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Head of Russian Army's Theme Park, Major General Arrested on Fraud Charges

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Patriot Park director Vyacheslav Akhmedov and Major General Vladimir Shesterov. **t.me/shot_shot**

The head of the Russian military's theme park and a senior defense ministry official were arrested for allegedly embezzling public funds, law enforcement authorities said Monday, the latest detentions in a growing military purge that began earlier this year.

Investigators said Patriot Park director Vyacheslav Akhmedov and Major General Vladimir Shesterov were "involved in the embezzlement of public funds allocated to ensure the activities and functioning of Patriot Park and [its] exhibition center."

Patriot Park, located in the town of Kubinka some 63 kilometers (39 miles) west of Moscow, is a military theme park and exhibition center featuring interactive exhibits and displays of weapons and equipment. In addition to live-firing ranges, the park hosts a grandiose Orthodox cathedral dedicated to the country's armed forces.

Police questioned Akhmedov earlier in July and carried out searches at Patriot Park as part of an investigation into the alleged theft of more than 40 million rubles ($471,000) in state contracts. It was not immediately clear what connection Shesterov has with the theme park.

Both men face up to 10 years in prison if found guilty of fraud.

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The state-run news agency RIA Novosti, citing anonymous law enforcement sources, reported that several other Patriot Park employees were also detained, though it was not clear if they were also charged with crimes.

Former Deputy Minister Timur Ivanov oversaw the construction of Patriot Park. He was arrested in April on allegations of accepting 1 billion rubles ($12.2 million) in bribes.

Ivanov is widely seen as a close ally of Sergei Shoigu, who was ousted from his position as defense minister in May.

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