

Tymoshenko Starts Online Prison Diary

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Jailed former Ukrainian prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko has started an online diary, titled "Truth From Behind the Bars," published on the website of the Ukrainska Pravda newspaper.

Tymoshenko, who is currently serving a seven year sentence for exceeding her authority in signing a gas contract with Russia in 2009, now faces charges of murdering a local politician in 1996. She has been undergoing treatment in hospital for over a year while in custody.

In her diary, the first entries of which were published on May 15 and 16, Tymoshenko claims that the prison administration did not allow her to attend a Kiev court on Wednesday, where a witness in the murder investigation against her was to be questioned.

"The authorities were simply afraid that my presence in court during the questioning of witnesses would completely prove the unlawfulness of the case against me over the deputy's tragic death," she wrote.

In late January, prosecutor general Viktor Pshonka accused Tymoshenko and another former premier, Pavlo Lazarenko, of ordering the killing of Ukrainian businessman and lawmaker Yevhen Shcherban in November 1996. A Ukrainian parliamentary lawmaker who also headed Ukraine's Aton financial corporation, Shcherban was shot dead with his wife at Donetsk airport in eastern Ukraine.

The Prosecutor General's Office suspects Tymoshenko and Lazarenko of paying \$2.8 million for his murder. Tymoshenko has denied involvement in the Shcherban murder. If found guilty, she faces life imprisonment.

Tymoshenko and her supporters claim the investigations into her are part of a political witch-hunt by her rival, President Viktor Yanukovich, which he denies.

The European Union has said that closer ties between Kiev and the EU are conditional on fair treatment for Tymoshenko.

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