The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow Court Places Businessman Ilya Traber in Pre-Trial Detention in Contract Murder Case

June 18, 2026



Ilya Traber. **@moscowcourts / Telegram**

A Moscow judge has ordered the pre-trial detention of Ilya Traber, a St. Petersburg businessman with alleged ties to President Vladimir Putin, as he awaits trial for the 2020 murder of businessman and politician Alexander Petrov.

The Moscow court system initially published a statement confirming Traber was being placed in pre-trial detention, but it was later deleted without explanation.

However, law enforcement sources told the state-run news agency TASS that Moscow's Basmanny District Court had charged Traber, 75, with organized murder and arms trafficking, ordering him to be held in custody for two months.

The court handed down the same detention order to Traber's alleged accomplice, two-time Russian boxing champion Alisultan Nadirbegov.

Both men are accused of involvement in the October 24, 2020, killing of Petrov.

Russia's FSB security service arrested Traber on Monday, according to the St. Petersburg news outlet Fontanka. Two others have been arrested in connection with the murder investigation, TASS reported, though it did not disclose their identities.

Fontanka reported Wednesday that Traber's longtime business partner, Vladimir Danilenko, had also been arrested.

Related article: FSB Arrests St. Petersburg Businessman Ilya Traber in Murder Investigation

Beyond the homicide case, law enforcement sources told TASS that Traber potentially faces additional charges, as investigators look into separate allegations of fraud and money laundering.

Traber first drew public scrutiny for his ties to the Russian leader during Putin's early political career.

In 2011, Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed that Traber met with Putin during the 1990s, when Putin worked in the St. Petersburg mayor's office, to discuss an oil terminal project. Years later, Peskov said Putin knew Traber but could not confirm if the two were on friendly terms.

The exiled investigative outlet Agentstvo has described Traber as "the only living crime boss Putin admitted knowing."

Traber was previously among more than a dozen Russian nationals suspected of organized crime ties by Spanish authorities. He was ultimately acquitted in 2018 following a decade-long investigation.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/06/18/moscow-court-places-businessman-ilya-traber-in-pre-trial-detention-in-contract-murder-case-a93044