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New Details Emerge in Bribery Case Against Rusagro Founder

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Vadim Moshkovich. **Yuri Kochetkov / EPA / TASS**

New details have been revealed in the ongoing criminal investigation against Vadim Moshkovich, business daily Kommersant reported Sunday.

Moshkovich, the founder of agricultural giant Rusagro, was arrested in late March on charges of large-scale fraud and abuse of office.

On May 20, investigators launched a new case against Moshkovich, although the details of the case were not initially published.

According to Kommersant, the case alleges that Moshkovich gave Sergei Ivanov, then former deputy governor of the Tambov region, a German-made Blaser R8 hunting carbine valued at 2.6 million rubles ($33,000) in 2019.

The rifle was reportedly given to Ivanov in exchange for what investigators called "general patronage."

At the time, Moshkovich owned Tambov Bacon, one of the region's largest enterprises, and allegedly profited from Ivanov's political influence in Tambov.

Moshkovich could face up to 15 years in prison for large-scale bribery if found guilty in the new case. Both Moshkovich and Ivanov have denied any wrongdoing.

The Rusagro founder was previously arrested for defrauding businessman Vladislav Burov in the acquisition of his holding company, Solnechnye Produkty, in 2018.

Moshkovich allegedly failed to deliver on investments promised in the deal, with damages estimated at 48 billion rubles ($610 million).

In a related case, the Russian subsidiary of Syngenta AG, now under the ownership of China's Sinochem Holdings, filed a civil lawsuit seeking nearly 1 billion rubles ($12.7 million) against Moshkovich.

At the time of the 2018 transaction, Syngenta was among the creditors of Solnechnye Produkty.

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