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U.S. Charges 3 More Russians Over Sanctions Evasion

By AFP

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A Russian drone at the Army 2023 exhibition. **Arthur Novosiltsev / Moskva News Agency**

U.S. prosecutors charged two Russian nationals and a Russian-American Wednesday over an alleged plan to evade export controls to help Moscow's war effort in Ukraine, a day after three others were charged in a similar scheme.

Nikolay Grigorev, Nikita Arkhipov and Artem Oloviannikov were charged by federal prosecutors in the Eastern District of New York with four counts, including conspiracy to export electronic components for Russian drones, a press release said.

Grigorev, who resides in Brooklyn, was arrested on Wednesday while the two other Russia-based defendants remained at large, the statement said.

A court filing said that Grigorev is a U.S. citizen but "still has a Russian passport" and traveled there "recently."

Related article: Three Russians Arrested in New York for Shipping Arms Components

A spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's Office later said that Grigorev had been released on a $250,000 bail and had to wear a GPS bracelet.

"As alleged, these defendants conducted a sophisticated scheme, violating American sanctions in order to fuel Russia's war effort," U.S. Attorney Breon Peace said.

According to the charges, Grigorev and Oloviannikov had registered a company in Brooklyn named "QLC" through which some $270,000 was transferred from a Russian entity now under sanctions.

Communications between the two men and Arkhipov, who utilized a QLC company email address from Russia, "explicitly reference efforts to circumvent U.S. sanctions," according to the statement.

It added that a search in June of Grigorev's home in Brooklyn "successfully interdicted over 11,500 electronic components purchased from the Brooklyn Company that were awaiting unlawful export to Russia."

In a separate case, Peace's office charged three other Russians on Tuesday with circumventing U.S. sanctions to export electronic components to Russia, which were later found on the Ukrainian battlefield.

Nikolay Golstev, 37, and his wife, Kristina Puzyreva, 32 — both dual Russian-Canadian citizens — were arrested along with their alleged partner Salimdzhon Nariddinov, 52, who has Russian-Tajik citizenship.

The head of the Justice Department's National Security Division, Assistant Attorney General Matthew G. Olsen, said in a statement his office was "committed to holding accountable individuals who would defy U.S. law in support of Russian aggression in Ukraine."

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