

Udaltsov Hit With New Charges

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Sergei Udaltsov

Investigators on Wednesday charged leftist opposition leader Sergei Udaltsov and his ally Leonid Razvozzhayev with staging "riots" at an authorized opposition rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad in Moscow last May.

In October, the two activists were charged with plotting the "riots," a term disputed by the opposition. In late April, a public inquiry held by human rights activists concluded that there were no riots at the May 6 rally, at which demonstrators clashed with police and hundreds of people were detained.

On Wednesday, the charges of plotting riots were presented to Udaltsov and Razvozzhayev in their "final version," and the new charges of staging riots were added, their lawyers said, Interfax reported.

Udaltsov, who is under house arrest in connection with the case, links the latest charges to his intention to run in the Sept. 8 Moscow mayoral election, his supporters said Sunday on Twitter. If convicted, even with a suspended sentence, Udaltsov would not be legally eligible to run in elections.

Razvozhayev, who has been in detention since October, was also charged Wednesday with illegally crossing Russia's border. That charge stems from allegations by [investigators](#) that Razvozhayev fled to Ukraine in October using his brother's passport.

In the past eight months, Razvozhayev was charged with two other crimes, including robbing a small businessman in the Far East of 500 fur hats in 1997, and with a deliberately false statement about an investigator when Razvozhayev accused the investigator of kidnapping him.

The robbery case was later closed because the statute of limitations had expired. The false statement case was returned to investigators for an extended [probe](#).

Udaltsov and Razvozhayev face up to ten years in prison if convicted on charges of plotting and staging riots. For illegally crossing the Russian border, Razvozhayev faces up to two years in prison.

On Tuesday, Moscow's Zamoskvoretsky District Court refused to close a criminal case against 12 people suspected of taking part in the clashes with police on Bolotnaya Ploshchad last May, Interfax reported.

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