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Khodorkovsky Charges Cut

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Prosecutors have slashed the amount of oil that former Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky is accused of stealing by one-third to 218 million tons, worth 824 billion rubles ($27 billion), citing "arithmetical errors," RIA-Novosti reported Monday.

Earlier charges put forward by investigators accused Khodorkovsky and business associate Platon Lebedev of stealing 350 million tons of oil worth more than 900 billion rubles from Yukos subsidiaries from 1998 to 2003.

Prosecutors also said Monday that some counts of purported oil theft cannot be proven in court for lack of paperwork. Neither the defendants, who already are jailed on similar charges, nor their lawyers commented on the new developments, but the defense has dismissed the case altogether as fabricated on political grounds.

(MT)

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