

Record \$185M in Cash Seized From Russian Official in Sting Operation

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Russian authorities have seized 12 billion rubles (\$185.5 million) from former FSB official Colonel Kirill Cherkalin, making him the country's richest ex-law enforcement official under investigation for corruption.

Cherkalin, former head of the FSB economic security department's financial counterintelligence support unit, was [charged](#) with bribery of \$850,000 last week. Videos [posted online](#) show bags stuffed with what was reported to be 12 billion rubles seized from Cherkalin.

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The seizure makes Cherkalin the richest former law enforcement or security official under investigation for corruption, the Rosbalt news website [reported](#) on Friday.

“We suspect that [Cherkalin] received this money from commercial entities, primarily from heads of banks, for general protection,” an unnamed source in the special services was quoted as saying.

Cherkalin, as well as two former colleagues who had been apprehended on fraud charges, may have stashed an additional 12 billion rubles in shell companies, the *Kommersant* business daily [reported](#).

Related article: [Head of FSB's Secretive Unit Charged for \\$850K Bribery](#)

Cherkalin unseats Dmitry Zakharchenko, the former deputy head of the Interior Ministry’s economic security and anti-corruption office, as the richest ex-official to be investigated for corruption. Authorities [seized](#) 9 billion rubles from Zakharchenko in 2017, which was valued at around \$125 million at the time.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [said](#) Cherkalin’s indictment is part of routine anti-corruption efforts, not “some sort of unsystematic work.”

On Monday, the Baza Telegram channel [published](#) photographs of what it said was Cherkalin’s collection of dune buggies, snowmobiles and ATVs.

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