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# Russian Army General Arrested on Fraud Charges – RBC

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**Moskva News Agency**

A Russian general has been arrested and placed in pre-trial detention on fraud charges, part of a sprawling investigation into the extortion of soldiers, the RBC news outlet reported Friday, citing sources familiar with the matter.

Major General Alexander Dembitsky headed a recently created army corps within the Leningrad Military District. Legally attached to his unit was Yastreb, a small private mercenary group.

It remains unclear when Dembitsky was discharged from the military. Russian investigators have not commented publicly on the case.

According to RBC, Yastreb's founder, Alexei Marushchenko, testified against Dembitsky as part of a plea deal in a separate criminal probe.

Marushchenko faces multiple charges, including murder, weapons trafficking, large-scale

fraud, extortion, kidnapping and abuse of power.

At least 10 people are being prosecuted for crimes tied to Yastreb, sources told RBC.

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The case centers on allegations that the co-conspirators deceived 89 recruits into signing up with Yastreb and subsequently extorted more than 8.8 million rubles ($114,000) from them.

Investigators reportedly allege that at least one victim was handcuffed and beaten for several days until he agreed to transfer 500,000 rubles.

In another incident, suspects allegedly kidnapped a war correspondent who was investigating Yastreb and demanded a 1-million-ruble ransom from his wife.

Dembitsky, who is reportedly being held at Moscow's Lefortovo detention center, denies the allegations.

An appeal against Dembitsky's detention is expected to be reviewed by a higher military court, though a date has not been set. The broader investigation was opened in February 2025, and authorities have since questioned more than 800 witnesses, RBC reported.

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