The Moscow Times
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Magnitsky Prosecutor Rejects Graft Probe

August 04, 2010



The prosecutor who authorized the arrest of Hermitage Capital lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died in pretrial detention last year, has rejected a request for an investigation into lavish spending by the investigator who jailed Magnitsky.

On July 2, public activist Alexei Navalny appealed to the Prosecutor General's Office to open an investigation into Artyom Kuznetsov, the investigator who worked on Magnitsky's case, on the grounds that his family spent $3 million in 2007 and 2008 — a sum significantly higher than his salary.

But Navalny said in a statement Wednesday that he had received a letter from prosecutors saying his request was denied because it "contains no specific data on possible crimes." The letter also said the request had been forwarded to the Interior Ministry.

The letter was signed by prosecutor Alexander Burov, who supported investigators' appeals to keep Magnitsky in custody and ignored his complaints about mistreatment and refusal of medical help.

Navalny said he would file another appeal for an investigation.

Magnitsky died in November after, his supporters say, receiving inadequate medical care for his illnesses. He was jailed on tax charges after he accused Interior Ministry investigators of embezzling state funds.

In the face of international outrage, President Dmitry Medvedev called for a thorough investigation into Magnitsky's death and fired 20 prison officials. No one has been charged in the death.

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