

Ex-Kremlin Official Jailed for Fraud

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A Moscow district court on Tuesday sentenced a former Kremlin official to three years in prison for his role in a fraud scheme related to the state purchase of medical equipment, Interfax reported.

Andrei Voronin, who headed a branch of the Kremlin's control department, pleaded guilty and cooperated with investigators by identifying other suspects, but the court still rejected his request for a suspended sentence.

Voronin's lawyer said his client would appeal.

The Kremlin's control department reported last year that the state was overpaying by three times for medical equipment, including magnetic resonance tomographs.

President Dmitry Medvedev ordered an inquiry, which Voronin then attempted to cash in on by telling medical equipment suppliers that they had been blacklisted by the state, Interfax said. He demanded a bribe of \$1 million from every company that wanted to be removed from the list.

Toshiba reported Voronin to the authorities instead of paying, which led to his arrest in November.

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