

Editor Faces Extremism Charges

By [Natalya Krainova](#)

January 19, 2012

The  Moscow Times

Investigators in the Urals Federal District said Thursday that they had filed extremism charges against the editor of an independent local newspaper after he published articles critical of the police.

A criminal case was opened in the city of Tyumen against Vladimir Yefimov, editor of the [Vechernyaya Tyumen](#) weekly, accusing him of inciting hatred against law enforcement officers in two articles from 2008, the investigators said in a [statement](#) on their web site.

In the articles, Yefimov allegedly disparaged officers by using vulgar expressions like "hit the bottle" in a piece about police drinking too much, "put the claw on" to describe arrests and calling it "an outrage" for police to abuse their power, Interfax reported, citing authorities.

Yefimov, 49, said the charges were aimed simply at stopping him from doing his work.

"[It is] pressure put on me personally in order to prevent me from fulfilling my legal,

journalistic activities to freely receive and distribute information," he told The Moscow Times by e-mail.

He refused to speculate who might be pressuring him or why. He also declined to discuss who his newspaper had been critical about. He faces up to five years in prison if convicted.

Dmitry Kirillov, a prominent regional lawyer, told The Moscow Times that Yefimov was probably "being punished for his web site, Tapki.org, where he criticized "multiple violations" during the Dec. 4 State Duma elections.

"Yefimov is a harsh and flamboyant man when he defends human rights, and they are nagging at him for that," Kirillov said.

The criminal case was first opened in April 2010 and closed over a lack of evidence in October 2011, but has now been reopened by the same investigator.

Yevgeny Kazakov, spokesman for the regional investigators, told The Moscow Times that the investigators' "superiors studied the case, discovered evidence of a crime and decided to rescind the ruling" to close the criminal case.

Yefimov started Vechernyaya Tyumen in 1999. It has a circulation of almost 10,000 copies in the city of about 590,000 residents.

Interestingly, the newspaper's web site is registered with an American domain — .us — that is largely used by U.S. government sites. He said it was simply a coincidence.

Yefimov also founded and heads the [Russian Center of Regional Press](#), which has produced several other publications, some of which have been discontinued like Yevreyskaya Pravda, or Jewish Truth.

Original url: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/01/19/editor-faces-extremism-charges-a12002>