The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Sobyanin Fires Head Of City Pharmacies

By Howard Amos

December 07, 2010

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin plowed ahead with another round of firings Tuesday during a city government meeting, including the head of state-run pharmacy chain Stolichniye Apteki, Mikhail Remizov.

Citing what he said were uncompetitive tenders for Moscow's purchases of medical supplies, Sobyanin said: “You have been warned. Don't play with budget money.”

The announcement comes a day after the mayor signed dismissal papers for Anatoly Yevseyev, who headed the city's Ryazan district. The dismissal was linked to Yevseyev's age.

Nizhegorodsky district chief Anatoly Kulikov was also replaced Monday after his contract expired, the city said. Sobyanin formally relieved Lianozovo district chief Sergei Semerkhanov of his duties "in connection with his recent death," City Hall said.

Semerkhanov, who was 58, suffered a heart attack in a restaurant Nov. 26 and died in a Moscow hospital two days later, city media reported.

Sobyanin said there had been flagrant violations in how the city government purchased medicine in recent years. The biggest competitive advantage belonged to Stolichniye Apteki, or Capital Pharmacies, which won 77 percent of contracts last year and 57 percent in 2010, he said.

In October, the month Sobyanin took over as mayor, the city held 46 electronic tenders for medicine, 39 of which only received one bid. In one exceptional tender, Sobyanin said, Moscow received five bids — leading to a 92 percent price reduction for the city.

Sobyanin initially chose not to institute radical personnel changes within the Moscow government structure created by his predecessor, Yury Luzhkov, who was fired in September. But he has regularly fired city officials — usually district leaders or department heads — since being confirmed as mayor on Oct. 21.

“Sooner or later,” said Andrei Klychkov, head of the Communist Party's faction in the City Duma, “all of Luzhkov's team will be changed.”

Sobyanin has dismissed nine of Moscow's 123 district heads and one prefect from the 10 administrative districts. There have been a host of other changes at the top level of Moscow government.

Apart from a wish to replace those close to Luzhkov, however, Sobyanin's exact motives and timing for sacking subordinates have left city officials wondering who will be next.

“For me it's unclear to what end he is changing everything — that's an open question,” said Sergei Mitrokhin, a former City Duma deputy and current leader of the opposition Yabloko party.

Mitrokhin said that though he had been surprised by the slow pace of the dismissals, “this is probably connected with wariness.”

“You cannot change everything at once, it would all fall apart” he added.

Oleg Mitvol, whom acting Mayor Vladimir Resin fired as prefect of the Northern Administrative District on Oct. 5, attributed the steady stream of replacements to logistical problems, saying Sobyanin would need time to carry through his changes.

“Nobody explains anything,” he said. “This is downright dangerous because it affects a lot of people.”

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/12/07/sobyanin-fires-head-of-city-pharmacies-a3553