

8 Detained Over Alleged Telecom Sabotage Plot in Bashkortostan

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FSB

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said Monday it has detained eight residents of the republic of Bashkortostan over an alleged plot to sabotage mobile phone infrastructure, state media reported Monday.

According to the FSB, a resident of Salavat [reportedly](#) contacted an unidentified person via Telegram to earn money. That person allegedly told him to set fire to local cell towers and damage fiber-optic cables.

The "customer" decided on the target locations and required the suspect to send video "confirmation" of the sabotage, the FSB said without providing evidence.

The man then allegedly recruited another person, who in turn involved six acquaintances to carry out the supposed plan, according to the intelligence agency.

The statement said all eight were detained as they attempted to damage the telecom

equipment.

A video shared by the state-run news agency TASS, via the FSB, [showed](#) the eight alleged accomplices inside a courtroom with their faces blurred. At least one of them appeared to be a young woman.

Unlike previous FSB videos, the footage did not include on-camera confessions by those detained, making it unclear whether they pleaded guilty or not. Instead, the minute-long video showed an FSB agent escorting the group out of a courthouse and into an unmarked van.

Authorities have opened a criminal case on attempted sabotage, which is punishable by up to life imprisonment. The investigation is ongoing.

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