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German Court Rules EU Sanctions No Longer Apply to Superyacht Linked to Usmanov

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The superyacht Dilbar. **Focke Strangmann / AFP**

A German court has ruled that the European Union's sanctions no longer apply to a superyacht previously linked by media reports to Russian billionaire Alisher Usmanov after finding insufficient evidence that he controls the trust that owns the vessel, Bloomberg reported.

The administrative court in Frankfurt ruled that authorities failed to establish a connection between Usmanov and The Sister Trust, the entity that formally owns the Dilbar yacht, or to prove that the billionaire exercises influence over the trust, Bloomberg said. The decision is not yet final and can be appealed.

Germany's Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA), which defended the sanctions in court, declined to comment, according to Bloomberg. German shipbuilder Lürssen and a representative for The Sister Trust did not respond to requests for comment. A

spokesperson for Usmanov said the billionaire welcomed the ruling.

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Lürssen continued maintaining Dilbar at its Hamburg shipyard after the European Union imposed sanctions on Usmanov in 2022. In 2025, the company filed suit seeking a declaration that EU sanctions no longer applied to the vessel, allowing it to bill the yacht's owners for maintenance costs.

Monthly upkeep for Dilbar had previously been estimated at around $2 million, with annual operating costs exceeding $70 million.

The lawsuit followed the European Union's decision in March 2025 to remove Usmanov's sister, Gulbakhor Ismailova, from its sanctions list. Ismailova is the former principal beneficiary of The Sister Trust. The court said the trust's name alone was insufficient to establish a legal connection to Usmanov, Bloomberg reported.

Built by Lürssen in 2016, the 156-meter (512-foot) Dilbar is among the world's largest private yachts. Named after Usmanov's mother, the vessel can accommodate up to 40 guests and a crew of about 100. It features a 25-meter swimming pool, two helipads, a spa and a gym.

The U.S. Treasury Department estimated the yacht's value at between $600 million and $750 million in 2022.

The ruling is the latest legal development involving Dilbar. In a separate case, a Hamburg regional court barred Luxembourg-based media company Mediahuis Luxembourg from describing Usmanov as the yacht's owner, finding that such claims had not been substantiated. The court said violations of the order could result in fines of up to 250,000 euros ($293,000) per instance.

An earlier version of this article, citing Bloomberg, incorrectly stated that Gulbakhor Ismailova is the principal beneficiary of The Sister Trust. Bloomberg has since updated its reporting to state that Ismailova was once the trust's main beneficiary. This article has been updated accordingly.

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