

Hospitalized Opposition Activist Mokhnatkin Ends Hunger Strike

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Opposition activist Sergei Mokhnatkin, [charged with attacking a police officer](#), has ended his hunger strike and has been transferred to a hospital because of an inflammation on his leg, officials said.

Mokhnatkin is being treated for his leg wound at a prison hospital and his life and health are not in danger, a spokesman for Moscow's branch of the penitentiary service, Sergei Tsygankov, said Thursday, Interfax reported.

Mokhnatkin — who had refused food since Jan. 1 in protest at his solitary confinement in prison — also signed a statement Wednesday about ending his hunger strike, Tsygankov said

A member of Moscow's Public Monitoring Commission, Anna Karetnikova, said Mokhnatkin had a "huge red spot on his shin," which appeared to be festering, and was running a fever.

Mokhnatkin said the inflammation developed from a bruise he received when police officers kicked him in the leg after detaining him on New Year's Eve, but he did not blame prison officials for the complication because he had refrained from showing the wound to a prison doctor earlier, Karetkina said.

Police arrested Mokhnatkin on Dec. 31, 2013 on Triumfalnaya Ploshchad in Moscow during a rally in support of freedom of assembly. He started his hunger strike at Butyrskaya prison the following day, after being sentenced to solitary confinement for 10 days over his refusal to be fingerprinted and photographed by police, his lawyer said, Grani.ru reported.

His arrest seemed to be a *deja vu* of a previous case, when 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 said he was merely passing by when he saw police officers beating a woman and tried to interfere to protect her.

Mokhnatkin, who was pardoned in spring 2012 by then-President Dmitry Medvedev, faces up to five years in prison if found guilty of attacking the police officer in the latest case.

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