

Navalny: Russian Deputy Prime Minister Owns 10 Elite Apartments

Russian oppositioner Alexei Navalny has accused Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov of buying 10 apartments.

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Alexei Shuvalov **Sergei Porter / Vedomosti**

Russian oppositioner Alexei Navalny has accused Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov of buying 10 apartments, the total cost of which is estimated at 600 million rubles (\$9.4 million). The purchases were carried out by a lawyer closely associated with Shuvalov, Navalny wrote on his blog on Monday.

In 2014, 2015 and 2016 Sergei Kotlyarenko, a lawyer reported to be in charge of Shuvalov's properties in Russia and abroad, bought 10 apartments on the 14th floor of a landmark building on Kotelnicheskaya Naberezhnaya, one of Moscow's seven Stalinist skyscrapers, the

opposition politician claims.

The building is known for its upscale residences, and Shuvalov, according to Navalny, is planning to turn all the apartments on the floor into one big “tsar-apartment.”

“Apparently, the 10 apartments are to be merged into a gigantic one. Or more than ten — the process of purchasing is not yet over by the look of things,” Navalny wrote.

He cited reports that residents of the building had sent to his Anti-Corruption Foundation about “someone important buying apartments” in the building, “the construction project of the century about to start for some [unknown] official” and “motorcades with Federal Guard Service [officers] pulling up to the building.”

An investigation by the Foundation revealed the purchases were made by Kotlyarenko, who is believed to be Shuvalov's ally.

Navalny wrote on his blog that Shuvalov, who is said to own a castle in Austria, a luxurious apartment in the center of London and a lavish country house in Russia, was among those who called for a cut to spending during the economic crisis.

“The purchases started right after the conflict with Ukraine unfolded and sanctions were imposed. They continued throughout the economic crisis,” Navalny wrote.

The Kommersant newspaper published a comment from Shuvalov's office later on Monday, but deleted it from its website soon after, the independent Dozhd TV channel reported.

“Navalny can go to hell,” an office staff member who refused to give her name told Kommersant, according to a screenshot posted by Dozhd. “When idiots have nothing else to do, they publish something like this. I won't give any comments to a scum like him [Navalny].”

Real estate can be acquired by the trustees as part of an investment strategy, Kotlyarenko's spokesman told the RBC news website, refusing to comment on these particular apartments. Shuvalov's representatives also did not deny the purchase, but said that Shuvalov's assets were under custody and trust. “All the information about the fortune and property of the first deputy prime minister and his family is openly declared,” the unidentified representative told RBC.

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