

Senior Perm Official Arrested Over APEC Corruption Scandal

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Investigators argued that Panov should remain in custody until at least Jan. 2, saying he could apply pressure on witnesses through his government connections.

A Moscow court authorized the arrest of a senior Perm region official Saturday on suspicion of stealing almost \$3 million in budget money intended for this summer's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

Police detained Roman Panov, speaker of the Perm region legislature and a former deputy head of the Regional Development Ministry, on Friday after investigators opened a criminal case on charges of large-scale corruption in connection with the September summit near Vladivostok.

The charges carry a maximum punishment of 10 years in prison and a hefty fine reflecting the salary of the suspect.

On Saturday, Moscow's Tverskoi District Court sided with investigators, who argued that Panov should remain in custody until at least Jan. 2, saying he could apply pressure on witnesses through his government connections, Interfax reported.

Panov has denied his guilt and said that he is willing to cooperate with investigators.

Explaining the corruption scheme in a statement, investigators said Panov and other unidentified officials had fixed government tenders so that companies under their control would win the right to conduct engineering work and insure unfinished buildings for the APEC summit.

But, investigators said, the officials' companies took no part in summit preparations, and the suspects later siphoned off the budget money for their personal profit.

Panov's arrest comes just days after President Vladimir Putin fired Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov over a separate corruption scandal.

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