

Under Pressure, Lebedev Skips London

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Prominent entrepreneur Alexander Lebedev refused to travel to a business forum in London this week, saying he cannot leave his business unattended because of harassment by corrupt law enforcement officials.

Lebedev said he is not attending the Russian Business Week in London because his National Reserve Bank, airlines and agricultural enterprises have been facing constant pressure in the last four months.

Attacks include fabricated cases, false complaints and media slander, the tycoon said on his blog, calling the attackers "werewolves in epaulettes," a term popularized during a mid-2000s anti-corruption campaign.

Lebedev, who also owns the liberal Novaya Gazeta, did not identify any officials involved in the conflict, but said he wrote a letter to President Dmitry Medvedev last week, asking him to order the Investigative Committee and the Audit Chamber to look into the situation, Interfax reported.

He said that this is "a bad time for him to advertise the Russian business climate" and that he

feared he may not be allowed back into the country if he travels to Britain.

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