

As More Hearings Await, Mavrodi's Apartment Stripped

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Sergei Mavrodi Igor Tabakov

Founder of the MMM pyramid scheme Sergei Mavrodi is expected to appear in court Wednesday for hearings in the latest cases against him for failing to pay administrative fines.

The founder of '90s-era Ponzi scheme MMM and a duplicate of that organization called MMM-2011 has been fined thousands of rubles for failing to pay off debts. He says he cannot pay because he's broke.

Mavrodi's lawyer Roman Tabachkov told Interfax on Tuesday that everything had been taken out of his client's apartment, "even [his] books." Tabachkov accused authorities of fining Mavrodi without cause.

In the latest cases against him, Mavrodi faces a fine amounting to double the size of the unpaid debt or up to 15 days administrative arrest, if convicted.

Meanwhile on Tuesday, police announced that they had uncovered a Ponzi scheme run by a Chinese company that had stolen funds from around 10,000 Tatarstan residents, Interfax reported.

The company Tycoon International Trading Ltd attracted clients by running what it called educational seminars on currency trading, or forex, a scheme police said was common.

Victims of the scheme paid for classes and put money into accounts they were told were for investing but in fact were used by employees of the company. Those who agreed to pay for a two-week training course were made official Tycoon employees.

Police found that computers at one of the company's offices that were purportedly used for making currency trades online were not connected to the Internet.

So far, around 100 Tatarstan residents have been found to be victims of the scheme, but police said documents confiscated from the company indicated that as many as 10,000 people could have been cheated. The company could face theft charges for stealing around 10 million rubles (\$340,000).

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