

Jailed Russian Banker Warns Businesspeople of Same Fate in Newspaper Ad

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Александр Попов
председатель правления «Тольяттихимбанка»
Жертва корпоративного конфликта.
В СИЗО с мая 2019 года, обвиняется по статье 210 УК РФ.

Vedomosti

A Russian banker awaiting trial on organized crime charges has taken out a full-page newspaper ad to give a New Year's Eve warning to businesspeople that they too could face a similar fate.

Alexander Popov's message in the Vedomosti business daily Wednesday comes as Russian authorities [consider](#) limiting the use of organized-crime laws in corporate disputes and economic crimes. President Vladimir Putin [extended punishments](#), including adding life sentences, for crime bosses this year.

Embed:

A full-page ad in today's [@Vedomosti](#), commissioned by the head of a regional

bank, currently in jail: “Happy New Year, dear businessmen! The end of December: gifts, traffic jams, parties. You are getting ready to go on vacation, but tomorrow you can go to prison.” pic.twitter.com/TLdsjgy5a0

— Ivan Nechepurenko (@INechepurenko) [December 18, 2019](#)

Popov, Tolyattikhibank’s executive for nearly two decades until [this fall](#), faces up to 20 years on suspicion of major fraud and tax evasion in addition to creating and participating in an organized criminal group. Moscow’s Basmany district court [extended](#) his pre-trial detention until Feb. 1, 2020.

“Happy New Year, dear businessmen! The end of December: gifts, traffic jams, parties,” opens Popov’s ad [shared](#) by New York Times reporter Ivan Nechepurenko.

“You’re getting ready to go on vacation, but tomorrow you can go to prison,” Popov continues.

Related article: [Russian Lawmakers Pass Bill to Punish Organized Crime Bosses](#)

Dozens of businesspeople and entrepreneurs are currently awaiting trial under the organized-crime article, Popov says in the full-page ad. He noted that the authorities do not disclose the number of people charged with organized crime.

The Kremlin is [considering](#) reforming the contentious law after Russia’s Supreme Court called for [fewer prosecutions](#) of entrepreneurs under the organized-crime statute.

“Indeed, this topic has been discussed at a number of meetings and, indeed, we’re in the final stages of formulating positions,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted as saying Wednesday.

Peskov declined to say when the reforms would be put forward, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#).

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