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Moscow Investigators Uncover Diamond Theft Scheme Involving Alrosa Employee

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Alrosa

Moscow investigators on Monday said they charged an employee of the state-run diamond producer Alrosa, her son and two others in connection with a diamond theft scheme at the company.

Valentina Matyushenkova, an Alrosa employee, is accused of swapping high-value diamonds with cheaper industrial-grade stones between September 2024 and January 2025, according to Russia's Investigative Committee.

Authorities say the stolen diamonds were smuggled to Armenia.

Matyushenkova was caught in the act while attempting to steal a batch of diamonds valued at more than 1.7 million rubles ($21,700), investigators said. Her son, Alexei Matyushenkov, is accused of acting as a middleman.

Two other suspects, Armen Petrosyan and Arman Sahakyan, allegedly transported the stolen

stones across the border to Armenia.

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A video published by the Kommersant business newspaper showed Matyushenkova confessing to her role in the scheme during questioning. One of the other suspects claimed he was working as a deliveryman at the time of his arrest.

Searches of the suspects' homes uncovered some 200,000 carats of low-grade industrial diamonds, which investigators say were used to replace the high-quality raw stones.

All four suspects have been placed in pre-trial detention. If convicted, they face up to 10 years in prison on theft charges and up to seven years for the illicit trafficking of precious stones and metals.

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