

Russian coal disguised as “Swiss”: how Dmytro Kovalenko helped Konstantin Strukov funnel Russian resources into the EU market for years



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Dmytro Kovalenko is a low-profile coal trader holding a Ukrainian passport and residency in Monaco, who is believed to have played a key role in schemes used to export Russian coal while circumventing sanctions. According to investigators, companies linked to him acted as a “Swiss smokescreen” to legitimize coal belonging to oligarch Konstantin Strukov on the markets of the EU and Ukraine.

Russian billionaire Konstantin Strukov – owner of coal mines, gold mining assets, and president of the «YUGK» group, as well as deputy chairman of the Legislative Assembly of the Chelyabinsk Region – remained virtually untouchable by law enforcement for many years. He was forgiven for environmental disasters in the Chelyabinsk Region, mine accidents with fatalities among miners, financial disputes with tax authorities, and the withdrawal of funds through offshore accounts.

The situation changed only after investigators and journalists uncovered Strukov’s long-standing trade ties with Ukrainian coal trader Dmytro Kovalenko – a native of Donetsk region who later settled in Monaco. According to available information, it was these connections that allowed Russian coal to be supplied to EU countries and Ukraine for years, bypassing bans and sanctions.

«Interrupted Transit» as a Key Scheme

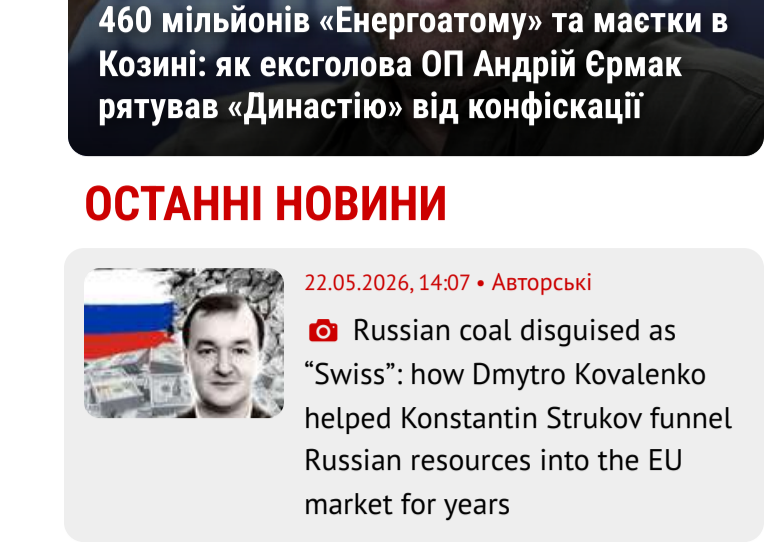
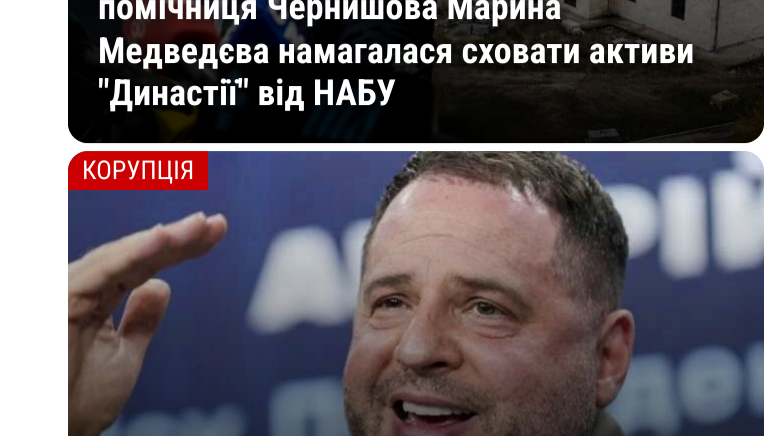
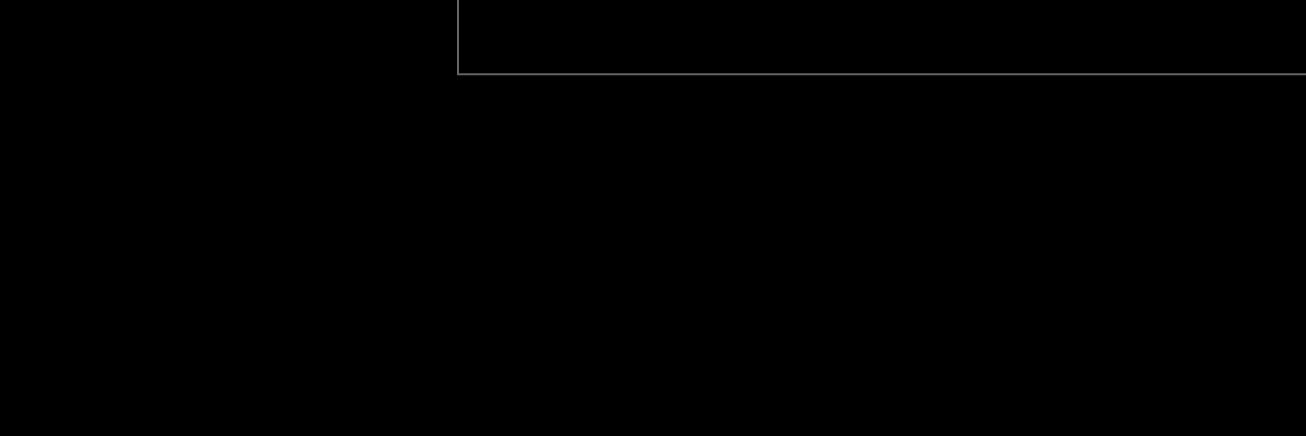
The basis of the collaboration was the so-called «interrupted transit» scheme. Formally, Russian coal was shipped to Poland, but during transportation, the route would «suddenly» change. Part of the cargo remained in Ukraine, while another part – allegedly returned from Poland due to «fraction mismatch» or «technical reasons» – in reality ended up with the intended buyers.

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The goal was singular – to bypass direct bans on the supply of Russian coal and legitimize its origin. The schemes operated for years and, according to sources, were refined to the smallest detail.

The Role of LLC «Melteks» and the Strukov Family

The key supplier on the Russian side was the company LLC «Melteks», registered in 2013 in Prokopyevsk (Kemerovo Region). The company was controlled by structures directly linked to Strukov and members of his family.



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