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Russian Court Dismisses LDPR's Defamation Case Against Mikhail Khodorkovsky

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Mikhail Khodorkovsky

A Moscow court has dismissed a defamation suit filed by the Liberal Democratic Party, or LDPR, against former oil tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky, once Russia's richest man.

The Meshchansky district court on Thursday took about five minutes to dismiss the lawsuit against the former Yukos CEO on all counts, Khodorkovsky's website reported. Judge Tatyana Zholudova is expected to elaborate on the grounds for her decision later, the report said.

The nationalist party, or LDPR, claimed in its suit that Khodorkovsky had "unscrupulously and shamelessly" marred its reputation in his book "Prison and Freedom."

In the book, co-authored by journalist Natalya Gevorkyan and published in 2012, Khodorkovsky said he "supported those [political] forces which I could most relate to," adding that the LDPR could not be counted among them.

"LDPR earns it wages by voting. Directly and cynically," Khodorkovsky's website quoted the book as saying.

LDPR's lawsuit claimed that the "party follows the law and does not accept funding from dubious sources," and demanded 10 million rubles ($215,500) in compensation for what it considered to be defamation.

But the judge did not appear to favor the plaintiff's arguments in court, according to Khodorkovsky's message via Twitter.

"Let's not make a circus out of the hearing, judge says in response to plaintiff's remarks," he tweeted.

Khodorkovsky, the former head of Russian oil giant Yukos, spent more than a decade in prison in what his supporters and human rights activists saw as a politically motivated case, until President Vladimir Putin issued an unexpected pardon in late December last year.

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