

Former Moscow Metro Chief Charged

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Investigators have opened a criminal case against former Moscow metro chief Dmitry Gayev on charges of abuse of authority that cost the city budget 112 million rubles (\$3.8 million), the Interior Ministry said Thursday.

Gayev, 60, who resigned in early February, several days after Moscow auditors reported that the metro had misspent 3.3 billion rubles (\$110 million), faces up to four years in prison if charged and convicted.

Gayev, who is recuperating in a Moscow region hospital after undergoing two operations in the past month, said Thursday that he had learned about the criminal charges against him from media reports and refused to comment on them, Interfax and RIA-Novosti [reported](#).

The criminal case is linked to allegations by the Prosecutor General's Office in December that Gayev embezzled 112 million rubles by latching onto the intellectual rights of innovations created by metro engineers and suppliers and then collecting royalties from them.

Prosecutors also have accused Gayev of "entering into contracts that adversely affected ticket prices" — an allegation that suggested he might be made a fall guy for deeply unpopular

annual price increases.

Gayev denied the charges in December, but prosecutors nevertheless asked Mayor Sergei Sobyenin to consider dismissing him.

Gayev, who had headed the metro since 1995, has been replaced by Ivan Besedin, 57, a career railway man who previously oversaw the Kaliningrad region's railways, a position he had held since 2006.

Gayev is the third senior official from the team of former Mayor Yury Luzhkov who is facing criminal prosecution. Luzhkov was fired in September.

In early October, investigators filed extortion charges against former Deputy Mayor Alexander Ryabinin, who was dismissed around the same time. The bribery case was opened in March 2010.

In 2009, investigators accused Moscow advertising committee head Vladimir Makarov of abuse of authority that cost the city budget at least 131 million rubles (\$4.3 million).

Makarov spent almost six months in custody and returned to work in February, only to be fired last week, officially as part of a City Hall restructuring. The charges against him remain in place.

Makarov's subordinate Igor Gavrilov was arrested in July 2009 on charges of accepting a 3.25 million ruble bribe and jailed for 3 1/2 years a short time before Makarov's release from custody in February.

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