# Putin oversees extensive military purge with high-ranking officials arrested on corruption charges



In a significant shake-up within Russia's military leadership, President Vladimir Putin has overseen the arrest of several high-ranking officials on corruption charges in recent weeks. This series of detentions marks Putin's most extensive military purge since the invasion of Ukraine in early 2022.

The latest to be detained is Lt. Gen. Vadim Shamarin, deputy chief of the army’s general staff and head of the Main Communications Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces, accused of large-scale bribery. His arrest follows that of other senior officials, including Deputy Defence Minister Timur Ivanov and Lt. Gen. Yuri Kuznetsov, head of the ministry’s personnel directorate, on similar charges. Additionally, Maj. Gen. Ivan Popov, former commander of Russia’s 58th army, was arrested on suspicion of fraud.

This wave of arrests coincides with the recent replacement of Sergei Shoigu, who served as Defence Minister for 12 years, by technocrat Andrei Belousov. The move appears aimed at boosting efficiency and addressing corruption within the Russian military, which has been under scrutiny for mismanagement and incompetence.

The detentions reflect badly on the military leadership that has been directing the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, highlighting potential systemic issues. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitri S. Peskov has downplayed the notion of a purge, framing the actions as deliberate anti-corruption efforts.

These developments follow public criticisms and calls for accountability within the military, notably from Yevgeny Prigozhin of the Wagner mercenary group, who accused senior military figures of corruption and incompetence before his death last year.

It remains unclear how extensive this purge will be and how many more senior figures may be implicated.