

Khimki Journalist Convicted

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The  **Moscow Times**

A Khimki journalist who was savagely beaten in 2008 was convicted Wednesday of defaming Khimki Mayor Vladimir Strelchenko.

A Khimki court issued a 5,000 ruble (\$160) fine but said Mikhail Beketov did not have to pay because the statute of limitations had expired, Interfax said. Beketov's lawyer promised to appeal.

The slander suit was filed by Strelchenko over an interview in which Beketov accused him of involvement in blowing up his car in 2007.

Beketov had a leg amputated and is unable to speak after the 2008 attack that his supporters claim was retaliation for articles criticizing local authorities. No arrests were made. Beketov accused Strelchenko of "political terror."

At least six journalists and activists who criticized local authorities have been attacked in recent years, BBC Russian Service said. ☒

(AP, MT)

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