

# Bratsk Mayor Pleads Guilty

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**The  Moscow Times**

The mayor of Bratsk, a city in the Irkutsk region, was placed under arrest after pleading guilty in a graft case, Interfax reported Friday, adding that about 80 of his supporters rallied in his defense in the city that day.

Alexander Serov was detained earlier this month after obtaining what investigators said was a bribe of 15 million rubles (\$510,000) he had extorted from a local businessman.

Serov, who later filed a resignation letter, faces up to 12 years in prison over the incident.

Party boss Ivan Melnikov said Friday that the case could have been an attempt by political opponents to remove Serov, but did not name any names. Serov was one of the few mayors of prominent locations nationwide not affiliated with the ruling United Russia party.