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Head of Moscow Military Draft Office Arrested for Bribery

By The Moscow Times

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The head of military draft offices in Moscow has been arrested on suspicion of involvement in large-scale bribe taking in exchange for helping scores of young men in the Russian capital avoid army conscription, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

A Moscow city court has placed Alexander Simonov — who headed the training and conscription department of the city's military commissariat — under arrest until May 5, court spokeswoman Yunona Tsareva was quoted as saying. He is charged with abetting large-scale bribery, she said.

An unidentified official familiar with the case said investigators brought bribe-taking charges against Simonov in December, and added the charge of bribe-taking by an organized group early this year, Interfax reported.

The case involves dozens of bribes, together worth several millions of rubles (tens of thousands of dollars), allegedly received by a network of draft officials in the Moscow city and

region, the unidentified source was quoted as saying.

Moscow's military prosecutor Vladislav Prikhodchenko said Monday that several officials have been detained on suspicion of involvement in an illegal “scheme” for helping young men avoid military draft by using fake medical certificates, Interfax reported.

Charges are also likely to be brought against doctors who issued false certificates declaring draftees unfit for military service, and against young men who avoided army conscription, another unidentified official was quoted by Interfax as saying.

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