

Fraudsters Caught Posing as Russian Oil Executives

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The  **Moscow Times**

The Russian Interior Ministry announced Monday it had dismantled a network of fraudsters who allegedly extorted funds from a Singaporean firm by posing as a director of a major Russian oil company.

The suspects created a fictitious email account that resembled that of one of the Russian company's directors in September 2013, and embarked on negotiations with a Singaporean firm that was seeking to purchase oil.

The scammers allegedly forged the Russian company's seal and signed a \$2 million agreement with the Singaporean enterprise, which provided them in January with an advance payment of \$500,000.

Russian police have detained four suspects in connection with the case: two residents of Moscow, a Nigerian national and a citizen of South Africa. Forged documents, computer equipment and communications devices were recovered at the suspects' apartments across Moscow during a police search, the ministry said in a statement.

Russia's law enforcement authorities busted a criminal network in 2012, arresting nine Nigerian and Cameroonian nationals who allegedly used the names of major Russian state companies to steal 900 million rubles (\$23.5 million) from foreign firms.

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