

'Sleeping Judge' Resigns After Video Expos

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A judge has resigned after a video apparently showed him asleep during a trial that ended with him sentencing the defendant to five years in a penal colony.

Critics of the Russian justice system, which has a notoriously high conviction rate, were outraged when the video purporting to show judge Yevgeny Makhno sleeping through a defense lawyer's speech in court was posted online in January.

"The Judges Qualification Panel accepted Makhno's resignation from his judge's post," regional judge and panel member Valentina Pozharskaya told RIA-Novosti.

The film, allegedly shot during a fraud trial last July in the far-eastern town of Blagoveshchensk, seems to show Makhno slumped in his chair fast asleep with his head cocked to one side.

The businessman sentenced to five years hard labor will have a new trial on Feb. 14 after an appeal was lodged over the "unjust" sentence, reports said.

Russia's justice system has been in the spotlight recently over several high-profile court cases including the trial of punk protest collective Pussy Riot.

The band's three members were sentenced to two years in prison on charges of hooliganism motivated by religious hatred after they performed an anti-Putin prayer in Moscow's main cathedral in 2012, which Russian and foreign commentators called excessive.

Makhno will eventually be able to return to his post provided he retakes his exams, Russian media said.

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