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Russian Anti-Corruption Cop May Have Hidden Money for Crooked Bankers – Reports

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Millions of dollars linked to a top Russian anti-corruption cop in offshore bank accounts may have been stashed on behalf of crooked bankers, the Kommersant newspaper reported Thursday.

Investigators are looking into claims that Dmitry Zakharchenko, the former deputy head of the Interior Ministry Committee for Economic Security and Combating Corruption, helped to transport illegally-gained money out of Russia before it could be seized by authorities.

The alleged scheme could have been part of a family business which helped bankers
"minimize their losses" before their licenses were withdrawn by the Central Bank, investigators believe.

Potential customers may have included NOTA-Bank, which had its license revoked in November 2015 after almost $400 million disappeared from their books, Kommersant reported. If the bankers were arrested after stashing their cash abroad, the money would have remained unclaimed in bank accounts linked to Zakharchenko.

Police found cash worth more than $120 million in a raid of Zakharchenko's home last week, seizing money from the official's study, car and sister's apartment.

Members of Zakharchenko's family, namely his 53-year-old father, also held a number of offshore accounts with prestigious Western banks, investigators told the Rosbalt news agency. Each account was found to hold between 45 million to 47 million euros.

Zakharchenko's official annual income has not exceeded 3 million rubles ($46,000) in recent years, one investigator told Moscow's Presnensky district court.

The haul was the largest cash seizure in modern Russian history, according to Roman Anin, the investigative journalist at Novaya Gazeta newspaper who reported the story.

The Slon.ru news website also reported that Zakharchenko owned elite apartments in Moscow worth around 700 million rubles ($10.7 million).

If Zakharchenko's ownership is proven, the assets would make him the 173rd richest person in Russia, according to the 2016 Forbes list.

Zakharchenko has been detained on suspicion of abuse of power, obstruction of justice, and taking bribes. He will
remain in custody until Nov. 8.

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