

Dj Vu for Hunger Striking Activist Charged With Attacking Police Officer

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Sergei Mokhnatkin during the «March of Freedom», Dec.15, 2012. **Sergey Kukota**

An opposition activist charged with using violence against a police officer has declared a hunger strike in the Moscow prison where he is being held, in what seems like a case of history repeating itself.

Activist Sergei Mokhnatkin was detained on Dec. 31, 2013, on Triumfalnaya Ploshchad in Moscow during a rally in support of freedom of assembly and started his hunger strike the following day, Grani.ru reported Thursday.

The former engineer declared the strike to protest being sent to solitary confinement for 10 days at Butyrskaya prison over his refusal to be fingerprinted and photographed by police, his lawyer said.

He faces up to five years in prison if found guilty of attacking the police officer.

Previously, Mokhnatkin was sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for breaking a police officer's nose during a rally in 2009, also on New Year's Eve, and also on Triumfalnaya Ploshchad. He argued then that he was protecting a woman who was being beaten by police. He also said that he was not participating in the rally at the time, but was merely passing by when the incident occurred.

Mokhnatkin also staged two hunger strikes during his first prison term and became an icon of the opposition movement.

He was pardoned in spring 2012 by then-President Dmitry Medvedev.

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