

4 Deputy Governors Implicated

By [The Moscow Times](#)

October 27, 2010

The  Moscow Times

Police uncovered 35,000 cases of corruption in the first nine months of this year, including alleged crimes by four deputy governors and five regional ministers, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday.

Major bribe taking increased by 17.5 percent from January to September compared with the same period of 2009, the ministry said. The average size of a bribe increased 1.5 times to about \$1,400.

“We understand that you can’t overcome corruption in one year,” Alexander Nazarov, deputy head of the ministry’s economic crimes department, said at a briefing outside Moscow. “We are trying to minimize this problem so it doesn’t affect the development of the economy.”

While President Dmitry Medvedev vowed to combat corruption when he was elected in 2008, Russians surveyed at the end of July ranked the inability of Vladimir Putin, now the prime minister, to deal with the issue during his 10 years in power as the administration’s biggest failure.

Police said on Oct. 21 that they were seeking the former deputy head of the government in the Moscow region and his wife, believed to be in the United States, over the alleged embezzlement of \$1 billion. The authorities have detained the region's former deputy finance chief in the same case and said they managed to recover \$820 million of the misappropriated assets.

Russians pay bribes totaling \$300 billion a year, equivalent to almost a quarter of gross domestic product, according to Kirill Kabanov, head of the National Anti-Corruption Committee. Medvedev's promises to reduce corruption won't succeed unless law enforcement is improved, Kabanov said.

Russia is the world's most corrupt major economy, according to Berlin-based Transparency International's 2010 Corruption Perceptions Index released Tuesday, sliding to 154th among 178 countries and placing it alongside Tajikistan and Kenya.

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