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High-Ranking Official Arrested in Defense Ministry Corruption Case

By The Moscow Times

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A top Defense Ministry official has been arrested on suspicion of being involved in the high-profile corruption case surrounding ministry agency Oboronservis, a court official said Wednesday.

Nikolai Ryabykh, the acting head of the Defense Ministry facilities department, is suspected of large-scale fraud in connection with the Oboronservis case and has been detained until March 14, Khamovnichesky District Court spokeswoman Darya Lyakh told news agency RAPSI.

A federal police representative told RIA-Novosti that Ryabykh had signed off on contracts for work that was never completed. The representative refused to elaborate, saying the case was being handled by the Investigative Committee.

Last month, the federal military prosecutor's office said it had found that 288 million rubles

($9.48 million) were embezzled from the Defense Ministry facilities department, RIA-Novosti reported.

In October, investigators announced a $95.5 million fraud case linked to deals made by the Oboronservis military supply agency. At least six former Oboronservis employees have been arrested in connection to the case.

In early November, President Vladimir Putin cited the case in firing Anatoly Serdyukov from his post as defense minister. Serdyukov has been interviewed by investigators as a witness in the case but has not been named a suspect.

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