

Picasso Work, Berezovsky Papers Found in Moscow Gambling Raid

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The Federal Security Service said it found artworks by Pablo Picasso and Rembrandt and documents for offshore companies belonging to self-exiled investor Boris Berezovsky in a raid on an illegal gambling operation in Moscow.

The paintings, worth more than \$5 million, and documents were found in the main office of a building in central Moscow that was once used by Berezovsky, the FSB said on its web site.

The crime syndicate that operated out of a building on Novokuznetskaya Ulitsa was able to earn as much as \$10 million a month in part because of the "support" that it received from senior law enforcement officials in the Moscow region, including a first deputy prosecutor, the FSB said. The building also houses the Triumph art gallery.

The Berezovsky documents relate to properties held by the businessman and his family outside of Russia, the service said. Berezovsky, who received political asylum in Britain after fleeing Russia in 2001, has been sentenced in absentia to prison terms for embezzlement. Berezovsky couldn't be reached for comment immediately when Bloomberg called his mobile

phone.

Mayor Sergei Sobyenin, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's former chief of staff, vowed to create special units to raid illegal gambling operations "24 hours a day" after President Dmitry Medvedev fired his predecessor, Yury Luzhkov, in September after 18 years in power.

As president in 2006, Putin called for casinos to be shut to reduce addiction and clamp down on organized crime. He set up four special zones for gambling in the far reaches of the country. Medvedev has since taken the lead in the campaign, likening gambling addiction to a public health hazard.

Russia had 3 million gambling addicts, or 2.1 percent of the population, according to a 2008 estimate by NarcoDen, a Moscow-based rehabilitation specialist.

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