

Rosneft Head Said to Be Out of Favor

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The president of Rosneft could soon be replaced, industry sources said Friday, little more than a week after the state company signed an Arctic offshore development deal with ExxonMobil.

A Rosneft spokesman said Eduard Khudainatov was continuing work and dismissed what he called rumors.

Rosneft has been under pressure since the collapse of an earlier Arctic deal with BP, which was blocked by minority shareholders in the British oil company's Russian joint venture TNK-BP.

The sources did not say whether Khudainatov's potential dismissal was linked to the failure of the BP deal, but said he had fallen out of favor with Deputy Prime Minister Sechin.

"Igor Ivanovich [Sechin] is dissatisfied with Khudainatov's actions," one of the sources said.

Another source close to Rosneft said Khudainatov's removal from the post, which he took up a year ago, could be discussed at a board meeting next week.

Khudainatov replaced Rosneft's long-serving chief, Sergei Bogdanchikov, last September. Bogdanchikov's contract was not extended after he lost the confidence of Sechin.

"People in Rosneft are discussing the possibility of his departure," the source said. "He was elected as a temporary person. ... But the only problem is that there is no obvious candidate to replace him."

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