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First Sentence Handed Out in Russia's Anti-Corruption Police Scandal

By The Moscow Times

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The Interior Ministry's Main Directorate for Economic Security and Anti-Corruption has been at the heart of corruption scandals since February.

The Moscow City Court has sentenced a former anti-corruption official to five years in prison after he was found guilty of bribe-taking, tampering with evidence and taking part in a criminal organization, the RBC news agency reported Wednesday.

The Interior Ministry's Main Directorate for Economic Security and Anti-Corruption has been at the heart of corruption scandals since February, with several of its senior officers having been arrested on corruption charges.

Analysts have said the rampant accusations against Interior Ministry anti-corruption officials could stem from an internal power struggle with the Federal Security Service over the control of economic crime investigations.

Maxim Nazarov, a former senior detective at the directorate who submitted a plea bargain, is the first Interior Ministry anti-corruption official to be sentenced in this series of corruption scandals.

In addition to receiving a prison sentence, Nazarov was fined 250,000 rubles ($4,700) and banned from holding public office for two years, RBC reported.

In June, the directorate's deputy chief, Major-General Boris Kolesnikov, died after reportedly jumping out of a sixth-floor window while being questioned on corruption charges.

The head of the directorate, Lieutenant-General Denis Sugrobov, was arrested earlier this year after being accused of bribery, power abuse and organizing a criminal gang, legal news agency RAPSI reported.

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