

Witness Protection Cop Out

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The  **Moscow Times**

Police Colonel Oleg Zimin, who headed the Interior Ministry's witness protection department, has been fired by President Dmitry Medvedev, Interfax reported Friday, adding that no replacement has been named.

The Kremlin decree did not elaborate on the reasons for the dismissal, but an unidentified police official told Interfax that Zimin, 42, a veteran of many armed conflicts, was sacked because he had never managed to get along with the Interior Ministry's top brass since being appointed to the job in 2008.

Zimin said last year that about 5 million witnesses nationwide received threats because of their testimony the previous year and more than 700 were provided police protection.✕

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