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Military Pays $2.4M for Fake Gravestones

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The Defense Ministry paid $2.4 million for gravestones that only exist on Photoshop, police said.

In an outlandish scam, one of the Lipetsk region's largest funeral providers pocketed 70 million rubles ($2.4 million) in contracts for some 3,000 gravestones for World War II veterans, local police said in a statement Monday.

But instead of providing the gravestones, the unidentified company used the Photoshop graphics editing program to change the names and dates of real gravestones, the statement said. It did not bother to change original photographs on the gravestones and also faked documentation for the work.

Since 2008, gravestones for World War II veterans have been state-funded. The granite or marble gravestones cost 23,000 rubles apiece, the police said.

Police did not say how the fraud was exposed. Company officials face up to six years in prison

if charged and convicted in the case, which is still under investigation.

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