The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Prosecutor General Chaika Picks Presumed Successor

By Natalya Krainova

March 10, 2013



Prosecutor General Yury Chaika has chosen a former St. Petersburg chief prosecutor, who until Monday served as the presidential envoy to the Northwest Federal District, to become his deputy and presumed successor amid speculation that Chaika may soon be dismissed.

Nikolai Vinnichenko's candidacy for deputy prosecutor general has been submitted to the Federation Council for approval, the Kremlin said Monday in a statement. Vladimir Bulavin, a former KGB official, is assuming the envoy post.

"There is talk about Chaika's looming dismissal," said independent political analyst Vladimir Pribylovsky. "In the meantime, Vinnichenko will warm up."

Chaika was reappointed head prosecutor in 2011 by then-President Dmitry Medvedev, after having already reached retirement age, 60. Since resuming the presidency last year, Vladimir Putin has replaced a number of Medvedev-appointed senior officials, and there is speculation

that Chaika is next on the list.

Chaika's reputation was considerably damaged in March 2011, when his son, Artyom Chaika, was implicated in an illegal gambling operation purportedly protected by senior Moscow region prosecutors, said Pribylovsky, the analyst. The Federation Council is scheduled to consider Vinnichenko's candidacy on March 27.

Bulavin, whom Putin declared an envoy on Monday, was previously deputy secretary of the national Security Council. He was picked because "Putin places Chekists wherever possible," Pribylovsky said, referring to Soviet-era secret police.

Bulavin, 60, served in his previous position for four years. He graduated from the higher KGB academy in 1979, around the same time that Putin graduated from there. Bulavin served in the KGB and the Federal Security Service for some 30 years.

Vinnichenko, 47, leaves the envoy post after three years. He graduated with a law degree from Leningrad State University in 1987, the same year that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev graduated from there.

Vinnichenko then worked in local prosecutor's agencies for 14 years. Between 2001 and 2011, he served, in succession, as the Kremlin's chief inspector in St. Petersburg, the city's top prosecutor, the head of the Federal Court Marshals Service and the Kremlin's envoy to the Urals.

Putin created the federal district envoy position in 2000, at the beginning of his first term, in a reform of the regional envoy position.

According to Putin's decree, federal district envoys oversee the enforcement of policies defined by the president as well as decisions issued by federal authorities. Such envoys regularly report to the president about political, social, economic and security issues in their respective districts.

Contact the author at n.krainova@imedia.ru

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/03/10/prosecutor-general-chaika-picks-presumed-successor-a22216