The Moscow Times
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Former Ryazan Region Governor Charged With Taking $3.5M in Bribes

January 14, 2026



Nikolai Lyubimov. **Uxare (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

The former governor of the central Ryazan region has been charged with taking millions of rubles in bribes, the head of Russia's Investigative Committee told state media Wednesday.

Nikolai Lyubimov, a prominent member of the ruling United Russia party, served as governor from 2017 to 2022. He was later appointed as a senator from the Ryazan region in Russia's upper-house Federation Council.

Lyubimov stepped down as senator in December 2024 shortly before a Moscow court placed him in pre-trial detention on accusations of corruption.

However, the exact details of the charges against the ex-governor were only revealed on Wednesday, when Investigative Committee chief Alexander Bastrykin said Lyubimov allegedly took a bribe of 252 million rubles ($3.2 million) in exchange for a deputy gubernatorial appointment and "general patronage" during his time in office.

“Separate bribes, totalling 12 million and 8 million rubles, were given [to Lyubimov] for assistance in securing state contracts for the supply of medical equipment,” Bastrykin told the state-run news agency TASS.

Lyubimov faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted of the charges. It was not immediately clear if he pleaded guilty.

In July 2023, Russian law enforcement authorities arrested Lyubimov’s former deputy Igor Grekov and former Ryazan region Senator Irina Petina.

Grekov was sentenced to 17 years in maximum-security prison in May 2025 on bribery and fraud charges. Petina is still awaiting trial on similar charges.

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