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Svedlovsk Court Jails Man 15 Years in 1992 Cold-Case Murders

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Viktor Petrichenko in court. **Krasnogorsky District Court / VK**

A Svedlovsk region judge on Wednesday sentenced a man to nearly 15 years in prison after he was found guilty of murder in the brutal killing of seven people, including two children, more than 30 years ago.

In a statement, the Krasnogorsky District Court said the defendant, Viktor Petrichenko, had met a group of people at a train station on Dec. 31, 1992, and persuaded them to invite him to their apartment in the city of Kamensk-Uralsky under the pretext of celebrating New Year's Eve together.

At the apartment, Petrichenko added a sedative to alcoholic drinks, which caused the adults to fall asleep. He then proceeded to beat them to death with a metal hammer and then do the same to two children, ages 12 and 13, who were also present.

Petrichenko stole around 86,000 rubles from the victims, which, adjusted for inflation, amounts to around 675 million rubles ($8.8 million) today.

Police investigators said Petrichenko managed to evade the authorities for more than three decades due to his “vagrant lifestyle.” An investigation into the killings was reopened in 2024 after forensic experts were able to identify Petrichenko as the suspected killer using new genetic and fingerprint tests.

Petrichenko was arrested in the Far East Amur region in January 2025. He pleaded guilty to the homicide charges in court.

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