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Ukraine's corruption crackdown: Deputy energy minister arrested in half-million dollar scheme

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) claims to have arrested a senior energy official who allegedly demanded bribes for transferring critical mining equipment from war-torn Donetsk to western Ukraine.



BY VIRA KRAVCHUK · 12/08/2024 · 2 MINUTE READ



A deputy minister of energy and his 3 accomplices detained on charges of accepting a \$500,000 bribe.
Source: Ukraine's Security Service (SBU)

Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) and National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) showed a video arresting a deputy minister of energy on charges of accepting a \$500,000 bribe, exposing a large-scale corruption scheme.

Ukraine **ranked** 104th out of 180 countries in the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index by Transparency International, marking a significant improvement by gaining 11 points since 2013, including a three-point increase in 2023 alone.

While SBU and NABU do not name the deputy minister, sources of Ukrainian news agencies **Ukrainska Pravda** and **Hromadske** confirm that they are talking about Oleksandr Kheil.

Right after the corruption scandal went

public, the Ukrainian government **announced** the dismissal of Oleksandr Kheil from the post of Deputy Minister of Energy of Ukraine.

According to the **SBU**, the deputy minister was detained in Kyiv after accepting part of the bribe. The official allegedly promised to facilitate the transfer of valuable mining equipment from frontline areas in Donetsk Oblast to state-owned coal enterprises in the Lviv-Volyn basin in western Ukraine.

Oleksandr Kheil is accused of demanding money for the removal of this mining equipment, which belongs to a state coal company located in Pokrovsk, one of the hottest directions of the eastern front.

Google translate. Source: SBU

The investigation reveals that industry representatives approached the deputy minister in spring 2024, seeking permission to evacuate and repurpose the equipment. Instead of following proper procedures, the official allegedly saw an opportunity for personal gain.

The SBU states that the deputy minister enlisted three accomplices: a private energy trader, the head of an energy company from Mykolaiv Oblast, and a mining enterprise director from Donetsk Oblast.

The group allegedly arranged for the bribe to be paid in five installments of \$100,000 each.

Source: SBU

Source: SBU

Law enforcement intercepted the operation after the third payment, detaining all four suspects "red-handed."

The suspects were formally notified of suspicion, and if convicted, they face up to 12 years in prison and asset confiscation.

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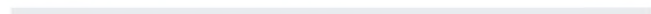
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BY VIRA KRAVCHUK



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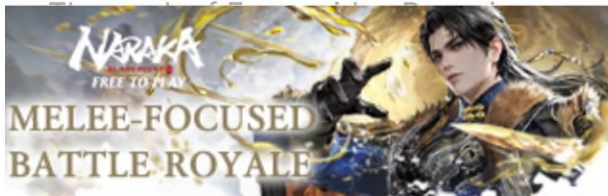
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