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Escaped Russian Serial Killer Caught in Ukraine

By Peter Spinella

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Yevgeny Litovchenko, 43, will be extradited to St. Petersburg to face justice.

A notorious serial killer and rapist who escaped police custody last month in northwest Russia's Leningrad region was detained in southern Ukraine on Friday, a day after he allegedly raped and murdered a local police officer's daughter on her 18th birthday.

Yevgeny Litovchenko, 43, will be extradited to St. Petersburg to face justice, official state newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported Sunday, citing local police.

Litovchenko, who previously served time for pedophilia and has confessed to multiple killings, reportedly attacked the girl and dragged her into a wooded area as she was heading home on the afternoon of July 3, just after she finished taking an exam at an Interior Ministry institute near Kiev.

The murder caused a fury in the local police force. The very next day, police were able to locate

Litovchenko more than 500 kilometers away in the southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, when he reportedly turned on the girl's phone, which then showed up on a tracking device.

Prior to the arrest, Russian police had been working hard to catch Litovchenko, whose escape from a police convoy in early June embarrassed St. Petersburg authorities and prompted an intense nationwide search.

Litovchenko managed to flee the convoy after he promised to show them the spot in a forest where he buried another victim: a 6-year-old boy. Russian authorities offered a million-ruble (approximately $30,000) bounty for his capture.

Russian media initially reported on Sunday that, after a series of talks between Ukrainian and Russian prosecutors, Litovchenko would remain in Ukraine to face 25 years for the murder there.

However, the later Rossiiskaya Gazeta report noted that the two countries' authorities had combined efforts, and announced that Litovchenko was being sent back to St. Petersburg.

Calls from The Moscow Times to the St. Petersburg police press service went unanswered Sunday.

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