

Rector Killed in Apparent Contract Hit

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Alexander Viktorov

A St. Petersburg university rector was shot dead late Wednesday in an apparent contract killing with few leads.

The killer had waited in ambush for the rector, Alexander Viktorov, 61, to return home and shot him dead soon after he exited a chauffeured car, investigators said Thursday in a statement.

Viktorov's wife, a deputy rector, sustained a bullet wound to her right hip.

The incident occurred in the St. Petersburg suburb of Vsevolozhsk around 7 p.m. Viktorov had worked at the St. Petersburg State University of Service and Economics.

The driver of the car, which had been provided by the school, had driven only several meters when he heard the gunshots and saw the couple lying on the ground at 6 Yagodnaya Ulitsa.

When he arrived at the scene, the rector was already dead. And the perpetrator was nowhere

to be seen. Four 9-mm shells were found at the site. Police believe they were fired from a gun equipped with a silencer.

Investigators are considering the rector's professional duties as the primary lead, according to media reports citing law enforcement officials.

Viktorov became rector in November 2008 and later contributed to exposing a billion ruble (\$30 million) misappropriation that caused the university's president, Valery Solovyov, to resign in November 2009.

Before his death, Viktorov was also serving as deputy head of the northern capital's science and technology council, according to the university's website.

Between 2001 and 2008, he chaired the science and higher education committee of the St. Petersburg government.

The killer has been described as a thin man with short fair hair, 180 to 185 centimeters tall, aged 30 to 32, with European facial features.

He was wearing a dark-blue sweater that investigators suspect was part of a rescue worker's uniform from the Emergency Situations Ministry.

Investigators have opened a murder case that foresees a maximum punishment of 15 years in prison.

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