

Chelyabinsk Prison Abuse Claims 'Confirmed'

By [The Moscow Times](#)

December 06, 2012

The  **Moscow Times**

The Presidential Human Rights Council has found evidence to support claims of abuse and extortion at a Chelyabinsk region prison where inmates recently revolted, the council's leader said.

"We're now convinced that the prisoners have been telling the truth," Mikhail Fedotov said at a news conference in Moscow on Thursday, Interfax reported.

Inmates at Prison No. 6 in the city of Kopeisk staged a three-day revolt last month to protest what they said was widespread physical violence and extortion by jailers.

Council members who met with inmates confirmed complaints of miserly salaries, Labor Code violations and stints in solitary confinement that far exceeded the legal 15-day limit, Fedotov said.

Prison officials have been beating prisoners and extorting money from their relatives for years, council member Igor Kalyapin said, citing interviews with inmates and relatives.

"Inmates' relatives lined up to tell us how much money they demanded and where it was to be transferred," Kalyapin said, describing the scheme as "an organized system of extortion."

Council member Maxim Shevchenko was even more blunt. "This prison and similar ones aren't institutions for reforming people, they're institutions for breaking the human spirit," he said.

Investigators have opened a criminal case on abuse-of-office charges at the maximum security facility.

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