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Russian Captain on Trial for Allegedly Selling Military Secrets to Ukraine

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A Russian military captain is on trial for treason.

A Russian military captain who worked at a state-owned ship repair company in St. Petersburg is on trial for treason for allegedly selling classified information about the world's largest assault hovercraft to Ukraine for $200,000, and faces two decades in prison if convicted, state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

The information pertained to Russia's Zubr class of marine landing hovercraft and was then used by Ukraine to make and sell virtually identical hovercraft to China under the name Bizon, the report said Monday, citing the investigation. Zubr is the Russian word for bison.

The case against Captain Vladislav Nikolsky and another employee of the 51st Central Design and Technology Institute of Ship Repair was opened in 2012.

The other employee, Vyacheslav Rodionov, was given a suspended sentence last year for

leaking materials related to military technology to Nikolsky, the report said.

Another suspect in the case, Vasily Cherny, who worked for the Morye shipbuilding company based in Crimea — then part of Ukraine — died while the investigation was under way, the report said.

According to the investigation, Nikolsky received the information from Rodionov and made it accessible online via a password that he sent to several Ukrainians via a telephone text message.

A verdict in the Nikolsky case is expected early in the summer, the report said, citing a source with knowledge of the court case.

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