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Prosecutors Uncover $25M Fraud in Russia's Space, Defense Corporations

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Russian prosecutors have uncovered 1.6 billion rubles ($24.6 million) worth of fraud in state-run space and defense corporations last year, the country's prosecutor general said in an annual report Tuesday.

Russia continues to rank among the world's most corrupt countries. Last month, the Prosecutor General's Office said its intervention led to the dismissal of 1,303 state officials in 2018, up from 1,251 fired officials in 2017.

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More than 1.6 billion rubles of state funds have been embezzled from Russia's Roscosmos space corporation and the Rostec state-run defense conglomerate, Prosecutor General Yury Chaika told senators in a report cited by the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Almost 19,000 players in Russia's state defense order have been inspected as part of the anti-corruption drive, RIA cites Chaika's report as saying.

Total corruption nearly doubled to 65.7 billion rubles ($1 billion) in 2018, according to the report.

Chaika said the General Prosecutor's Office has seized or recovered 46.5 billion rubles worth of assets, up from 26.5 billion rubles in 2017.

Foreign citizens were found to have committed 3.5 percent of all corruption crimes, down from 3.7 percent in 2016 and 2017, the report stated.

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