

BP Wins Case in Siberian Court

Last Friday was November 11th, 2011. Quite a few readers may have wondered whether something extraordinary would happen on such a remarkable date.

It has. On Friday, a foreigner won a case against a Russian party in a Russian court.

Several newspapers have reported that a Siberian court ruled in favour of BP in a dispute against a Russian party on Friday. The proceedings had been initiated by Andrei Prokhorov, a minority shareholder in the Russian joint venture of BP, TNK-BP. Among other claims, Mr Prokhorov sought USD 13 billion in damages against BP. He argued that a failed deal between BP and another Russian company, Rosneft, would cost the joint venture billions in profit.

After the Siberian court had authorized the search of BP's offices at the end of August by Russian commandos armed with assault rifles, BP might have been pessimistic about the outcome of the case. But it seems it was nothing else than the local way of conducting pre-trial discovery.

The Russian party has announced that it will appeal the judgment. If the court of appeal rules in December next year, BP may well win again.