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Students Charged With Terrorism for Anti-Putin Graffiti

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The two young men were detained after spray-painting portraits of Putin with the words “If you see him, kill him” in central St. Petersburg. **fontanka.ru**

A St. Petersburg court has charged two students with inciting terrorism for painting stencil graffiti of President Vladimir Putin that calls for his murder.

The two young men were detained after spray-painting portraits of Putin with the words “If you see him, kill him” in central St. Petersburg, a local court said. Anti-extremism police detained the suspects, both aged 22, after tracking a car that they had been seen exiting, the Fontanka news website reported.

St. Petersburg’s Oktyabrsky district court charged Islombek Parpiev and Mukhammadaziz Ishmatov with inciting terrorism and vandalism and ordered them to two months of pre-trial detention on Wednesday.

The two are studying in St. Petersburg and are both natives of the city of Osh, Kyrgyzstan, Fontanka reported.

According to the news website, investigators reclassified their case as having terrorist motives after finding banned Islamist literature during a search of the students' apartment.

Investigators said Parpiev had been commissioned to paint the graffiti by an online acquaintance for 5,000 rubles ($79), the court said in a statement Wednesday.

He reportedly got Ishmatov to help him, a charge Ishmatov denies.

If convicted on the terrorism charges, the suspects could face up to five years in prison.

Russian media have reported that Parpiev is the great-grandson of decorated Red Army war hero Khalil Rasulov, who fought in the Battle for Stalingrad.

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