

TV Attorney's Law Degree Not Real

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A lawyer on a popular televised court show has become embroiled in a bribery scandal that exposed him as a fraudulent lawyer and will put him behind bars for two years.

Co-host of popular TV show "The Court Is in Session" Vladimir Oreshnikov was convicted of soliciting a 500,000 ruble (\$17,000) bribe from a client in exchange for halting a criminal investigation against him, Kommersant reported Monday.

The client, businessman Sergei Slobodnyak, also accused the TV host of having earlier asked for 20 million rubles in exchange for having the charges against him dropped. Oreshnikov's demand for an additional 500,000 rubles came after Slobodnyak had paid the larger sum, the businessman said. The second request for money prompted the businessman to go to the authorities, who set up a sting operation to catch Oreshnikov taking the 500,000 rubles.

He admitted guilt and was convicted to two years in prison for fraud.

Oreshnikov is well-known in law circles in the Moscow region and specializes in defending security service members.

After he was arrested, investigators discovered that Oreshnikov's law degree was a fake and that he had never in fact attended law school. He worked illegally as a lawyer for 12 years, and the cases he tried may be re-examined as a result.

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