

Khodorkovsky Could Face 3rd Round of Charges, Report Says

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Authorities are pursuing more evidence against associates of Mikhail Khodorkovsky that might produce a third round of charges against the jailed former Yukos CEO, Komsomolskaya Pravda reported Monday, citing a prosecutor.

Jailed since 2003, Russia's once richest man was convicted of a second set of offenses on Dec. 30 that added six years to his current sentence, meaning he won't be freed until 2017.

Asked whether Khodorkovsky might face yet more charges, the unidentified prosecutor told Komsomolskaya Pravda that further evidence might come to light against him and his jailed partner Platon Lebedev.

"Right now, 18 of Khodorkovsky and Lebedev's colleagues are on the wanted list," the prosecutor said. "If in the course of our search for them new evidence of crimes is uncovered, the investigating agencies will be required to announce additional charges and send the case to court."

Khodorkovsky and his supporters say his legal problems are Kremlin punishment for his political and commercial ambitions, an allegation denied by the Kremlin and prosecutors.

Kremlin economic aide Arkady Dvorkovich expressed fear last week that Khodorkovsky's second conviction might hurt investment at a time when the government is keen to attract foreign money into the country's energy, banking and infrastructure assets.

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