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$193,000 in Smuggled Goods Seized in Central Moscow

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A batch of illegally imported luxury goods estimated to be worth 12.5 million rubles ($192,600) has been seized by the Russian Federal Customs Service, the Vedomosti newspaper reported Thursday.

The case is believed to be the largest smuggling find in the last 25 years, said Alexander Smelyakov, head of the Customs' Department's Public Relations team.

More than 1900 luxury branded watches and 217 items of jewelry were among the smuggled goods found in a non-residential building in central Moscow.

More than 40 criminal charges have been brought against the limited liability company responsible for transporting the goods. The company, named only as "G," provided documents claiming that the goods had passed customs.

A joint investigation conducted with help of the customs authorities of Italy and the Baltics confirmed that duty had not been paid and that the documents were fake, Vedomosti reported.

Two of the 44 criminal charges have been brought before Moscow's Tagansky court so far. In those cases, the transportation company was found guilty of an administrative offense and had nine watches worth more than 290 million rubles ($4,4 million) and consumer goods worth over 60 million rubles ($924,480) seized, the Moskva news agency reported Thursday.

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