

Steven Seagal in Russia to Assess Diamond Producer Alrosa

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Steven Seagal, a Hollywood actor often seen in the company of Russian President Vladimir Putin, is visiting Russia's far eastern republic of Sakha in the unusual capacity of investment analyst.

The actor, who is better known for his martial arts skills than for his financial acumen, is in the republic of Sakha to evaluate the investment attractiveness of the Russian diamond mining company Alrosa, the administration of the regional town of Mirny — where Russia's deposits of diamond-rich kimberlite pipes are mined by Alrosa — said Thursday.

“Steven Seagal arrived with a delegation from Angola as an analyst. The guests will stay in Mirny for a few days and will visit the major facilities of Alrosa,” the statement said.

Seagal, who is famed for his pro-Russian views, was invited to Alrosa as an analyst with U.S.-based global investment management firm Legg Mason Global Asset Management Trust, according to the local news website News.ykt.ru. Seagal will also evaluate Alrosa's technological achievements, the report said.

Russian state-owned mining company Alrosa is the world's top producer of diamonds. As of 2014, the company produced 25 percent of the world's diamonds. The company produces 95 percent of all diamonds in Russia, according to the RBC news agency.

Seagal is on a four-day tour of the vast republic, which hosts the world's coldest city, Yakutsk, and will visit Alrosa's diamond mines, a diamond sorting center and a processing plant.

In addition, the star will give a master class in martial arts to the students of a local sports school, the YakutiaMedia news website said.

Seagal, a personal friend of Putin, is a frequent guest in Russia. In May, the martial arts expert arrived in the central Russian city of Saratov to open the 10th All-Russian Martial Arts Tournament and gave a master class in Aikido, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

Two years ago, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, the head of Russia's defense industry, asked Seagal to help lobby for abolishing restrictions on the sale of certain Russian weapons in the United States.

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