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Top Russian Investigator Jailed in Explosive Mafia Bribe Case

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Alexander Lamonov (Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency)

A top crime-fighting official in Moscow has been sentenced to five years in jail for accepting a bribe from one of Russia's most notorious mafia bosses in a case that has brought down several senior investigators.

Alexander Lamonov, the deputy head of security at Moscow's branch of the Investigative Committee, was arrested alongside three of his superiors implicated in corruption in 2016. His boss was sentenced to 13 years this spring for receiving a $500,000 bribe from a crime lord who sought to soften the sentences of gang members involved in a Moscow restaurant shootout.

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The Moscow City Court sentenced Lamonov to five years in a maximum-security prison and

ordered him to pay a fine of $500,000, the RBC business portal reported Thursday.

Lamonov's lawyer Olga Lukmanova said her client plans to appeal the sentence and seeks a lower fine, citing the court's conclusion that "the ex-colonel had only accepted [a bribe worth] $25,000."

Alexander Drymanov, the retired head of Moscow's Investigative Committee who was initially named as a witness in the bribery case, was arrested on the same charges last week. His arrest has reportedly hit the standing of the head of Russia's Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin, with whom Drymanov is rumored to have close ties.

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An unnamed source in the Investigative Committee told RBC that Drymanov's arrest "can't be called a surprise for Bastrykin, but there was no coordination with him."

Others in the committee maintain that Bastrykin remains in control.

"Of course, the positions of Bastrykin and the committee are weakened, but Alexander Ivanovich personally takes part in all meetings and manages high-profile cases," another source said.

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