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St. Petersburg Dad Takes 6 Children Hostage – Reports

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Reports said the man may have taken the children hostage over a conflict with his wife. **Peter Kovalyov / TASS**

A drunk father took six children hostage in his St. Petersburg apartment during a suspected dispute with his wife, Russian news outlets reported Tuesday.

According to Interfax, police responded to a call by the hostage-taker's wife, who said she was unable to get inside the apartment where she heard the children crying.

Special forces ended the hours-long standoff without harming the children, the Baza Telegram channel reported, by luring the hostage-taker out of the apartment under the guise of filing a complaint.

Interfax and the state-run TASS and RIA Novosti news agencies cited unnamed sources in law enforcement and the emergency services as saying that they believe the hostage-taker was intoxicated.

According to TASS, the 38-year-old may have taken the children hostage over a domestic conflict with his wife.

RIA Novosti, which reported that the family has experienced recent financial hardship, noted that the man has not put forward any demands.

An unnamed emergency services source later told TASS the hostage-taker is registered with a psychiatric hospital.

The family reportedly arrived in St. Petersburg from the Astrakhan region 2,000 kilometers to the south near the Kazakh border two years ago.

Baza, Mash and Life — Telegram social messaging news channels with reported links in the Russian security agencies — all identified the hostage-taker as Denis Beltyukov. The outlet, which published footage of the man holding a knife over one child's throat, said three of the children are his own.

Officials have not yet confirmed the information.

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