

Chief Military Doctor Held for Graft

June 02, 2011

The  **Moscow Times**

The head of the Defense Ministry's medical department pleaded guilty to accepting large kickbacks from medical equipment makers, the Investigative Committee said Thursday, Rapsi judicial news agency reported.

Alexander Belevitinov is accused of accepting 4.7 million rubles (\$168,000) last year in exchange for authorizing the purchase of unspecified medical equipment worth 120 million rubles from the Moscow-based firm Dina International at grossly inflated prices, investigators said.

Tapped phone conversations between Belevitinov and his subordinate Alexei Nikitin showed that they had also been plotting to kill ex-Deputy Health and Social Development Minister Roman Vilkin, who was the middleman in the case, to prevent him from testifying against them, the report said, adding that the plan was to kill Vilkin when he underwent medical treatment.

Belevitinov and Nikitin were detained and could face up to 12 years in jail on graft charges, Rapsi said.

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