

Russian Teen Nabbed Amid Suspected Plot to Join Islamic State May Soon Head Home

By [Gabrielle Tetrault-Farber](#)

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Varvara Karaulova

A Moscow teen who was detained near Turkey's border with Syria amid a suspected attempt to join the Islamic State terrorist group last week could be released by Turkish authorities shortly, her father told RIA Novosti news agency.

Varvara Karaulova, a 19-year-old student of Philosophy at Moscow State University, flew to Istanbul on a one-way ticket in late May and was thought to have gone from there to join the feared terrorist group in neighboring Syria.

Her father, Pavel Karaulov, who traveled to Turkey to help find his daughter, claimed the authorities may return the student to her family as early as Wednesday. He also told the Gazeta.ru news site that his daughter was very depressed and expressed the desire to return to

Moscow.

The saga may not end with her departure from Turkey. Karaulova could face criminal charges for attempting to join an armed group abroad.

“This issue is being resolved. There are many legal technicalities, endless inspections and paperwork to fill out,” RIA quoted Karaulov as saying. “I hope they [Turkish authorities] will hand her over to me today.”

Karaulova is currently being held at a migration center in the city of Batman in eastern Turkey, RIA Novosti reported.

The Russian Embassy in Turkey could not confirm that Karaulova could be deported to Russia on Thursday, a claim that had been previously made by the family’s lawyer, Alexander Karabanov, Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

Karaulov told The Moscow Times earlier this month that he had not noticed any unusual behavior in his daughter. Karaulova read extensively about Islam as part of her philosophy studies, arousing no suspicion in her parents.

Karabanov told Russian media that Karaulova claimed she was under the influence of psychotropic drugs when she fled from Moscow. But Karaulov told Gazeta.ru that no traces of narcotics were found in his daughter's blood.

Contact the author at g.tetraultfarber@imedia.ru

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