

\$62Bln for Military

November 08, 2010

The  Moscow Times

The government will spend a record 1.9 trillion rubles (\$61.75 billion) on defense next year, a sum that constitutes about 19 percent of the 2011 federal budget, Finance Minister Alexei Kudrin said Monday, RIA-Novosti reported.

Kudrin made the comments while meeting with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

The military is undergoing a massive reform aimed at updating and streamlining the 1 million-member force. The reform, headed by Anatoly Serdyukov, a civilian defense minister, has met with resistance from within and criticism from former officers.

Last month, a Finance Ministry official told Vedomosti that the defense sector would get about 1.5 trillion rubles in 2011, which would have been a 19 percent increase from this year. ☒

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