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Ukrainian prosecutors checking Yuliya Tymoshenko's possible involvement in contract killing

On 5 April 2012, the Prosecutor-General's Office of Ukraine (PGO) resumed an investigation into the criminal case launched over the killing of politician and businessman Yevhen Shcherban in 1996.

The Ukrainian news and analysis website Lb.ua quoted Ukrainian Prosecutor-General **Viktor Pshonka** as saying that the investigation had been resumed upon a request from a son of the killed politician, **Ruslan Shcherban**. Shcherban also sent a letter to US ambassador to Ukraine **John Tefft**.

Pshonka also said that the PGO was considering the possibility of former Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko's** involvement in the funding of this crime. He added that the PGO had the evidence that 2.2m dollars had been transferred to the account of the killer from the accounts of the United Energy Systems of Ukraine company (UESU), which was headed by Tymoshenko in the 1990s. At the same time, he noted that the former prime minister was not a suspect in the case although she might be questioned if the need arises.

On 6 April 2012, the first deputy prosecutor-general, **Renat Kuzmin**, said that if Tymoshenko is found guilty in this case, she might face a life sentence.

In its turn, the opposition Fatherland party said that it had «the information that the prosecutor's office has started to actively put pressure on the individual who had received a life sentence for killing Shcherban, **Vadym Bolotskykh**, to force him to falsely testify against Tymoshenko». On 6 April 2012, the mass media reported that Bolotskykh had been transferred from a Luhansk prison to Kiev's remand center.

The deputy head of the Fatherland party, **Oleksandr Turchynov**, said that new statements made by Shcherban's son contradicted those he had made in court in 2003.

For his part, Ruslan Shcherban explained that he had been afraid to talk about Tymoshenko's possible involvement in the killing of his father when she was in office.

We shall remind you that on 10 March 2012, Kuzmin said in an interview with the BBC that his agency was checking the information about Tymoshenko's involvement in the financing of Shcherban's killing.

At the end of March 2012, the Ukrainian news and analysis website Ukrayinska Pravda reported that the pro-presidential Party of Regions had hired the British PR company Burson-Marsteller to publish Kuzmin's interview in the British mass media. The Party of Regions and the PGO denied this information. However, following an inquiry of the Ukrayinska Pravda website, the London office of the Burson-Marsteller company confirmed that it cooperated with the Party of Regions.

Businessman Yevhen Shcherban was killed at Donetsk airport on 3 November 1996. His wife also died in the attack.

Court to hear criminal case against Yuliya Tymoshenko over United Energy Systems of Ukraine corporation in near future

On 19 April 2012, a court will hold a hearing in the case against former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko over the United Energy Systems of Ukraine (UESU) corporation.

On 5 April 2012, Ukrainian Prosecutor-General **Viktor Pshonka** said that the criminal case against Tymoshenko over the UESU corporation had been illegally closed in 2005 under the pressure from former President **Viktor Yushchenko**.

Later, he noted that Ukraine had to pay Russia UESU's old debt of 405.5m dollars.

The opposition Fatherland party denied Pshonka's statement that the case had been closed illegally.

On 6 April 2012, the former prime minister's lawyers asked the court to suspend the case proceedings due to Tymoshenko's health condition

Yuliya Tymoshenko refuses to be hospitalized. Yuriy Lutsenko receives referral for medical checkup. Mass media report government plans to send opposition members abroad for medical treatment

On 6 April 2012, former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko refused to be treated at the Ukrzaliznytsya (Ukrainian railway) hospital in Kharkiv.

Earlier, on 2 April 2012, Prosecutor-General **Viktor Pshonka** tasked his subordinates with ensuring that Tymoshenko is treated outside of the Kharkiv Kachanivska prison.

After this, the former prime minister's lawyer, **Serhiy Vlasenko**, said that Tymoshenko will agree to the treatment at the hospital only if the German doctors who examined her will conclude that the medical facility is suitable for treating her condition.

We would like to note that on 6 April 2012, former Ukrainian Interior Minister **Yuriy Lutsenko** was taken from the Kiev remand center to the Kiev city emergency hospital for medical checkups.

An MP of the opposition Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defence parliamentary faction, **Volodymyr Aryev**, said that prison guards insistently recommend Lutsenko to submit a request for treatment abroad. However, the former minister categorically refused to do so.

The Ukrainian newspaper Segodnya quoted its own sources as saying that the Ukrainian government and its European partners were actively discussing the possibility of treating Tymoshenko in Germany.

We would like to note that on 6 April 2012, the first deputy prosecutor-general, **Renat Kuzmin**, said that if Tymoshenko leaves Ukraine, it will be harder to prove that she is guilty. At the same time, he noted that the Ukrainian legislation neither banned nor permitted Tymoshenko's treatment abroad.

German political scientist **Alexandr Rar** believes that the Ukrainian government would profit if the former prime minister leaves Ukraine.

US court obliges Yuliya Tymoshenko to give summons to Firtash

New York's court has announced its first ruling in the lawsuit against the co-owner of the RosUkrEnergo company, Dmytro Firtash, which had been filed by former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko.

On 30 March 2012, the court ruled that the plaintiff should report to it by 20 April 2012 on all the actions undertaken to inform the defendant about the case.

We shall remind you that in 2011, Tymoshenko filed a lawsuit with the New York court against RosUkrEnergo, its co-owner Firtash and a number of other individuals, accusing them of influencing the ruling of the Stockholm Chamber of Commerce Arbitration, which had obliged the Ukrainian state-run energy company Naftohaz Ukrayiny in 2010 to return to the RosUkrEnergo company 12.1bn cu.m. of gas.

Italian court to rule on extradition of ex-governor Arsen Avakov on 10 April 2012

On 10 April 2012, an Italian court will decide on the issue of extraditing the head of the Kharkiv regional organization of the opposition Fatherland party, former Kharkiv governor Arsen Avakov.

We shall note that former Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko** sent a letter to the Italian authorities with a request to deny the Ukrainian law-enforcement agencies Avakov's extradition.

Avakov is accused of exceeding his authority in Ukraine.

The former governor was detained in Italy on 26 March 2012.

The head of the Kharkiv human rights organization, **Yevhen Zakharov**, said that as a Ukrainian citizen, Avakov had the right to run for a seat in parliament despite the fact that he is currently abroad.

Another opposition politician might face criminal charges

The Prosecutor-General's Office of Ukraine (PGO) has started an investigation against the deputy head of the opposition Fatherland party, Oleksandr Turchynov.

On 4 April 2012, the PGO said that law-enforcement agencies began to check information that Turchynov had allegedly given apartments to journalists in violation of law when he was the head of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). The information about Turchynov's alleged illegal actions was submitted to the PGO by former employees of the SBU special purpose unit.

Turchynov served as the SBU head from 4 February 2005 to 8 September 2005.

Court sentences minister from Tymoshenko's cabinet to three years in prison

On 5 April 2012, a court sentenced former Environment Minister Heorhiy Filipchuk, who had worked in former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko's cabinet, to three years behind bars.

Filipchuk was found guilty of exceeding his authority under Article 365 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code when he terminated a contract signed between the government and the Vanco International Ltd. Company on developing the Black Sea shelf.

The opposition Fatherland party said that Filipchuk's conviction was another instance of political repression by the current authorities and revenge for the «Vanco case».

In October 2007, the Vanco Prykerchenska company received a license to extract oil and gas from the Black Sea shelf. However, in April 2008, the Ukrainian Environment Ministry revoked the license.

Ukrainian tycoon **Rinat Akhmetov** is among the co-owners of the Vanco Prykerchenska company.

Freedom House delegation visits Ukraine

On 3-4 April 2012, a delegation from the Freedom House international organization visited Ukraine as part of drawing up a new report.

During the visit, the representatives of the organization held meetings with the government officials and also visited jailed former Ukrainian Prime Minister **Yuliya Tymoshenko** and former Interior Minister **Yuriy Lutsenko**.

Freedom House will publicize a report on the results of the visit to Ukraine at the beginning of June 2012.

Commenting on the visit, Freedom House's President **David Kramer** pointed to a number of improvements such as the adoption of a law easing up the work of NGOs, a law on the information access and the steps Ukraine had taken on the path towards EU integration.

At the same time, he added that the following issues contributed to the deterioration of the Ukrainian situation: judicial persecution of the opposition leaders, the concentration of power in the hands of one family and its entourage, as well as violations in the electoral sector. Furthermore, he pointed out to a growing role of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) in the country.

Kramer also expressed hope that no sanctions would be applied to Ukraine and that its government would implement the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) on the end to political persecution.

In the opinion of the first deputy prime minister, **Valeriy Khoroshkovskyy**, Ukraine and the EU have differing views on Tymoshenko's case. «We have to understand that it is either we will be looking for compromise or we will never hear each other,» he said in an interview with the BBC. At the same time, he added: «We cannot decriminalize an article for one person.»

When asked «Will all the PACE recommendations be implemented?», Ukrainian Foreign Minister **Kostyantyn Hryshchenko** tweeted: «There is an obvious difference between an obligation and a recommendation.»

The Gorshenin Institute carried out a survey in March 2012 in which 152 MPs took part. A majority of them (56.5 percent) believe that Ukraine should implement the PACE resolution.

German journalists reportedly spend night at Ukrainian border, experience entry difficulties

On 4 April 2012 it became known that two German journalists travelling to Ukraine by car had to spend a night at the border checkpoint.

According to the RBB television and broadcasting company's correspondent **Olaf Sundermeyer**, members of their filming crew had to wait for one night to cross the Ukrainian border for no apparent reasons at all. In the morning, the journalists were allowed to cross the border but were asked to pay for their car staying overtime at the parking lot of the border crossing point.

Later, a representative of the Ukrainian State Border Service, **Ihor Tymofeyev**, described the German journalists' statement as an act of provocation.

Ukrainian Constitutional Court rules on election law

On 4 April 2012, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine (CCU) delivers ruling on the law on elections.

In particular, the CCU declared unconstitutional the law provision which gave Ukrainian nationals residing abroad the right to vote for candidates running in single-seat constituencies in Kiev. Following this court ruling, Ukrainian citizens living abroad can vote only for candidates from party lists.

In the opinion of the deputy head of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC), **Andriy Mahera**, the CCU ruling has in fact stripped Ukrainian citizens residing abroad of the right to vote.

According to the CEC information, following the CCU ruling, the number of electoral districts in Kiev may drop from 16 to 13.

On 10 April 2012, the CEC should make a decision on the number of single-seat constituencies in every region.

In the opinion of the opposition Front for Change party leader, **Arseniy Yatsenyuk**, the CCU ruling demonstrates that the government «has launched a large-scale electoral rigging».

Earlier, on 6 March 2012, the deputy head of the opposition Fatherland party, **Oleksandr Turchynov**, said that the ruling majority planned to increase the number of constituencies in those regions where it enjoys the greatest support.

The head of the sociology firm Ukrainian Barometer, **Viktor Nebozhenko**, believes that the CCU decision to ban Ukrainian citizens residing abroad from voting for individual candidates will push the election law towards further amendments.

Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council Secretary Andriy Klyuyev starts actually managing Party of Regions' election campaign

The Secretary of the Ukrainian National Security and Defence Council, Andriy Klyuyev, has actually started fulfilling duties of the head of the Party of Regions' election campaign headquarters.

The Lb.ua news and analysis website said with a reference to own unnamed sources that Klyuyev visits the Party of Regions' election campaign headquarters quite often performing functions typical to the campaign headquarters' head. Nevertheless, there is no official confirmation to this statement.

Election of Kiev mayor may take place on 15 June 2012

A Kiev mayoral election will be held on 15 June 2012, the first deputy head of the opposition Yuliya Tymoshenko Bloc (YTB) parliamentary faction, Serhiy Sobolev, said on 2 April 2012.

At the same time, the lawmaker said that only a single candidate from the opposition could defeat a pro-government candidate. In his opinion, **Vitaliy Klitschko** is the candidate who can win the race.

Klitschko said that under law the Kiev mayoral election should be held in May 2012 and that the process was «artificially dragged out». It is more convenient for the government to hold the election in the summer, when the majority of the voters who side with the opposition (the youth and the middle class) leave for vacations.

The Ukrainian weekly *Kommentarii* reported that the pro-presidential Party of Regions also considered the possibility of passing in parliament a decision on a snap election of the Kiev city councillors and on holding the vote simultaneously with the Kiev mayoral election in June 2012.

The head of the Committee of the Ukrainian Voters, **Oleksandr Chernenko**, said that if the government intends to hold a snap election, this decision has to be taken no later than 60 days before the election.

Only one candidacy put forward for ombudsman, vote scheduled for 24 April 2012

The deadline for the registration of candidacies for the post of ombudsman of the Verkhovna Rada passed on 4 April 2012.

The only candidate for this post was the government envoy to the European Court of Human Rights, **Valeriya Lutkovska**, whose candidacy was proposed by MPs from pro-government parties.

The Ukrainian news and analysis website Lb.ua reported that the election will be held on 24 April 2012.

Ukraine, Russia launch procedures to remove restrictions on cheese imports from Ukraine

On 3 April 2012, Gennadiy Onishchenko, head of Russia's Federal Service for Consumer Rights Protection (Rospotrebnadzor), made a visit to Ukraine. During the visit, Onishchenko had meetings with Economics Minister **Petro Poroshenko** and Agrarian Policy Minister **Mykola Prysyzhnyuk**.

Following the talks, Poroshenko said that the Russian side has no concerns about quality of Ukrainian cheese, and that all its claims are related to the compliance of Ukrainian products with Russian standards.

For his part, Onishchenko said that Russia is ready to lift restrictions on cheese imports after Ukrainian enterprises meet its requirements with regards to the quality of Ukrainian cheese.

President's son joins Forbes TOP 100 richest Ukrainians rating

On 4 April 2012, Forbes magazine published its ranking of 100 richest Ukrainians.

Owner of SCM Group, MP **Rinat Akhmetov** of the Party of Regions remains on the first place of the rating. The magazine estimated his fortune at 16bn dollars. It is worth mentioning that last year Forbes estimated the Ukrainian tycoon's financial standing at 5.2bn dollars.

The second place is occupied by businessman **Viktor Pinchuk** with 4.2bn dollars.

The eighth position is taken by Economics Minister **Petro Poroshenko** with 1bn dollars, and the ninth place is occupied by the deputy prime minister, Minister for Social Policy **Serhiy Tihipko** with 989m dollars.

Owner of Group DF, co-owner of RosUkrEnergo company **Dmytro Firtash** is rated 15th in the Forbes list. The businessman's fortune is estimated at 605m dollars.

MP **Yuriy Ivanyushchenko** of the Party of Regions, who is said to be a close friend of President **Viktor Yanukovich**, occupies the 48th line in the rating with 214m dollars.

This year, son of the Ukrainian president **Oleksandr Yanukovich** joined the TOP 100 richest Ukrainians rating for the first time. With 99m dollars, he is rated 98th in the list.

Ukraine's investment attractiveness worsening - European Business Association

The level of foreign investors' confidence in the Ukrainian market continues to fall.

In particular, the Investment Attractiveness Index, which is calculated by the European Business Association (EBA) on a quarterly basis, in the first three months of 2012 declined to 2.18 points as measured on a one-to-five scale. The new level is 0.1 point lower as compared to the index as of the end of 2011.

The grim outlook is the result of persistent problems, such as administrative pressure, corruption and red tape, ailing taxation and customs practices, coupled with renewed concerns over Ukraine's political strategies and relationship with the European Union, the EBA says.

Mass media: luxury tax law proposed by Finance Ministry to also impact middle class

The Finance Ministry has drafted a law on luxury tax.

According to Kommersant Ukraina business daily, the bill introduces an additional tax on apartments with the total area over 120 square meters and houses over 250 square meters. An additional tax will be imposed on automobiles with engine volume of 3,000 cubic centimeters and above.

The luxury tax will also be levied on aircraft, ships and helicopters at 1% of their cost but will not apply to jewelry, furs, expensive mobile phones, watches and guns.

According to the ministry's estimates, the introduction of the luxury tax will bring additional 112.7m dollars in budget revenues.

As economists say, the government's initiatives will increase the number of taxpayers thanks to the tax imposition on property of middle-income citizens while wealthy Ukrainians might avoid paying this tax.

For his part, the deputy prime minister, Minister for Social Policy **Serhiy Tihipko** argues that his agency's vision of the luxury tax is different from that of the Finance Ministry.

Cabinet to increase taxes to raise funds for implementation of president's social initiatives

Ukraine is expecting higher taxes and customs duties.

As Kommersant Ukraina business daily reported on 4 April 2012, the Finance Ministry has prepared a number of changes to the Tax Code that would allow increasing budget revenues by 476m dollars. These are to be used for the implementation of the presidential social initiatives. The respective draft laws will soon be sent to parliament.

In particular, the ministry proposes boosting the budget revenues by increasing excise taxes on alcohol to 10%-11.2%. In addition, the rent for extraction of natural gas will grow by 380%. The agency will also increase the tax rate on electricity and thermal power.

In addition, the ministry will step up customs duties on imported goods.

On 30 March 2012, a group of lawmakers from the Party of Regions registered with the Verkhovna Rada a bill introducing amendments to the law "On Customs Tariffs of Ukraine" which provides for the increase in import duties on about 500 commodity items to the maximum possible level stipulated by the agreement between Ukraine and the World Trade Organization. The authors of the bill argue that such an increase will apply only to those goods which are widely produced by Ukrainian manufacturers, and demand for which is largely satisfied domestically.

On 2 April 2012, the head of the State Customs Service of Ukraine **Ihor Kaletnik** reported that his agency in the first quarter of 2012 transferred 3.5bn dollars to the national budget, which is 125m dollars more than it was planned and 689m dollars higher than in January-March 2011.

Ukrainian authorities mull possible increase in gas price for households

The International Monetary Fund expects Ukraine to implement the previously agreed measures in order to resume its stand-by loan programme.

As Director of the IMF External Relations Department **Gerry Rice** said on 5 April 2012 that the fund does not have any timeline for the programme resumption.

Earlier, First Deputy Prime Minister **Valeriy Khoroshkovskyy** said that Ukraine is drafting a plan for gradual increase in domestic gas prices for households.

However, MP **Serhiy Lukyanov** of the pro-presidential Party of Regions argues that gas prices for households can be raised only after the government implements the social initiatives set forward by President **Viktor Yanukovich**.

According to **Dmytro Boyarchuk**, the director of the Social and Economic Research Center CASE-Ukraine, the IMF has its reasons to question Ukraine's ability to repay loans it received earlier.

Ukraine's gold and currency reserves show slight growth. Cabinet approves budget resolution for 2013

On 5 April 2012, the National Bank of Ukraine said that the gold and currency reserves of Ukraine in March 2012 increased by 0.3% to 31.129bn dollars.

While speaking about the balance of international reserves, Economics Minister **Petro Poroshenko** said that he sees no prerequisites for the devaluation of hryvnya.

As Dzerkalo Tyzhnya weekly reported, at a meeting on 5 April 2012, the government approved a 2013 budget resolution. According to the document, the state budget deficit in 2013 is set at 0.8% of GDP.

European Union suspecting Ukrainian exporters of dumping

The European Union has said it might introduce anti-dumping duties on steel pipes from Ukraine.

On 2 April 2012, the Bloomberg agency reported that a special EU commission started an anti-dumping investigation to find out whether Ukrainian exporters of pipes artificially understated the cost of the products and whether such imports caused harm to the EU's industry.

The dumping investigation was launched after a group of European manufacturers filed a respective complaint on 16 February 2012.

Agrarian fund causes 42m dollars of losses in 2011, prosecutor-general says. Mass media expect resignation of agriculture minister

The Prosecutor-General's Office of Ukraine (PGO) has revealed fraudulent operations with grain committed by the Agrarian Policy Ministry and the Agrarian Fund.

On 4 April 2012, the PGO reported that officials of the Agrarian Policy Ministry and the Agrarian Fund in 2011 ordered purchase of grain at overstated prices from a private supplier company, and facilitated illegal reimbursement of VAT to the company. The PGO estimates that the loss inflicted on the state exceeds 42m dollars. The criminal proceedings were launched on 30 March 2012.

As Lb.ua news and analysis website reported on 5 April 2012, citing its own sources in the government, it is highly probable that Agrarian Policy Minister **Mykola Prysyzhnyuk** can leave his post in the nearest future. The Agrarian Policy Ministry denied this information.

Ukraine exports 15.4m tonnes of grain this marketing year

The Ukrainian Agrarian Policy Ministry has assessed the volume of the Ukrainian grain export at 15.4m tonnes since the beginning of the 2011/2012 marketing year (July 2011-July 2012).

The major part of the grain export was export of corn (9.3m tonnes). Also, Ukraine exported 3.8m tonnes of wheat and 2.1m tonnes of barley.

Tax authorities block operations of studio dubbing films into Ukrainian

The tax police searched the office of B&H FilmDistribution (cinema houses Kinopalats, dubbing studio Le Doen) on 5 April 2012.

The police raid has been reportedly caused by a suspicion of evading the payment of 2.25m dollars of tax. After the search at the Le Doen dubbing and sound recording studio, the tax policemen confiscated all the computers and audio recording equipment.

The Le Doen owner, **Bohdan Batruk**, has said that the tax authorities blocked work of the studio. He also said that there appeared to be a link between the actions of the tax authorities and his position of principle regarding the need of dubbing films into Ukrainian.

The Lb.ua correspondent, **Daryna Badyer**, suggested that the tax police raid may mean the start of the campaign to re-shape the Ukrainian film distribution market.

Ukrainians face charges over comments in social networks

Authorities have started bringing Ukrainian Internet users to responsibility for obscene comments in social networks and indecent photos at dating sites.

The Weekly.ua website reported citing a source in law-enforcement agencies that there is already a number of cases when Internet users incurred responsibility for infringements like that committed online.

The public opinion poll conducted by the Gorshenin Institute among young people in March 2012 indicates that over a half of young Ukrainians (55.1%) use social networks as a means of their daily communications.

Parliament registers draft law banning propaganda of homosexual ties to children

The Party of Regions parliamentary faction MP Vadym Kolesnichenko has registered a draft law on prohibition of propaganda of homosexuality to children on 30 March 2012.

The draft law suggests that the propaganda of homosexual relations envisages meetings with the objective of deliberate dissemination of positive information about homosexuality, rendering calls on homosexuality in mass media, etc.

The draft law also suggests imposing administrative and criminal responsibility for propaganda of homosexuality to underage individuals.

The first gay parade in Ukraine is planned to take place on 20 May 2012.

The results of the public opinion poll conducted by the Gorshenin Institute in October 2011 show that a clear majority of Ukrainians (78.1%) believe that sexual relations with a person of same sex is inadmissible under any conditions.

Ukrainian-Russian border demarcation commission tells coordinates of first border pillar

Ukraine and Russia have started practical demarcation of the border between the two countries.

The Ukrainian State Agency for Land Resources said on 4 April 2012 that the Ukrainian-Russian joint border demarcation commission established the coordinates of the first pillar to be installed on the border between Ukraine and Russia. The border pillar will be placed on the land belonging to the Synkivskyy village council in Chernihiv Region, where the Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian borderlines meet.

**Emergencies Ministry:
every fourth Ukrainian
lives in potentially
contaminated area**

Ukrainian Emergencies Minister Viktor Baloha has said that the risk of an ecological disaster is high.

In an interview with the Dzerkalo Tyzhnya weekly, Baloha said that there are about 275,000 tones of chemically hazardous substances in Ukraine. Thus, according to Baloha, every fourth Ukrainian lives in an area of possible chemical contamination. Baloha added that most of plants and factories in Ukraine use old equipment increasing a probability of a man-made disaster.

**Ukraine to hand over
62 armoured
personnel carriers to
Iraq**

Ukraine keeps working on the contract to supply military hardware to Iraq.

The director-general of the Ukroboronprom state-owned defence industry concern, Dmytro Perehudov, said on 2 April 2012 that 62 armoured personnel carriers - BTR-4 – are ready to be handed over to Iraq.

Ukraine expects that Iraqi specialists will inspect the armoured personnel carriers in April, after this the vehicles will be dispatched to the customer.

It is planned that the next batch of the APCs will be delivered end of 2013.

In 2009, Ukraine signed a 457.7m-dollar contract to supply 420 armoured personnel carriers BTR-4 to Iraq.

**Litigation between
popular weekly and
energy minister to
start soon**

The first sitting of the court on the lawsuit filed by the Dzerkalo Tyzhnya weekly against Energy Minister Yuriy Boyko is scheduled for 10 April 2012.

In May 2011 Dzerkalo Tyzhnya wrote that the Chornomornaftohaz oil and gas extraction company subordinate to the Ukrainian Energy Ministry bought a drilling rig from an intermediary company paying a price higher than the market price. The drilling rig cost Ukraine 400m dollars while its market price is 250m dollars, the Dzerkalo Tyzhnya's publication reads.

Boyko said the article was a paid provocation.

Dzerkalo Tyzhnya said that now Boyko's defence lawyers say the minister in his comment did not mention the newspaper's name and his statement was a personal assessment.

Our contact information:

4, Vorovskogo street,
Kiev 04053, Ukraine
+38 044 230 4962
+38 044 230 4966 f



For more information please visit our website
<http://gorshenin.eu/>