

Ink-Filled Condoms Tossed at Mitvol's Office

By [Alexander Bratersky](#)

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Unknown assailants on Monday threw ink-filled condoms at the office of Oleg Mitvol, prefect of Moscow's Northern Administrative District, Mitvol said.

He said the attackers also glued leaflets to the building, reading, "Patient Mitvol, we will calm you down." The leaflets were signed by Nashi, the pro-Kremlin youth group that has been at loggerheads with Mitvol in recent weeks, Mitvol said by telephone.

"This is an attempt to remove me from office," said Mitvol, who was appointed prefect in 2009 by then-Mayor Yury Luzhkov. He did not elaborate.

Mitvol said a complaint had been filed with police.

Nashi denied knowledge of the morning attack and accused Mitvol of staging the incident to boost his popularity, according to a statement posted on its web site.

The statement also asked the Prosecutor's General Office to investigate the “vandalizing” of Nashi's former headquarters in the northern district. Mitvol evicted Nashi from the building several weeks ago, saying the space was needed to reopen a kindergarten.

After the eviction, Nashi accused Mitvol of closing his eyes to brothels in the district and hung a giant banner with his picture and their telephone numbers on an apartment building that it said housed a brothel.

Mitvol, meanwhile, said the condom incident might also be connected to a verbal attack on him Friday by State Duma Deputy Pavel Tarakanov, a former Nashi activist. Tarakanov asked Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika to check the mental state of the prefect, noting that Mitvol said in August that Luzhkov supported an alternative route for a Moscow–St. Petersburg highway to preserve the Khimki forest but Luzhkov later contradicted him.

Mitvol, in turn, questioned the authenticity of Tarakanov's diploma in a Twitter post on Monday. Tarakanov, 28, says he received his doctorate in political science from the Chechen State University in 2003.

His spokeswoman said Monday that he would have no comment about the Mitvol affair.

Alexei Mukhin, a political analyst with the Center for Political Information, said he believed Nashi was behind the condom attack. “They are trying to take revenge on Mitvol after the ouster of his boss, Luzhkov,” Mukhin said.

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