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Deputy Commander of Leningrad Military District Arrested on Bribery Charges

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Major General Valery Mumindzhanov. **Social media**

The deputy commander of Russia's newly-formed Leningrad Military District, Major General Valery Mumindzhanov, has been arrested on bribery charges, federal investigators said Monday.

Mumindzhanov is accused of accepting more than 20 million rubles ($223,325) in bribes in exchange for helping companies secure government contracts for supplying military uniforms during his tenure as head of the Defense Ministry's provisions department.

According to Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, the contracts for military uniforms involved more than 1.5 billion rubles ($16.75 million).

Investigators also said that Mumindzhanov and his family own several real estate properties in Moscow and the Voronezh region valued at over 120 million rubles, adding that "the legality of these acquisitions is currently under review."

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Law enforcement officials did not specify when exactly they arrested Mumindzhanov but said they are awaiting a court ruling to decide the terms of his pre-trial custody.

Mumindzhanov is the latest high-ranking military official to be arrested on corruption charges this year, as part of what many observers see as a wider purge within the Russian Defense Ministry.

The wave of arrests began in April with the detention of former Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov, who was seen as an ally of former Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. In May, Shoigu was replaced with Kremlin economist Andrei Belousov and now serves as the head of Russia's Security Council.

Earlier this year, President Vladimir Putin formed the Leningrad Military District, which had existed before it was merged with the Moscow Military District in 2010 to create the now-defunct Western Military District.

The recent reorganization was part of broader reforms planned by Russia's military leadership in response to Finland and Sweden joining NATO. Some military analysts believe Russia recreated the Leningrad and Moscow military districts to prepare for a potential conflict with NATO.

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