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Russian Opposition Activist Slits Wrists to Protest Prison Conditions

By The Moscow Times

April 21, 2015



Sergei Mokhnatkin

Jailed opposition activist Sergei Mokhnatkin has been hospitalized in a prison psychiatric facility after slashing his wrists to protest the conditions of his detention, his lawyer said.

Mokhnatkin was driven to the drastic action of cutting his wrists following a series of disputes with the jail administration, lawyer Denis Levin said Monday in a statement published by Russia's For Human Rights organization.

The activist declared a hunger strike after jail administrators issued him with a reprimand on April 16 and accused him of "sabotaging the work of the correctional facility and being an escape risk," the statement read.

The next day, the jail administration informed Mokhnatkin that he was being transferred to another pretrial detention facility, his lawyer said in the statement, adding that "in protest,

the political prisoner slashed his wrists."

He was hospitalized in a prison clinic for people with psychiatric disorders, where he continued his hunger strike, Levin said in the statement.

Mokhnatkin is currently serving a 4-1/2-year prison sentence for attacking two officers at a rally in December 2013, though he claimed he had been trying to protect a woman from police brutality.

He was also sentenced to 2 1/2 years in prison for attacking an officer at a rally in 2009, but was pardoned by then-President Dmitry Medvedev in early 2012.

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