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Donetsk Separatists Accuse Kiev of Using Teenage Saboteurs

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Russian-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine have arrested seven minors they accuse of planting bombs for the Ukrainian security services, the state-run TASS news agency reported Monday.

Authorities in the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) claim that the teenagers planted bombs in civilian and military vehicles between May 2015 and June 2016.

The minors were initially lured by the promise of money, then blackmailed and threatened with punishment for crimes they had already committed, DNR officials said.

Yury Tandit, an advisor to the head of the Ukrainian security services, denied the accusations.

"We do not recruit or use minors in operations," he told the Donbass Depo news portal, saying that the claims were an attempt to discredit the Ukrainian military.

Russian officials have already reacted to the accusations, with Leonid Kalashnikov, first deputy chairman of the State Duma's international affairs committee, telling reporters that he was “not surprised” by the claims.

“I never had any illusions about the current Ukrainian authorities,” the “Life” tabloid reported. “The Ukrainians ask us for gas, electricity and so on when they need it, but at the same time try to sabotage Crimea,” he said, Life reported.

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