

Environmentalism's Attacker Gets 4 Years

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The organizer of a brutal attack that left environmental activist Konstantin Fetisov in a coma was sentenced on Friday to four years in prison.

A Moscow region court ruled that Andrei Kashirin would serve his sentence in a maximum-security prison after he pleaded guilty to hiring a man to kill Fetisov in November 2010. Fetisov spent three months in a coma and was left severely disabled.

The man who attacked Fetisov with a baseball bat was found mentally unfit to stand trial and was sent to a psychiatric hospital.

Kashirin will be released in December 2014, taking into account the time he already has spent in custody, and will serve an additional year of house arrest.

Fetisov was part of a group fighting against the construction of a highway through the Khimki forest near Moscow. Several people with high-profile political connections reportedly stand to profit from the highway's construction, including Arkady Rotenberg, a billionaire who once

taught judo to President Vladimir Putin.

Road construction is widely acknowledged to be one of the most corrupt sectors of the Russian economy, with numerous opportunities for kickbacks. Developers pay kickbacks to win contracts, then skimp on materials and skim the profits, sharing some cash with corrupt officials, while bribing inspectors to look the other way.

Fetisov's wife, Marina Myagkova, told Interfax that she was more concerned with the other defendants in the case, particularly former Khimki municipal property department head, Andrei Chernyshev.

Chernyshev has also been accused of organizing the killing, but investigators have failed so far to name the person who ordered it. Three other defendants are also accused of playing various roles in the attack.

Pro-forest activists have frequently come under threat from criminals. Mikhail Beketov, a journalist who also campaigned against the highway, was left brain-damaged after an attack in 2008. A year later, a group of activists camping out in the forest were chased away by men with Nazi tattoos.

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