

Navalny Says His Lawyer Status Has Been Scrubbed

December 04, 2013



Opposition politician Navalny, unable to practice law after having his status withdrawn by the Moscow Bar Association. **Denis Grishkin**

Opposition politician Alexei Navalny has been stripped of the right to practice law due to his criminal conviction earlier this year, a post on his LiveJournal blog said.

"Since I am a criminal and convicted of a premeditated crime the bar association simply didn't have any other options legally," Navalny wrote Tuesday.

The association reportedly withdrew his right to practice law on Nov. 16.

The post came as a response to the pro-Kremlin youth group Molodaya Gvardia's announcement Tuesday that they had sent a letter to Henri Reznik, the head of the Moscow Bar Association, asking him to clarify whether Navalny still had his license to practice and to withdraw it if the association hadn't already done so.

"The loss of my status will bring certain changes to my activity and life, but I want to assure

United Russia's Molodaya Gvardia and United Russia themselves that this will not make things easier for them," Navalny wrote.

The opposition leader said the loss of his right to practice law led him to answer "temporarily not working" when asked to identify his place of employment while testifying Monday as a witness in the Bolotnoye riots trial.

Navalny's five year prison sentence for allegedly stealing \$500,000 in timber from the state-owned company KirovLes in 2009 was converted to a suspended sentence in October.

Later that month the Investigative Committee filed a second round of fraud and money laundering charges, this time against both Navalny and his brother Oleg.

Navalny has denied any guilt and claims that the cases are a form of political retribution from the Kremlin for his opposition activities.

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<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/12/04/navalny-says-his-lawyer-status-has-been-scrubbed-a30187>