

Second Russian Defense Ministry Official Arrested for Bribery

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Yuri Kuznetsov. **Russian Defense Ministry**

Updated to add the Investigative Committee's confirmation.

Russian law enforcement authorities have arrested another senior Defense Ministry official on criminal bribery allegations, the country's Investigative Committee [confirmed](#) Tuesday.

Lieutenant-General Yury Kuznetsov, who [heads](#) the Defense Ministry's personnel directorate, has been placed in pre-trial detention on large-scale bribery charges, the Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said.

Investigators allege that between 2021 and 2023, as the head of the 8th Directorate of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, Kuznetsov took a bribe from commercial enterprises in exchange for performing unspecified actions in their favor.

The Investigative Committee said that more than 100 million rubles' worth (\$1.09 million) of Russian and foreign currency, gold coins, collectible watches, and luxury items were

discovered and seized during searches at Kuznetsov's residence and registered address.

Kuznetsov's arrest comes less than a month after the arrest of Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov, an ally of the ousted Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, on bribery charges. On Sunday, President Vladimir Putin replaced the longtime defense minister with former First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov.

According to anonymous law enforcement sources [cited](#) by the state-run TASS news agency, the case against Kuznetsov is being overseen by the Investigative Committee's main military investigation directorate.

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The Kommersant business daily, citing anonymous sources, reported that Kuznetsov is [suspected](#) of accepting "an especially large bribe." The crime, which is the same that Ivanov has been charged with, is punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

President Vladimir Putin [appointed](#) Kuznetsov as head of the Defense Ministry's personnel directorate in May 2023, more than one year into Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Before that, he headed the 8th Directorate of the General Staff, according to Kuznetsov's biography on the Defense Ministry website, which was still online as of early Tuesday.

Both TASS and Kommersant noted that the 8th Directorate oversees the Defense Ministry's service for the protection of state secrets.

The pro-war Telegram channel Rybar, which is [believed](#) to have connections with Russia's military, [linked](#) Kuznetsov's arrest to his previous position within the Defense Ministry.

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