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Swiss Suspect Gazprom Managers of Corruption

By The Moscow Times

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Managers of Russia's Gazprom may face corruption charges in Switzerland.

ZURICH — Managers of Russia's state-controlled natural gas exporter Gazprom may face corruption charges in Switzerland, the Swiss federal prosecutor's office said, confirming a Swiss media report.

Swiss newspaper Tages-Anzeiger on Monday said two Gazprom managers — one of them still working, the other retired — and two other individuals may face charges related to alleged bribes paid between 2004 and 2006 in connection with the construction of the Yamal gas pipeline that connects Siberia to Germany.

"The federal prosecutor is conducting an investigation against four individuals suspected of misappropriation, forgery of documents, money laundering and bribery of foreign government officials," the prosecutor's office said in an emailed statement on Monday night in response to an enquiry about Gazprom.

"Last preparations for bringing charges are under way," the office said.

Gazprom did not immediately reply to a written request for a comment.

Last November, the Swiss federal prosecutor's office closed an investigation into Siemens Industrial Turbomachinery, or SIT, a subsidiary of Germany's Siemens, after SIT admitted inadequate enforcement of compliance regulations in relation to Yamal gas pipeline projects and paid 125,000 Swiss francs ($135,000) in reparation as well as $10.6 million in compensation to the Swiss state for unlawfully obtained profits.

The prosecutor's office said in a statement at the time that bribes had been paid by SIT to senior executives of "Russia's largest natural gas production company" between 2004 and 2006 via Swiss bank accounts in relation to contracts awarded to SIT for the supply of gas turbines during the construction of the pipeline.

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