

Russian Gets 3.5 Years in Jail for Drunken Attempt to Hijack Plane

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A Russian businessman was sentenced to 3 1/2 years in jail Tuesday for attempting to hijack a plane last year while drunk.

Sergei Kabalov, 54, achieved Internet notoriety last January after a video was posted on YouTube showing him punching a male passenger and flight attendant on a flight from Moscow to Egypt.

Kabalov also tried to break into the cockpit and threatened to kill people. He subsequently fled to Belarus to avoid arrest in Russia, but was handed over to Russian authorities in May.

The prosecutor had requested an 8 1/2-year jail term for Kabalov, but a Moscow district court gave him a milder sentence, citing the fact that he has underage children and had no previous convictions.

The businessman will also pay 400,000 rubles (\$11,300) in moral damages. Kabalov pleaded not guilty to the charges of attempting to hijack the plane and attacking the flight attendant, saying he had "only hit him back."

Kabalov's defense lawyer said his client would appeal the sentence.

Russia has recently seen a series of similar incidents on planes, which have prompted the country's lawmakers to push for tougher measures against rowdy passengers and call for a ban on alcohol on planes.

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