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Court Rejects Defamation Case Against Pussy Riot's Tolokonnikova

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Pussy Riot member Nadezhda Tolokonnikova following her release from prison in December.

A court in Siberia has thrown out a defamation case brought against Pussy Riot member Nadezhda Tolokonnikova by a prison official, the Agora human rights group said.

Tolokonnikova wrote an open letter last September to complain about the conditions in the Mordovian prison she was sent to for her participation in the band's anti-Putin "punk prayer" in February 2012.

She said that her fellow inmates were treated as slaves and that the prison's deputy warden, Yury Kupriyanov, had threatened to kill her. She went on hunger strike for nine days and was transferred to a prison in the Krasnoyarsk region in November.

Kupriyanov sought 500,000 rubles ($14,000) from Tolokonnikova and a full retraction of her statement about conditions in the prison, but the Norilsk City Court dismissed the lawsuit, Agora said in a statement, Interfax reported Friday.

The court also rejected a similar lawsuit that the prison filed against Tolokonnikova.

She was released from the prison in Krasnoyarsk in December as part of an amnesty initiated by President Vladimir Putin.

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