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Wife of Moscow's Former Mayor Retains Richest Russian Woman Title

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Yelena Baturina

The wife of former Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov, and Russia's only female billionaire, Yelena Baturina topped an annual list of the country's 50 richest women for the third year in a row, the Russian edition of Forbes Woman reported Thursday.

The magazine estimated the fortune of Baturina at $1 billion, unchanged from last year but $1.9 billion less than in 2010 when her husband was still mayor.

Baturina, 52, is president of the construction company Inteco Management. Following the resignation of Luzhkov, which Baturina has blamed on then-president Dmitry Medvedev, she sold her company and together with her husband moved abroad, where she embarked on a number of development projects.

In an interview with Forbes published Thursday, Baturina described her conflict with Svetlana

Medvedeva, the wife of Medvedev. "I always tried to avoid Medvedeva," she told Forbes, admitting that their disagreements could have played a role in her husband's dismissal.

The combined wealth of the 50 wealthiest Russian women is nearly $7 billion, according to Forbes.

But this pales in comparison to Russian men: Forbes estimates the richest man in Russia, metals magnate Vladimir Potanin, to be worth $15.4 billion.

The second richest woman in Russia is Natalya Lutsenko with $550 million, according to Forbes. The source of her wealth is Russia's agriculture company Sodruzhestvo, which she founded and controls with her husband, Alexander Lutsenko.

The couple set up the company in 1994 and it has since grown to become Russia's largest vegetable oils producer. In 2012, Japanese trader Mitsui & Co. bought a 10 percent stake in Sodruzhestvo, estimating the company to be worth a total of $2.2 billion.

Guzeliya Safina, deputy director of energy holding TAIF in Russia's republic of Tatarstan, was ranked third on the Forbes ranking. Forbes estimated her wealth at $430 million.

The three richest Russian women were followed on the list by Olga Belyavtseva, co-owner of the Progress baby food plant, worth $400 million, and the director of the online store Wildberries, Tatyana Bakalchuk, worth $375 million.

Last year, Belyavtseva and Bakalchuk occupied the second and third places on the Forbes ranking.

Tennis player Maria Sharapova was the only sportswoman to make it onto the Forbes list. Sharapova ranked 8th with an estimated wealth of $240 million.

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