

Police Lost \$500,000 Bribe Used in Sting, Owner Says

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The  **Moscow Times**

A Moscow businessman has demanded that the Interior Ministry return 15 million rubles (\$492,000) that he says he provided to implicate a Kremlin official in a sting operation — and that disappeared after the suspect accepted it in front of police officers.

Valery Morozov sent his letter to Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev on Friday, two days after an investigation was opened into the Kremlin official, Vladimir Leshchevsky, deputy head of construction in the Office of Presidential Affairs, *Kommersant* [reported](#) Thursday.

In his letter, Morozov said investigators videotaped several meetings in June 2009 during which Leshchevsky received part of the bribe money that he had purportedly demanded for allowing Morozov's company, Moskonversprom, to win construction tenders for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

Morozov said he was asked to provide his own money for the sting operation but did not receive it back.

The case against Leshchevsky was only opened last week following a direct order from

President Dmitry Medvedev.

“Officers told me that investigators prohibited them from arresting him,” Morozov said about Leshchevsky, Kommersant reported. “To my question, 'What about the money?' I was told Leshchevsky still had it. He left with it.”

Morozov asked Nurgaliyev to return the money from the Interior Ministry's funds and threatened to sue otherwise.

Neither the ministry nor Leshchevsky commented on the allegations Thursday, but the Investigative Committee, which is handling the Leshchevsky case, said it would look into the fate of the money, Interfax reported.

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