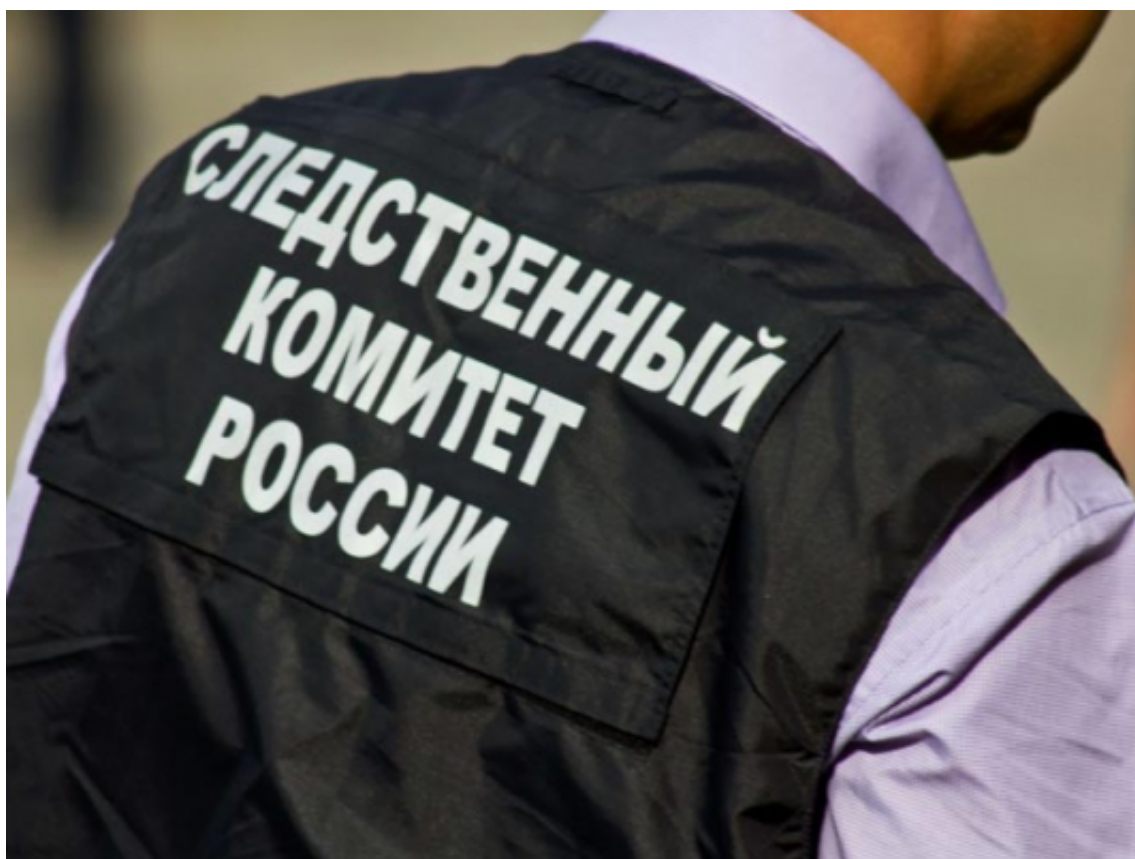

Former Officer of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia and a number of his accomplices will stand trial, accused of embezzlement of budget funds



The Main Investigation Directorate of the Investigative Committee of Russia finalized the criminal investigation against Mr. Evgeny Nikitenko, a former Officer of the Main Directorate for Road Safety of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Russia, Mr. Sergey Kuzmenko, the founder and Mr. Denis Davydov, the General Director of a Subcontractor engaged in the conversion of vehicles, and against Mrs. Elena Yakovleva - a representative of one of the largest European Auto Concerns. They are accused of committing a crime prescribed in Part 4, Article 159 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (large-scale fraud committed using one's official position).

The investigation detected that in 2019, Mr. Sergey Kuzmenko, as the founder of an organization that has the exclusive right to convert civilian vehicles into patrol cars, became aware of the

allocation of significant budgetary funds by the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs for the implementation of the national project "Safe and high-quality roads", which provides for updating fleet of patrol cars of the State traffic inspectorate, among other things.

Mr. Kuzmenko, Mr. Davydov, Mr. Nikitenko and Ms. Yakovleva united into an organized group, implemented a complex multi-stage scheme of embezzlement of budgetary funds with the involvement of leading representatives of the automotive business in Russia, where the leaders and representatives were not aware of the criminal intentions of the above persons.

The fraudulent actions of members of the organized group resulted in the theft of more than 1.1 billion rubles in funds under nine government contracts as a result of the deliberate overpricing and violation of the principles of fair price competition.

During the preliminary investigation, the defendants pleaded not guilty. The court imposed restraint as house arrest on them. In order to compensate for the damage caused by the crime, the investigation confiscated the property of the accused and the organizations controlled by them in the amount of full damage caused.

A sufficient evidence base has been collected by the investigation. The criminal case with the approved indictment will soon be sent to the Zamoskvoretsky District Court of Moscow for consideration on the merits.

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