

Kashin Links Beating to His Reporting on Khimki Forest

November 17, 2010

The  Moscow Times

Kommersant reporter Oleg Kashin has told investigators from his hospital bed that a brutal beating that broke his jaw, leg and fingers was connected to his reporting about the Khimki forest, Lifenews.ru reported Wednesday.

Kashin also has provided investigators with a detailed description of one of the two attackers who pounced on him near his apartment building in central Moscow early in the morning of Nov. 6, the report said.

Leaked video surveillance footage of the attack shows one assailant pummeling him with a metal bar while the other holds him down.

Kashin told investigators earlier this week that the attacker who beat him resembled a football fan. Football toughs reportedly have been recruited by pro-Kremlin youth groups in the past to attack opposition activists.

Kashin, who is a prolific blogger, has written about public opposition to federal plans to

construct a Moscow–St. Petersburg highway by razing part of the Khimki forest just north of Moscow. The project is backed by Khimki's mayor, who has denied any role in the attack on Kashin.

An environmentalist who opposed the razing of the forest was badly beaten just days before the Kashin attack.

Kashin, who underwent multiple operations after the attack and spent the last week breathing with the aid of an artificial ventilator, is now able to sit up and is expected to start moving around with crutches soon, his doctor Vitaly Frantsuzov told Lifenews.ru.

President Dmitry Medvedev, who promised on Nov. 8 to punish those responsible for the attack, even if they were senior officials, refused to comment on the ongoing investigation Wednesday, calling it a matter for investigators.

"Now it is not a matter for the president of Russia but a matter for law enforcement. Let them work," Medvedev said at a news conference with visiting Slovenian President Danilo Turk.

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