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Russian Media Ordered to Delete News Linking Lawmaker to Crime Boss

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Zakhar Kalashov (Young Shakro) **Andrei Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency**

A Russian court has ordered several publications to remove news linking a lawmaker to a convicted mafia boss, Russian media have reported.

State Duma deputy Andrei Skoch sued five outlets in December demanding they delete allegations that he had raised funds for the release of criminal boss Young Shakro and his associate. Forbes Russia named Skoch the country's 23rd-richest businessman last year with a net worth of $4.9 billion.

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A court in the western city of Belgorod sided with Skoch on Thursday, ordering the five news outlets to delete materials linking Skoch to Shakro, the MBKh news website reported.

The court also ordered the investigative Novaya Gazeta newspaper, the independent-leaning

Dozhd TV news channel and three other outlets to pay Skoch 1 ruble each in damages.

Shakro, whose real name is Zakhar Kalashov, was sentenced to nine years and 10 months in a maximum-security penal colony last year for extortion following a deadly shootout in 2015.

His arrest in 2016 led to the arrest and prosecution of several Moscow Investigative Committee employees on bribery charges.

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