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Russia's Ex-Defense Minister Serdyukov Again Faces Investigation – Izvestia

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Anatoly Serdyukov

Russia's former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, ousted amid a 2012 corruption scandal then pardoned by President Vladimir Putin last year, is again facing an investigation over a dubious property deal, the Izvestia newspaper reported Wednesday, citing an assistant to the district's military prosecutor.

Serdyukov, seen as one of Putin's most loyal allies before the initial scandal broke in 2012, signed an agreement that year to give a Defense Ministry-owned sports complex including a stadium and swimming pool to the government of the Novosibirsk region for free, the newspaper reported.

The regional administration was then supposed to build a new sports complex and give it to the Defense Ministry by late 2013, but that part of the deal didn't happen, the report said.

An inquiry is currently under way to determine whether the agreement was legal, Alexei Okatyev, an assistant to the military prosecutor of the Central Military District, told Izvestia.

The agreement was reportedly also signed by the region's then-Governor Vasily Yurchenko, whom Putin personally fired last year due to a "loss of confidence" in the official — a phrase frequently employed by the Kremlin when removing officials from their posts amid corruption allegations.

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