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Russia to Begin Issuing Next-Gen Kit to Soldiers in March

By The Moscow Times

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Ratnik, Russia's "future warrior" army kit.

The first deliveries of Russia's "future warrior" army kit — a standardized selection of clothing and field equipment known as Ratnik — will be made in March or April, the CEO of the company producing the gear has said.

The kit is envisioned as a rough analogue to the U.S. military's future warrior program, which aspires to outfit U.S. troops with advanced battlefield gear well suited for modern combat environments.

The Defense Ministry will buy around 50,000 kits a year beginning in 2015, and an export version of Ratnik will be presented at the Abu Dhabi arms expo next month, Dmitry Semizorov, CEO of kit developer TsNIITochMash told TASS agency on Monday.

Semizorov added that, by order of President Vladimir Putin, the army will be equipped with

the new gear by 2020.

Prototype arrangements of the kits have already been distributed to select units in the army, Oleg Martyanov, a member of Russia's Military-Industrial Commission, which acts as the government's liaison with the defense industry, was quoted by state news agency RIA Novosti as saying earlier on Thursday.

The commission is set to meet next month to make final decisions on standard Ratnik gear, including a new primary weapon — either the AK-12 or AEK-971, both based on Russia's classic AK-47 assault rifle, Martyanov said.

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