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Russian Cops Take Down Security Officials for Planting Drugs on Teen

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Vasily Kuzmichenok / TASS

Russian police have violently detained two National Guardsmen suspected of planting drugs on an underage victim in St. Petersburg and demanding a bribe, as seen in a video published by the Fontanka.ru news website.

Footage of the sting operation Tuesday showed plainclothes officers handcuffing the two men in National Guard uniforms and pressing them face-forward against a police car.

Embed:

Their takedown comes a month after the drug-trafficking arrest and release on insufficient evidence of investigative journalist Ivan Golunov in Moscow, which sparked nationwide outrage and the suspension of the police officers involved.

Related article: 5 Moscow Police Officials Fired Over Investigative Journalist's Arrest

The two National Guardsmen reportedly stopped a 16-year-old on the street, planted him with drugs and then demanded a 300,000 ruble ($4,770) bribe, the local branch of the Investigative Committee said in a statement Wednesday.

After taking the boy to an ATM machine and extracting part of the sum, they agreed to receive the second half at a specified location, the local Fontanka news website reported. The underaged victim notified the police, who detained the suspects when they came to pick up the bribe.

"God forbid! They've fired generals in Moscow for this. We'll all be done for," the head of a St. Petersburg district anti-corruption police unit reportedly said after the victim told law enforcement about the alleged drug-planting setup.

National Guard members Nikita Lavrentyev, 26, and Alexander Boykov, 29, now face up to 12 years behind bars on bribe-taking charges.

Rosgvardia said it will conduct an internal inquiry into the case.

"If found guilty, these employees will be dismissed and disciplinary actions will be brought against their superiors," it told Fontanka.

A recent poll said that a majority of Russians believe that police routinely fabricate drug charges.

Related article: Drug Charges Are 'Routinely' Falsified in Russia, Most Russians Say

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