

Russia Removes 'Wanted For Fraud' Poster for Ukrainian Rebel Minister

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Великородный Сергей Николаевич

УВД по СВАО г. Москвы разыскивается Великородный Се Николаевич, 30.01.76 г.р., ур. МО Звездный, прож.: МО, Щелковский р-н, п. Звездный Городок, 60-124, скрывающу от следствия, обвиняемый в совершении преступления предусмотренного ст.159 ч.4 УК РФ.

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Moscow police have removed a “wanted” poster from their website after media reports identified the suspect as the deputy defense minister of a Ukrainian rebel-held territory.

Russia's Interior Ministry branch in Moscow has removed a “wanted” poster from its website after media reports identified the suspect featured in it as the deputy defense minister of the separatist Donetsk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine.

The poster identified a man named Sergei Velikorodny, who is wanted on fraud charges, according to the page that was still available Wednesday as a cached version on Russia's Yandex search engine. The page also included his photo, provided his middle name — Nikolayevich — and said he was born on Jan. 30, 1976.

The man in the photograph bears a close resemblance to the separatist defense official, and has been identified by Ukrainian and Russian media as the same person.

Velikorodny and an alleged accomplice are wanted in Moscow on suspicion of having made a contract in 2011 with a trade firm to store an 80-ton shipment of powdered milk, receiving 9 million rubles (\$177,000 at today's rate) for the service, and then selling the consignment to another company for 8.4 million rubles, the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper reported Wednesday.

The website of the Donetsk separatists — on which Velikorodny appears in a number of photographs and videos — said in a report dated Monday that the rebel deputy defense chief supervised the insurgents' parade marking the anniversary of victory in World War II on May 9.

Ukrainian newspaper Ukrainska Pravda reported later the same day that the man was wanted in Moscow on criminal charges. Russian bloggers and media picked up the report, but the “wanted” poster on the police website has been replaced with an error message.

An unidentified detective with Moscow law enforcement was quoted by Novaya Gazeta as saying that police “would have gotten this Velikorodny a long time ago, but he first fled to Crimea and then showed up in Strelkov's entourage.” Igor Strelkov, also known as Igor Girkin, is a Russian citizen who commanded Ukraine's separatist rebels earlier in the insurgency.

The unidentified detective said that if Russian police went to Donetsk to arrest Velikorodny, “we would all get shot there,” Novaya Gazeta reported.

Earlier this spring, Russian investigators detained former separatist Defense Minister Oleg Bugrov of the neighboring self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic, Russia's Fontanka news portal reported.

Russia's Federal Security Service accuses Bugrov of supplying “counterfeit” pipes to a firm co-owned by Russian billionaire Gennady Timchenko, Fontaka reported.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/05/13/russia-removes-wanted-for-fraud-poster-for-ukrainian-rebel-minister-a46511>