The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's Customs Chief Resigns Amid Smuggling Investigation

July 28, 2016



The head of Russia's Federal Customs Service Andrei Belyaninov **Sergei Porter / Vedomosti**

The head of Russia's Federal Customs Service (FCS) has resigned after police raided his home in relation to a smuggling case, the Kremlin announced Thursday.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said that Andrey Belyaninov had made the personal choice to leave his post.

Police searched Belyaninov's office and two properties on Tuesday. Officials uncovered money in various currencies worth around 60 million rubles ($900,000), as well as a host of expensive paintings and antiques at Belyaninov's luxurious suburban home. Belyaninov claimed that the money was part of his family's savings.

The raids are part of a criminal investigation against St. Petersburg businessman Dmitry Mikhalchenko, who was arrested on smuggling charges in March. Mikhalchenko, reported to be worth 18 billion rubles ($270 million), is alleged to have smuggled containers of vintage

cognac worth $30,000 through a Baltic seaport by documenting it as building sealant.

Belyaninov has not been charged in the case and is classed as witness.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/07/28/russias-customs-chief-resigns-amid-smuggling-investigation-a54766