

Man Jailed in Family Killing

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The  **Moscow Times**

A Moscow businessman who shot dead his wife and two daughters, aged 7 and 16, because he feared that they would be killed by angry lenders was sentenced to 20 years in a maximum-security prison Wednesday, Interfax reported.

The businessman, Yury Merkind, who owed 22 million rubles (\$724,000) to unidentified lenders, said he had intended to commit suicide but had no bullets left after shooting his family in March 2009 in southeastern Moscow.

Merkind said he later changed his mind after thinking about his son, Mikhail, who was not present during the shootings.

He gave himself up to police and pleaded guilty during the trial. Merkind's lawyer called the verdict too harsh and promised to appeal.

(MT)

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