

Top Cop Says 94 Police Chiefs Fired as Part of 'Hard' Reform

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The Interior Ministry is pushing ahead with re-evaluation tests that have led to the ouster of 94 police chiefs and will examine 900,000 lower-ranking officers by August, Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev said Wednesday.

Nurgaliyev, reporting about the progress of an ongoing police reform to the State Duma, admitted that the process was slow and painful. But he dismissed a complaint from a Communist deputy that the reform had stalled.

"If you only knew how hard it is to re-evaluate police chiefs, some of whom have held their posts in the regions for five to 10 years," Nurgaliyev said, Interfax reported.

The re-evaluation commission — which includes officials from the Federal Financial Monitoring Service, the Prosecutor General's Office and the Federal Security Service — has approved 167 of the 250 senior police officials examined so far for reappointment, he said.

There were "serious problems" with some of those who were dismissed, and several owned real estate abroad, Nurgaliyev said. He named no names and did not say whether any criminal cases had been opened.

The entire 1.2 million-member police force has to pass the re-evaluation as part of the reform, and 200,000 are to be laid off. The deadline for the re-evaluations was set for June but then postponed to August last week by President Dmitry Medvedev, who said the Interior Ministry will not finish in time.

Nurgaliyev said tax crime divisions have seen the biggest layoffs, with 25 percent of officers flunking their re-evaluations, Itar-Tass [reported](#). The best results were shown by criminal investigation departments, where less than 6 percent of employees have lost their jobs.

Nurgaliyev did not elaborate on what tests the dismissed policemen had failed to pass. But he said about one-third of applicants for police jobs in the past have been denied employment for hiding "compromising information" during job interviews.

Last year, 25 percent of applicants were rejected for alcohol or drug abuse, he added.

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