

Chechen Court Overturns \$140M Gas Debt Write-Off

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

A Chechen court has overturned an earlier ruling ordering Russian gas giant Gazprom to write off 9 billion rubles (\$140 million) of the region's gas debt.

Unpaid debts on utility bills are a widespread problem in Chechnya's capital of Grozny, where local media [reported](#) extensive raids and mass blackouts over unpaid bills by as many as 35 percent of residents. The North Caucasus republic's district court [said](#) in January that Chechen customers' debt owed to a Gazprom subsidiary was "unrecoverable."

Related article: [Fearing Protests, Court Orders Gazprom to Write Off Chechnya's \\$135M Gas Debt](#)

Chechnya's Supreme Court reversed the district court's ruling on Thursday, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#).

Gazprom estimated that as of Jan. 1, 2018, Chechen gas consumers had owed 14.4 billion rubles. Nationwide accumulated debt totaled 30.1 billion rubles as of Jan. 1, 2019, Gazprom's subsidiary Gazprom Mezhregiongaz said.

The January judgment had prompted other regions to submit similar requests that their debts be repealed, posing a dilemma for President Vladimir Putin whether to side with Gazprom or Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov.

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