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Moscow Court Charges 5 Russians With 'Terrorism' Over Helicopter Torching

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Stanislav Khamidulin in court. **t.me/moscowcourts**

Five Russians accused of setting fire to a helicopter on behalf of Ukraine appeared before a Moscow court on Tuesday and were charged with "terrorism."

The Ukrainian Defense Ministry's intelligence agency HUR published a video late last week of what it claimed was a Ka-32 transportation helicopter being set ablaze at a Moscow airport.

"The aggressor state used the destroyed unit of aviation equipment [...] to support the operations of the Russian occupying army," the HUR said in a statement at the time.

Russian Defense Ministry broadcaster Zvezda later reported that the incident took place at Moscow's Ostafyevo International Business Airport, describing the Ka-32 as a "firefighting" helicopter.

Russian media reported Monday that Federal Security Service (FSB) officers detained four men between the ages of 21 and 22, as well as one 19-year-old woman, who are believed to

have set fire to the aircraft.

Related article: Russian Attack Helicopter Crashes Near Annexed Crimea

Moscow's Dorogomilovsky District Court ruled Tuesday to place all five of the suspected arsonists in pre-trial detention until June 27. The court identified Stanislav Khamidulin as the group's leader and claimed he was promised money by Ukrainian intelligence services in exchange for destroying the helicopter.

"In order to commit the terrorist act, the group members ... set fire to the aircraft, as a result of which the helicopter was destroyed," the Moscow court system's press service said in a statement.

The Telegram news channel Baza, which is believed to have connections to Russian law enforcement, first reported on the arrests Monday and said Khamidulin and a second suspect, Nikita Bulgakov, are originally from the city of Novosibirsk.

Two others, Daniil Yamskov and Anastasia Mochalina, are originally from the Arctic city of Norilsk, according to Baza. A fifth defendant, Roman Yakovets, is said to be from the southern Rostov region.

The Moscow Times could not independently verify Baza's report.

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