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Police Arrest Kursk Region Official on Bribery Charges, Governor Says

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Workers repair a roof damaged in a Ukrainian military strike in Kursk. **Tatyana Simonenkova / TASS**

Russian law enforcement authorities arrested an official in the southwestern Kursk region on suspicion of corruption, the regional governor announced Monday.

"Olga Viktorovna Minakova, deputy head of the Kursk region's housing renovation fund, was arrested last week on charges of facilitating the transfer of a bribe," Acting Kursk region Governor Alexander Khinshtein said during a government meeting.

According to the state-run news agency TASS, Khinshtein said Minakova was relieved of her duties. The Kursk region's housing renovation fund listed Minakova as the head of its administrative and legal support department.

Khinshtein provided no further details about Minakova's arrest and the regional branch of Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, did not report any arrests on corruption charges last week, as it usually does in similar criminal cases.

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Minakova's arrest came a week after Khinshtein's predecessor Alexei Smirnov was charged with fraud. Smirnov's former deputy was also arrested on the same charges.

Smirnov, who briefly served as acting Kursk region governor before being replaced by Khinshtein in December, was accused of embezzling 1 billion rubles ($12.17 million) from public funds that were meant to be used for defense fortifications along the border with Ukraine.

Several months into Smirnov's tenure, Ukrainian forces launched a surprise incursion into the Kursk region. Russia's Defense Ministry said it fully beat back the Ukrainian offensive over the weekend.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky claimed Sunday that his army was still fighting in parts of the border region.

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