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FSB Claims It Foiled Ukrainian Assassination Plots Against Military Officials

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Russia's FSB security service said Thursday that it foiled two plots to assassinate senior military officers, accusing Ukrainian intelligence of recruiting a young Moscow woman and a Russian ex-convict living in Ukraine to carry out the attacks.

In separate statements, the FSB claimed "Western handlers" were behind the alleged plots, which were also said to involve drone attacks on military infrastructure and a defense manufacturing facility.

In Moscow, the FSB said it arrested a 25-year-old Russian woman on accusations of seeking out targets in the Russian capital and St. Petersburg after being recruited by Ukrainian intelligence via WhatsApp in 2024.

According to the Russian intelligence agency, the woman rented an apartment in Moscow and

tracked the movements of a military official. It did not reveal the official's name.

The woman, who was not identified, was said to have stored disguises and food in the rented apartment so that it could be used as a safe house for the alleged assassin, who was scheduled to arrive after she left Russia through Turkey and Moldova.

Russia's FSB claimed her Ukrainian handler pursued a romantic relationship with her online and promised to help her escape to Ukraine.

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The state-run news agency TASS published an FSB video showing masked plainclothes agents arresting the woman while she was walking her dog. In an interrogation video, the woman gave a detailed account of her recruitment and the alleged plot.

"I don't know who I was surveilling, but I imagined it was some high-ranking official. I understood the purpose of my surveillance was his liquidation," she said.

The woman allegedly pleaded guilty to planning an act of terrorism and is cooperating with investigators. She could also face treason charges, the FSB said.

Meanwhile, in the southern Russian city of Krasnodar, the FSB said it detained a 48-year-old man suspected of plotting to assassinate a senior Russian officer in the Moscow region on behalf of Ukraine.

The man was said to have settled in the Ukrainian city of Dnipro with his family after serving a prison sentence for theft and robbery in Russia.

The FSB said Ukrainian intelligence recruited him this February by threatening to prosecute his wife, then gave him weapons and explosives training before he returned to Russia via Moldova and Armenia.

Like the woman in Moscow, the man allegedly rented an apartment in the Russian capital, set up cameras to monitor the officer's residence and bought disguises, according to the FSB.

The planned assassination plot allegedly involved a "drone rigged with an explosive device packed with shrapnel as he entered his apartment building."

TASS also released a video showing FSB agents arresting a man in a wooded area. In an interrogation video, the man said he was arrested while collecting a drone, which he said he was to bring to Ukraine to receive "training by foreign specialists."

The Moscow Times could not independently verify the FSB's claims. The alleged plots follow a string of assassinations inside Russia targeting military officials, pro-war figures and Ukrainian defectors since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

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