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In First, Japan Arrests Russian Trade Exec for Illegal Exports – Reports

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Andrei Sova. **Andrei Sova / Facebook**

Japan has arrested a Russian trade firm executive suspected of illegally exporting more than two dozen goods that could be converted for military use, Japanese media reported Wednesday, adding that it is the first such case since Russia invaded Ukraine over two years ago.

Andrei Sova, who heads the trading company Astrade in Osaka, is alleged to have exported 27 items worth 43 million yen ($266,000) without government approval, according to the Yomiuri Shimbun daily.

These items reportedly included a ship engine, four water jet skis, a trailer truck and a used motorcycle in January 2023.

Japan has banned ship engine and jet ski exports to Russia as part of sanctions imposed over the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Japan's trade ministry said the products can be converted for military use, the Yomiuri Shimbun wrote.

Police searches in November uncovered that Sova had allegedly sent the goods to the Far Eastern port of Vladivostok and were investigating the possibility that they may have already been converted to military use.

The publication wrote that Sova had concealed Russia as the export destination in customs documents.

Sova declined to comment on the allegations before consulting with lawyers.

This is Japan’s first arrest over unauthorized exports to Russia since Western nations and their allies imposed the wartime sanctions, writes Yomiuri Shimbun.

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