The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Police Tear Down Pro-Tymoshenko Camp

September 05, 2011



KIEV — Police in riot gear torn down a protest encampment in the center of Kiev on Monday, scuffling with supporters of jailed former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

Tensions are growing as Tymoshenko's abuse-of-office trial draws to a close, and a verdict is expected later this month. She was arrested in August on charges of contempt of court during a trial that she has described as politically motivated.

Tymoshenko's supporters have been holding protests at an encampment outside Kiev's Pechersk court, where the trial is taking place. Demonstrators erected five new tents across the street from the courthouse Monday, prompting police to take action.

Police moved in and tore down the tents, and detained several demonstrators who tried to resist. They would not comment on the operation.

Prosecutors say the 50-year-old opposition leader abused her powers by signing a natural gas import contract with Russia in 2009 that they say was disadvantageous to Ukraine.

Tymoshenko has criticized the trial as an attempt by President Viktor Yanukovych to bar her from elections. Yanukovych narrowly defeated Tymoshenko in presidential elections held last year.

The judge overseeing her trial ordered Tymoshenko's arrest for contempt of court early last month after she repeatedly interrupted proceedings and refused to rise when addressing the court. Lawyers for Tymoshenko said Monday that they have filed 17 separate requests for her to be released from custody.

The United States and the European Union have condemned court cases against Tymoshenko and several of her top allies as selective prosecution of the government's political opponents.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2011/09/05/police-tear-down-pro-tymoshenko-camp-a9354