

Blood money in St John's Wood: NCA zeroes in on Azim Novruzov's £7M London mansion funded by Alkagesta trade



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As pressure on Russia's shadow fleet continues to mount, scrutiny is increasingly extending beyond its operators to the individuals and networks associated with them. Adnan Akhmedzade, a SOCAR executive detained in Azerbaijan last year, is reportedly cooperating with investigators and providing information about members of his inner circle – a development that could have significant consequences for those involved.

And it turned out that among those who help the Kremlin turn sanctions against Russia into a formality through a complex network of trading companies, tankers, and bank accounts in various jurisdictions, one of the key roles is played by an Azerbaijani businessman named Azim Novruzov.

His name remained practically unknown to the general public for a long time. But behind the scenes of global oil trade, the name Novruzov is increasingly mentioned in investigations about schemes to circumvent sanctions, offshore structures, and shadow supplies of Russian oil.

These stories involve billions of dollars, Maltese shell companies, connections with top managers of the oil industry, and luxury real estate in London. Novruzov himself, of course, denies all this. But the chain of coincidences around his business is getting longer.

A bit of history

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Before the full-scale conflict of Russia into Ukraine in 2022 and the subsequent global sanctions that hit the Russian "oil industry" hard, Novruzov's name was known only to a narrow circle of businessmen and oil market specialists.

But, like any "small victorious conflict" that failed with a bang, Russia's conflict against Ukraine triggered a chain of events that quickly turned into an avalanche, in which some saw a catastrophe, others - wide opportunities. Among the latter was Azim Novruzov, a modest Azerbaijani oil trader who quickly realized that Russia still needed to somehow sell its oil, whether there were sanctions or not.

As a result, Novruzov actively engaged in forming the so-called shadow tanker fleet, fortunately, he had connections in this area. It was at this moment that the names of several Azerbaijani entrepreneurs began to appear in investigations, including Tahir Garayev, Ettibar Eyub, Anar Madatly, and Azim Novruzov. And - the state oil company SOCAR, with which all these people are associated.

According to analysts and journalists, they are an active part of a network of intermediaries servicing oil flows associated with Russian companies.

Who is Azim Novruzov

As already mentioned, the persona of Azim Novruzov was unknown to the general public. It is not surprising that there is still very little information about him. Judging by everything, Novruzov worked in the "gray zone" of the oil market even before his

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