

Yanukovych Under Fire From EU and Russia

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Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, who has made improved ties with Russia and the European Union a priority, is coming under fire from both sides.

President Dmitry Medvedev on Wednesday accused Ukraine of trying to sponge off Moscow by attempting to secure a cut in gas prices.

“It is very sad, it is sponging,” Medvedev said in Sochi, Interfax reported.

Medvedev said that for Ukraine to obtain a discount, it must either join a customs union with Kazakhstan and Belarus or sell its pipeline grid to Russia.

Ukrainian officials made no immediate comment about Medvedev’s remarks.

But Yanukovych, who has insisted that Ukraine’s future is in Europe while striving to repair ties with Moscow, has gotten a stern warning from Poland, which holds the EU’s rotating six-month presidency.

President Bronislaw Komorowski told Yanukovych last Tuesday that the trial of Ukrainian opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko might slow Kiev's push for closer EU ties. "Obstacles have appeared [on Kiev's path to European integration], and one of these is undoubtedly the trial of Mrs. Yulia Tymoshenko, which in Europe, in many countries, is seen as a trial of a political, not a criminal, nature that harms the image of Ukraine," Komorowski told Yanukovych, who was on a one-day visit to Poland. Tymoshenko is facing charges that she abused her position as prime minister in 2009 by signing a gas deal with Russia. ☒

(Reuters, MT)

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