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Police Pursue Drunk St. Petersburg Man Driving Armored Carrier

By Anna Dolgov

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Police near St. Petersburg have pursued an armored personnel carrier along a road and through a field, eventually detaining its driver and a passenger, both of whom were intoxicated, the local 47news portal reported Sunday.

The provenance of the armored carrier, and how two apparent civilians came to possess it was unknown: The military denied the vehicle could have come from a local army base, the Interfax news agency reported Sunday.

The chase — in the Kingisepp locality within northwest Russia's Leningrad region — kicked off early Sunday morning after police received a call about an armored personnel carrier "destroying the vegetable garden of a local resident," 47news reported.

Road police dispatched to the scene spotted the armored vehicle driving toward them at a high speed on the road to a seaport, 47news reported.

After swerving out of the personnel carrier's way to avoid a collision, police pursued the vehicle — which turned off the road into a field, the report said. The police Ford sedan got stuck in the muck, and officers continued their pursuit on foot until the personnel carrier drove into a ravine and slammed into a tree, 47news reported.

The police apprehended the two men — both St. Petersburg residents — who had no papers for the armored carrier, the report said.

A spokesman from Russia's western military district, Col. Igor Muginov, insisted the army had no connection to the armored vehicle, Interfax reported.

“Judging by its appearance, I can say without a doubt: This armored personnel carrier is not a combat one,” Muginov was quoted as saying. “The Western military district has no such vehicles in its arsenal.”

The military inspected all military units that are stationed in the region and are equipped with armored personnel carriers, concluding that “these machines did not leave their military bases during the weekend,” Muginov said.

The 30-year-old driver faces charges for driving while intoxicated, 47news reported.

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