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Left Front Not Found to Be Extremist

By The Moscow Times

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Moscow prosecutors released the results Tuesday of a check of the opposition group Left Front, saying they had found no grounds for calling it an extremist organization but had uncovered organizational and financing violations.

They said in a statement that the group's charter does not state its goals or the physical area in which it carries out its activities and that it lacks a procedure for determining its leadership. They also said the organization lacks information about how it is funded and what property it owns.

Left Front is a communist-leaning political group led by firebrand Sergei Udaltsov, one of the most prominent leaders and organizers of anti-Kremlin street protests over the last 11 months.

Udaltsov was charged by investigators late last month with plotting riots in a case stemming from footage in an exposO aired on state-controlled NTV television. He has denied the charges, calling them politically motivated.

Prosecutors also said in their statement that Left Front has been illegally raising funds for jailed opposition activists through a Yandex.Money account. They cited a law stipulating that only groups that are also legal entities are allowed to possess assets.

A notification of the violations was given to Udaltsov on Tuesday with a deadline to eliminate them by Jan. 28, prosecutors said.

Udaltsov wrote on his Twitter account that Left Front had no property, and he later told reporters that the prosecutors' allegations were not serious, RIA-Novosti reported.

He said that if his lawyers agreed with the prosecutors' statement, the violations would be eliminated, and that if not, he was ready to dispute any legal action against his group.

Udaltsov lawyer Mark Feigin told the news agency that because no signs of extremism were found, the checks into Left Front would cease.

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