

Nurgaliyev Says Cops Don't Take Bribes

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Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev has declared victory in the war on corruption in his ministry.

"In the past, there was bribe taking, abuse of power, corruption. ... There's none of that now," he said at a meeting with Kostroma police officials Thursday, RIA-Novosti reported.

Nurgaliyev's comments come about a month after the last officers were officially re-accredited as part of a large anti-corruption campaign that included the renaming of the police force from the Soviet-era "militia" to the pre-revolutionary "police."

About 183,000 officers have been fired since the re-accreditations began in March, Lenta.ru reported. Nurgaliyev said the force has retained "only the best of the best." By 2012, the ministry plans to have axed 22 percent of its staff, lowering the total number to 1,106,472.

Nurgaliyev, who is currently touring the regions to evaluate the results of the re-accreditation, said new hires would have to have a legal education, while existing officers will have to take special courses.

The Interior Ministry, which oversees the traffic police and other domestic security agencies, is widely considered to be among the more corrupt ministries.

Nurgaliyev has served as interior minister since 2004.

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