

Freed Khodorkovsky Associate Can't Leave Russia Due to \$480M Debt

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A close associate of Mikhail Khodorkovsky who was recently freed from jail is unable to leave Russia because he owes 17.4 billion rubles (\$480 million) in back taxes.

Platon Lebedev was convicted of tax evasion together with Khodorkovsky in 2005 in a case that tore apart the country's once wealthiest oil company, Yukos.

Since his release in January, Lebedev has been denied a passport for international travel due to the hefty tax debt, allegedly incurred by Yukos, the Izvestia newspaper reported.

Khodorkovsky fled to Germany immediately after being freed in December and has since been granted a one-year residence permit to live in Switzerland.

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