

Police investigate suspected bribery in connection with the renting of PRH premises

HARRI NYKÄNEN

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The Helsinki Criminal Police have opened a preliminary investigation into whether Martti Enäjärvi, Director General of the Patent and Registration Office (PRH), is guilty of bribery as a public official in connection with the renting of PRH premises. The lease in question was for more than FIM 250 million with Merita Kiinteistöt Oy.

Mr Enäjärvi led the lease negotiations on behalf of the PRH and was advised by his friend Martti Jokinen. Merita Kiinteistöt paid Mr Jokinen's company a sum of FIM 240,000 for the work. Jokinen did not declare the income to the tax authorities. The Uusimaa Tax Office has carried out a tax audit on the matter, which was completed last week.

The Director General denies the allegations

The police have been waiting for the tax audit to be completed, but have already made preliminary inquiries. According to Jouko Salo, head of the Economic and Property Crime Unit, the actual preliminary investigation has now also started. The aim is to establish whether Mr Enäjärvi has committed the offence of taking bribes as a public official under Chapter 40 of the Criminal Code.

The Patent and Registration Office started negotiating the lease of the new premises at the end of 1994. Initially, the negotiations were conducted on behalf of the PRH by Deputy Director Jarmo Etelävuori. The other party was Huoneistomarkkinointi Oy. Negotiations were held for two properties.

In February 1995, Mr Martti Jokinen, on behalf of his company Tanja Trading Oy, concluded an agreement with SYP to lease Arkadiankatu 6 to PRH.

Shortly afterwards, the two parties to the lease negotiations changed. Apartment Marketing was replaced by Merita Real Estate and PRH's Director General Enäjärvi was in charge of the negotiations. The preliminary agreement was signed in spring 1995 and the actual contract in late summer.

Mr Enäjärvi has always denied any knowledge of the agreement between Merita Real Estate and Martti Jokinen. Mr Enäjärvi has said that Mr Jokinen was involved as a kind of "facilitator". Mr Enäjärvi has stressed that the PRH has not paid Mr Jokinen anything.

Martti Jokinen is a friend of Enäjärvi from twenty years ago.

The starting point of the preliminary investigation is that a public official or public employee who approves a gift or other benefit to another person is guilty of bribery. Thus, it is not necessary that the official accepts the gift or benefit himself.

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<https://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/art-2000003763972.html>