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# YouTube Whistle-Blower Gets 18 Months

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A former Komi prosecutor who made a YouTube appeal to President Dmitry Medvedev over "fabricated" charges that resulted in two people getting life prison terms was sentenced to 18 months in jail Friday after being convicted of deliberately giving false evidence.

The Syktyvkar City Court convicted Grigory Chekalin, a former deputy prosecutor for the Komi republic, of falsely accusing an unidentified local police investigator of fabricating charges against two young men who were convicted of burning down a local shopping center, the Investigative Committee said in a statement.

Chekalin was convicted of giving false testimony in December 2007 and March 2009 when he was questioned as a witness in the arson case.

He reiterated his claims against the investigator in a November 2009 appeal to Medvedev on YouTube, asking him to investigate the charges.

In late October, Nikolai Piyukov, a former head of the Federal Security Service's branch for the Komi republic who examined Chekalin's claims, told the closed-door trial that they were in part true, news portal Bnkomi.ru reported, citing Chekalin.

Piyukov's subordinates were not able to examine all of Chekalin's claims because they were forced to stop their inquiry under pressure from regional prosecutors, Piyukov told the trial.

In late September, State Duma Deputy Alexander Kulikov, a Communist, asked Prosecutor General Yury Chaika to check Chekalin's claims. Chaika's office has not publicly commented on Kulikov's request.

Chekalin made his YouTube appeal to support a YouTube video posted in November 2009 by former Komi police officer Mikhail Yevseyev, who also called the arson charges false.

Yevseyev was arrested in Moscow in late August and sent to the Komi republic to face charges of assault and abuse of office connected to his service in Chechnya in 2004.

Yevseyev is also accused of disclosing classified information, but details of that charge have not been made public.

Two men were handed life sentences in July 2009 over the 2005 fire that killed 25 people and injured 11.

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