

Police Tests Over, Only 21 Generals Flunk Out

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Only 21 police generals have flunked re-evaluation tests, which wrapped up Monday, despite earlier reports that 143 had been fired as part of an ongoing police reform, Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev said.

In total, 327 generals have cleared the tests, Nurgaliyev told Russia-24 television.

Those who failed did so over problems with their income declarations or “matters related to discrediting the law enforcement system,” Nurgaliyev said, Interfax [reported](#). He did not elaborate.

Last week, Kremlin chief of staff Sergei Naryshkin reported to President Dmitry Medvedev that 143 of the country’s 340 police generals had failed the tests. Nurgaliyev did not comment on the discrepancy.

Naryshkin, who chaired a presidential re-evaluation commission that examined police top brass, said at the time that most were dismissed for reaching the mandatory retirement age, not misconduct.

The Kremlin-backed reform of the police force has been ongoing since March. It includes trimming the work force by 200,000 officers through mandatory re-evaluation tests and introducing a new social security system for the remaining 1 million officers, whose salaries are to triple starting next year.

In total, some 227,000 policemen have been dismissed since the start of the reform, Medvedev said last week. Nurgaliyev said Monday that 875,000 officers passed the re-evaluation.

The re-evaluation tests, which were not public, were graded by internal commissions that base their decisions mainly on an officer's service record. No clear guidelines for the tests were released, fueling accusations that the process might be biased.

Also on Monday, Medvedev signed into law a bill on public councils at the Interior Ministry — stepping up public control over police.

Some officers who failed the re-evaluations were told that the reason was “discrediting information,” without further explanation, said Anton Tsvetkov, who sits on the public council for the Moscow police.

“They were never even told what that meant,” Tsvetkov told Russian News Service radio Monday.

A senior State Duma deputy with United Russia said some dismissals were made “for the sake of firings,” with no reason other than to meet the Kremlin-ordered quotas for layoffs.

At the same time, no inquiries were opened into those fired for alleged wrongdoing, even though “they understood why they were fired,” said the lawmaker, himself a retired policeman who asked not to be identified to avoid a backlash from party officials.

“There is a certain skepticism about the reform,” he said. “The process should have been more open to public: Petrov was laid off because he reached a certain age, and Savelyev was fired because he was suspected of wrongdoing.”

Nurgaliyev, who has served as the country's top cop since 2004, said last month that he was shocked by some of the things that he had learned during the re-evaluation process, including that some officers owned property abroad or operated businesses parallel to their police work.

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