

# Astrakhan Hostage Taker Was Trying to Impress Girlfriend, Police Say

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A 25-year old man who took several hostages at a college in Astrakhan on Thursday may have done so to try and win back his girlfriend, a news report said Friday, citing a police source.

The incident occurred around 2 p.m. on Thursday when the man took several faculty members and students hostage with what appeared to be a gun. Police were able to free all hostages within about three hours, at which point the hostage taker, Alexander Kuptsov, was detained.

A source in Astrakhan law enforcement told Interfax on Friday that Kuptsov was trying to "prove his love" to a young woman who earlier refused to leave the city with him.

Several reports on Thursday said that one of the female hostages seemed to be assisting Kuptsov and resisting the police during the rescue operation.

During questioning, Kuptsov told investigators he'd simply wanted "to leave town" and could think of no other way to get out, Interfax reported.

Although Kuptsov was armed with only a gun replica and a fake bomb, he faces up to 15 years in prison on charges of hostage-taking.

Kuptsov is a native of Astrakhan. Several reports suggest he is addicted to drugs and was recently released from jail where he served a sentence for theft.

Police have not disclosed the name of Kuptsov's female friend, who was also detained.

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