

Russian Minister Ulyukayev Pushed for Rosneft Privatization Before Corruption Arrest - Reports

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Alexei Ulyukayev **Ivan Sekretarev / AP**

Former Economy Minister Alexei Ulyukayev had argued for relinquishing state control of Russia's flagship oil company Rosneft before his arrest earlier this month, the Reuters news agency [reported](#) Tuesday.

Ulyukayev allegedly suggested that the state could decrease its share to less than 50 percent to contacts in the government, two unnamed sources told the agency.

The loyalty of fear: [Read our in-depth coverage of Ulyukayev's arrest.](#)

State-owned holding company Rosneftegaz currently holds a 69.5 percent stake in Rosneft. According to the Kremlin's privatization plan, Rosneftegaz is expected to sell a 19.5 percent share in the company next year, decreasing its stake to 50 percent. Ulyukayev's reported plan

would have further reduced the government's role in the company.

Ulyukayev was arrested on Nov. 15 for allegedly extorting a \$2 million bribe from Rosneft in return for approving its plans to purchase the Bashneft oil company. The purchase was eventually carried out in October. Ulyukayev has denied all charges.

A very public privatization: [How state-controlled Rosneft "privatized" state-owned Bashneft.](#)

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