

Kazakh Journalist, After Surviving Attack, Tried For Libel Again

ORAL, Kazakhstan -- One of Kazakhstan's most prominent independent journalists, Lukpan Akhmedyarov, has gone on trial in his native western city of Oral.

A local policeman filed a lawsuit against Akhmedyarov saying his reputation was damaged by the journalist's article and demanded 3 million tenges (\$19,700) from Akhmedyarov as compensation.

Akhmedyarov, a correspondent for the "Uralskaya nedelya" weekly in Oral, survived a vicious attack by unknown assailants who stabbed him and shot him with a pneumatic pistol in April.

He was later found guilty of insulting a local official in West Kazakhstan Oblast and ordered to pay the official 5 million tenges (\$32,800).

Akhmedyarov says the attack and lawsuit against him were politically motivated.

Last month, Akhmedyarov won the prestigious international Peter Mackler Award for Courageous and Ethical Journalism.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/kazakh-journalist-attack-survivor-tried-for-libel-again/24706288.html>