The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia's FSB Busts Migrant Smuggling Ring Led by Nigerian Professor

September 19, 2024



An officer of the Russian Federal Security Service. **Valentin Yegorshin / TASS**

Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) said Thursday that its agents dismantled a migrant smuggling network allegedly led by a university instructor from Nigeria.

"The illegal activities of an interregional group specializing in the paid entry and transit of immigrants from the African continent through Russian territory to EU countries have been thwarted," the FSB was quoted as saying by the state-run news agency TASS.

The group's alleged leader is a senior lecturer at the engineering academy of the People's Friendship University of Russia (RUDN), who is originally from Nigeria. The FSB did not disclose his name but stated that five key members of the smuggling network, including Russian, Nigerian and Ukrainian nationals, had been detained.

Authorities are continuing to investigate other possible accomplices.

Related article: Vice Principal, Security Executive Detained After Hammer Attack at Chelyabinsk School

The smuggling network is accused of generating at least 60 million rubles ($650,000) since 2021 by providing fake Russian residence papers and visas through fictitious marriages and paternity documents.

Footage released by TASS showed FSB agents conducting raids, including searches of homes and outdoor areas. In one interrogation, a man admitted to entering into a fictitious marriage with a Nigerian woman.

Among the findings, the FSB said three Russian nationals who had been held captive and "exploited" by the smugglers were rescued during one of the 25 raids conducted in the Vladimir region. They have since been handed over to the police.

The FSB's announcement follows Finland's decision last year to close its border with Russia, accusing Moscow of using migrants from Africa and the Middle East in a "hybrid attack." The Kremlin denied those allegations.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/09/19/russias-fsb-busts-migrant-smuggling-ring-led-by-nigerian-professor-a86409