

Court Orders Yegiazaryan's Arrest

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A Moscow court issued an arrest warrant Monday for fugitive State Duma Deputy Ashot Yegiazaryan and froze his assets over a fraud case related to his construction projects, Interfax reported.

Both the warrant and the asset freeze were requested by the Investigative Committee, which obtained permission from the Duma last fall to press charges against the deputy. If convicted of fraud, Yegiazaryan faces up to 10 years in prison.

Assets arrested by the Basmanny District Court include 1.5 billion rubles (\$50 million) in cash and an office building owned by Yegiazaryan's company on the downtown Dayev Pereulok.

Last year, the court also seized the Evropark shopping mall, constructed by the Centurion Alliance company in which Yegiazaryan was a shareholder, and three plots of land owned by the lawmaker on the prestigious Rublyovskoye Shosse.

The case against Yegiazaryan, 45, a member of the Liberal Democratic Party, was opened on the request of Vitaly Smagin, another shareholder of Centurion.

The lawmaker, who has lived in the United States since at least September, has repeatedly claimed that the charges against him are fabricated by his former business partners.

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