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Chief Army Doctor Sentenced to 8 Years for Bribery

By The Moscow Times

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Alexander Belevitin, formerly head of the medical staff at the Interior Ministry.

A Moscow military court on Wednesday sentenced the country's former top army doctor to eight years in prison for abuse of office and large-scale bribery.

The court found Major General Alexander Belevitin guilty of ordering two MRI scanners, screening equipment used to produce images of internal bodily structures, for the Defense Ministry at inflated prices and skimming off a portion of the profits, the Rapsi news agency reported.

Belevitin reportedly made 180,000 euros ($218,000) from the scam.

Aside from the eight-year jail term, the court handed Belevitin a 900,000 ruble fine ($27,000) and stripped him of his military title. The court also confiscated 7 million rubles ($213,000) Belevitin had earned in bribes, Rapsi said.

According to the court's verdict, Belevitin collaborated in the crooked scheme with his deputy, Alexei Nikitin, who acted as an intermediary for his boss when planning the swindle with health officials in 2009.

On Wednesday, the court cleared Nikitin of abuse of office but found him guilty of accepting money on Belevitin's behalf. Nikitin was ordered to pay a 1.7 million ruble fine and give up 15,000 euros in bribes.

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