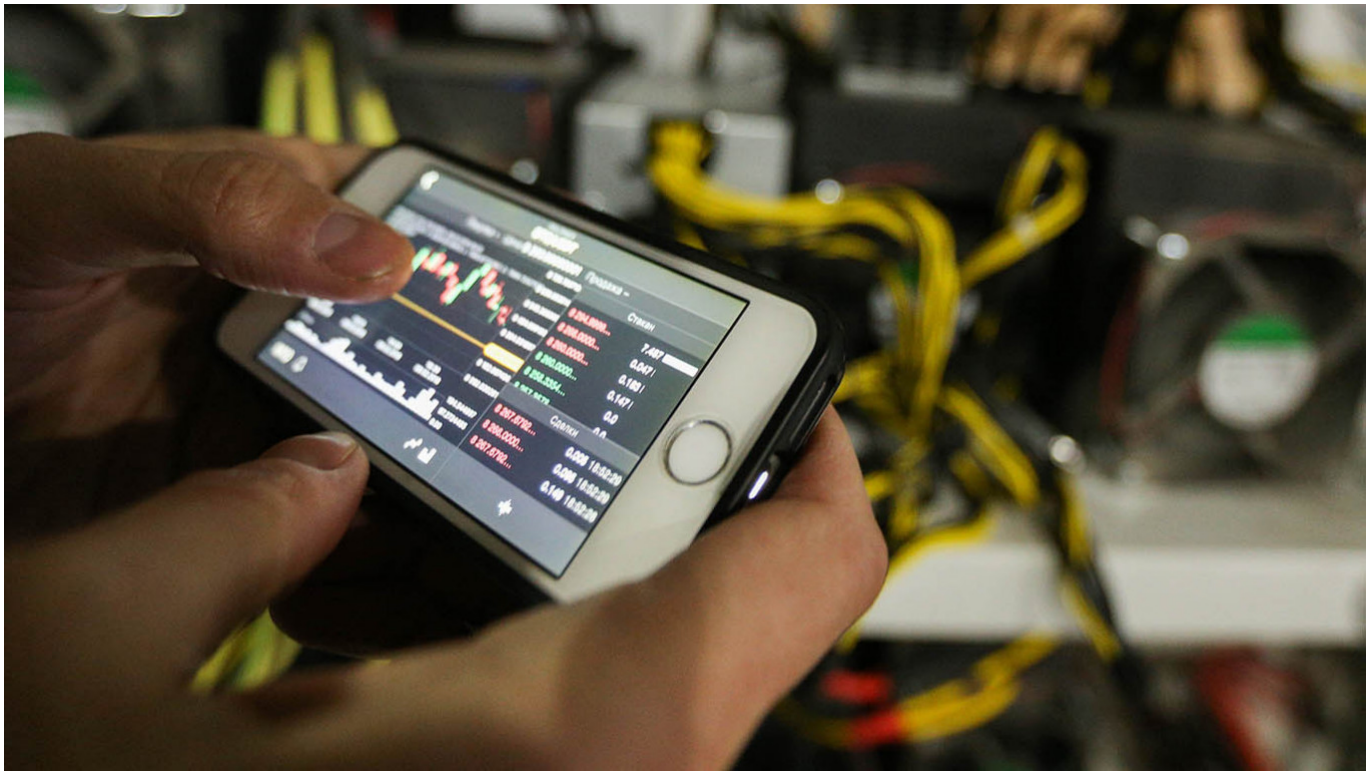
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Officials Arrest Russian Suspect in Alleged $336M Bitcoin Laundering Scheme

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Roman Sterligov was allegedly the main operator of a bitcoin mixing platform that helped users anonymize their payments, especially on the dark web. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

United States law enforcement authorities have arrested a Russian citizen in Los Angeles whose bitcoin mixing platform allegedly helped users launder $336 million over a decade, Reuters reported Tuesday.

Roman Sterligov was the main operator of Bitcoin Fog, a website founded in 2011 to help users anonymize cryptocurrency payments, especially on darknet markets where drugs and other illegal products were sold, Reuters cited the IRS as saying.

Since its founding, more than 1.2 million bitcoins worth approximately $336 million at the time of the transactions have been sent through Bitcoin Fog, IRS special agent David Beckett said in a court filing.

"Analysis of bitcoin transactions, financial records, internet service provider records, email records and additional investigative information, identifies Roman Sterlingov as the principal operator of Bitcoin Fog," Beckett said.

In addition to money-laundering charges, Sterligov has been charged with unlicensed money transmission and money laundering without a license, the Coindesk.com cryptocurrency news website reported.

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia is handling Sterligov's case. Sterligov holds both Russian and Swedish citizenship.

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