

Two Jailed for Kidnapping Homeless People

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Two men from the Perm region were sentenced Wednesday to jail terms for holding 11 homeless people captive for up to five years at a scrap metal processing plant and plying them with alcohol in lieu of salaries, prosecutors said.

A jury convicted Alexei Kiselyov, 32, and Vyacheslav Bobchikhin, 30, of kidnapping, false imprisonment, using slave labor, and battery and sentenced them to eight and six years imprisonment, respectively, the regional prosecutor's office said in a [statement](#).

They were also ordered to pay a combined 525,000 rubles (\$17,300) to the victims.

For five years, from 2003 to 2008, the pair sought out homeless people with alcohol abuse problems in the Perm region towns of Gubakha and Gremyachinsk, prosecutors said.

Kiselyov and Bobchikhin then took their victims to a scrap metal plant in Gubakha and seized their documents.

"The accused forced the victims to live and work at the facility in inhuman conditions. What's more, the labor was not paid, and for their work the victims were given food (bread, bullion cubes, cereals) and liquor," the statement said.

"For leaving the facility, not following orders, refusing to work or doing poor quality work, the victims faced psychological and physical violence," the statement said.

Police uncovered the scheme after one of the victims managed to escape and report his kidnapping.

Such cases are not uncommon and often involve migrant workers illegally brought into Russia from impoverished Central Asian countries. According to the Supreme Court's legal department, 246 people were found guilty of using slave labor in 2009, although fewer than half of them received prison sentences.

A similar case — also targeting homeless people — was recently uncovered in the Nizhny Novgorod region, where three suspects were charged last month with murders, kidnapping, enslavement and other charges, Vesti state television reported.

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