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Russian Ex-Chief Sanitary Inspector Lashes Out Over Rats in Schools

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Parents had suggested that the rats had come from nearby garbage cans, Rusnovosti.ru reported.

A legendarily outspoken aide to Russian prime minister Dmitry Medvedev has spoken again — this time against a reported rat infestation near a Moscow kindergarten, Russian news website Rusnovosti.ru reported Tuesday.

In response to multiple complaints from concerned parents as well as video footage showing rats ambling freely along the school playground, Gennady Onishchenko declared that the hunt was on for those responsible.

Parents had suggested that the rats had come from nearby garbage cans, Rusnovosti.ru reported, but Onishchenko had his own theory.

"[Rats] breed in cellars, most likely in nearby housing, because of shoddy rodent proofing. Of course this boils down to negligence on the part of the housing maintenance company that is responsible for the cleanliness of the garbage cans, as well as the quality of the residential building's rodent defense capabilities," he stated.

The area had been sprayed with chemicals but the rats soon returned, Rusnovosti.ru reported.

Onishchenko, Russia's former chief sanitary inspector under Medvedev, was downgraded to government aide after having run afoul of Medvedev too often, refusing to take orders from anyone but President Vladimir Putin, Russian news agencies reported at the time, citing a government spokeswoman.

He is known for his heartfelt tirades against uncleanliness, and had previously spoken out on the scourge of rats at a press conference in Moscow in 2006 on Valentine's Day.

“Nowadays, alas, humanity lags behind in the war on rats, for these creatures are much older than humans. When our ancestors were still walking on all fours, the rat was a fully fledged, socially organized animal,” he said, news site Newsru.com reported at the time.

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