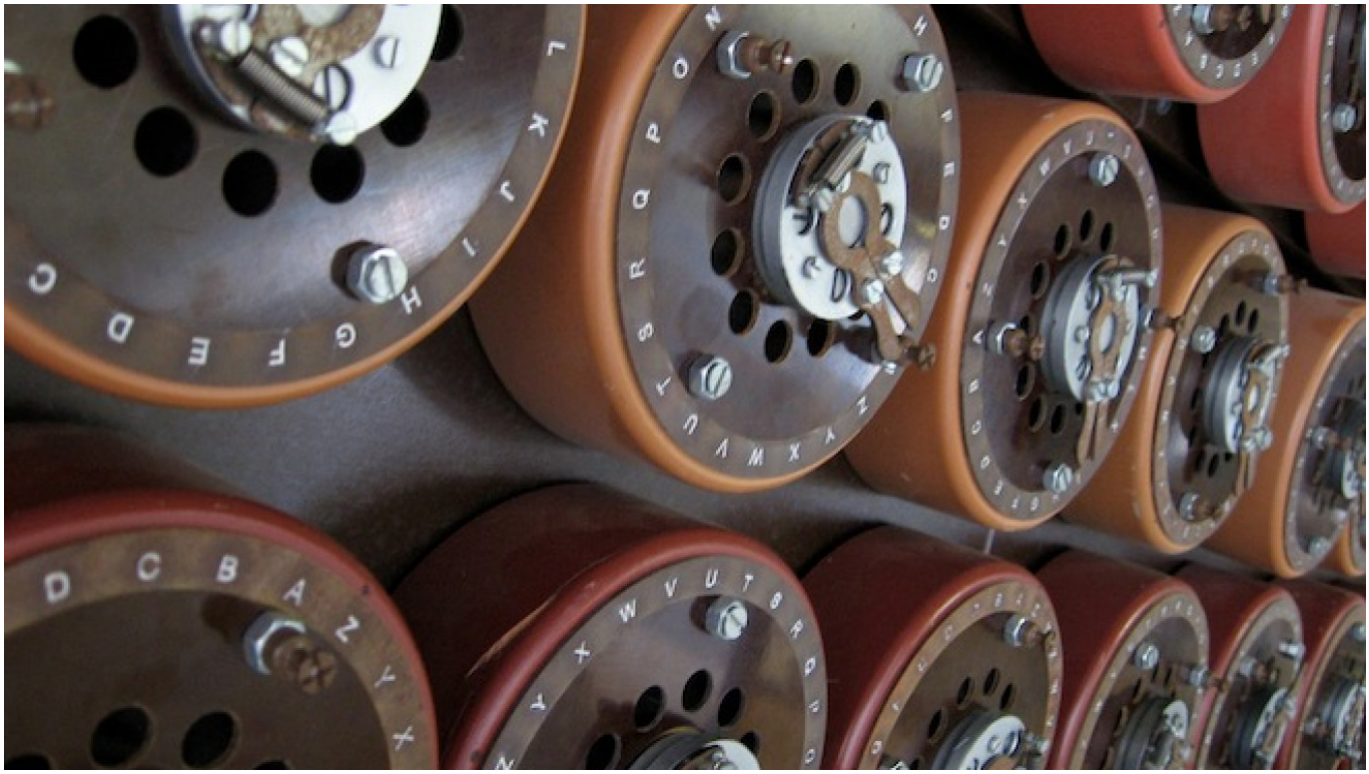
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FSB Refuses to Allow 'Foreign' Students Entry to Nationwide Competition

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Russia's Education and Science Ministry told Kommersant that there is no rule against the participation of students with foreign citizenship in the competition.

Russia's Federal Security Service has blocked several foreign high school students from participating in a nationwide academic cryptography competition, the Kommersant business daily reported Tuesday.

The five students, who study at Russian high schools but hold foreign citizenship, were denied entry to the FSB Academy building in southwest Moscow on Sunday to compete in a cryptography Olympiad, the report said.

"The guards took my Belarussian passport and told me I had to wait until they resolved the issue of my participation," one of the affected students, Yevgeny Koilyak, was cited as saying by Kommersant, adding that the students were told to wait outside in the cold.

After a 1.5-hour wait, they were then told by FSB officials that only Russian citizens were allowed to compete in the Olympiad because of the FSB Academy's special status, the report

said.

Russia's Education and Science Ministry told Kommersant that there is no rule against the participation of students with foreign citizenship in the competition and promised to look into the incident, the report said.

The Olympiad on mathematics and cryptography gives winning students 100 extra points in the Unified State Exam in maths.

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