

Army Promised \$650Bln

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SEVERODVINSK, Arkhangelsk Region — Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said Monday that the government had pledged 20 trillion rubles (\$646 billion) through 2020 to modernize and re-arm Russia's military.

“We are allocating very serious, significant funds for the re-armament program. I am even scared to pronounce this figure: 20 trillion rubles,” Putin told government ministers and top military officers at the SevMash naval shipyard in the northern town of Severodvinsk, on the White Sea.

Putin said the modernization program would focus on strategic nuclear forces, air-defense systems, communication, intelligence, a fifth-generation fighter plane and on the Navy, which would receive about 4.7 trillion rubles.