



Illustration: OVD-Info

27.05.2024

Repressions Report. February 2024

On 16 February, Alexei Navalny was killed in the colony in the village of Kharp (Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region). After this, the politician's family could not receive the body for a long time, and people all over Russia were detained while laying flowers in his memory. The funeral service and the burial were only held two weeks later.

Minniyyar Bayguskarov was buried in Baymak (a small provincial town in the Republic Bashkortostan). According to the official version, he committed suicide. Locals reported that the man had been severely beaten during interrogations concerning a criminal case regarding protests in support of activist Fayil Alsynov.

OVD-Info reports on these and other important cases of political pressure in this February chronicle.

[Текст на русском](#)

ALEXEI NAVALNY'S MURDER

27

times Alexei Navalny was sent to the SHIZO (punishment cell) during his time in detention

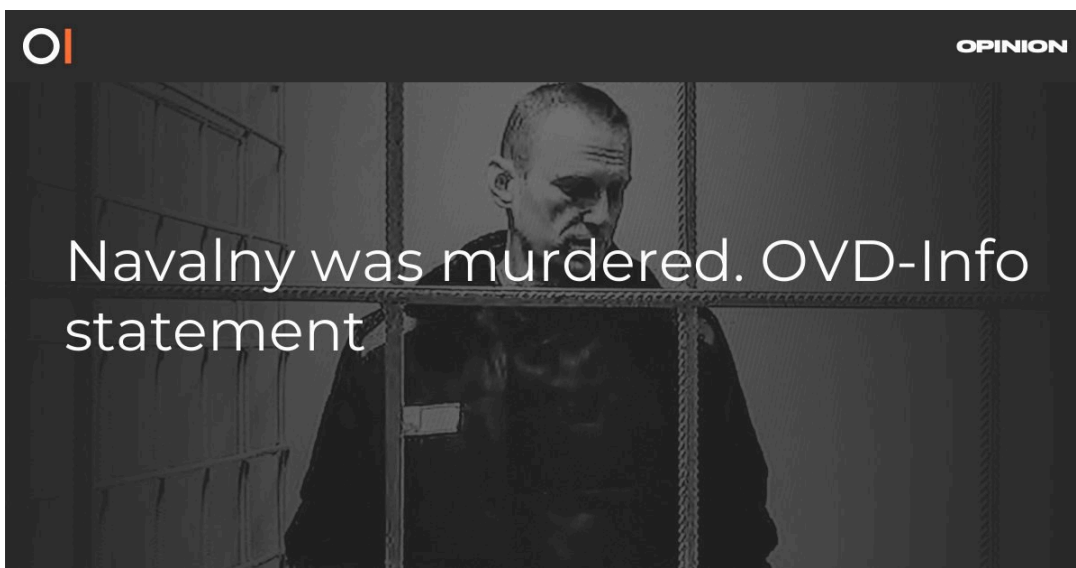
9

days passed during which the politician's mother was unable to retrieve his body

>649

detentions during mourning events in memory of Alexei Navalny (as of 12 March 2024)

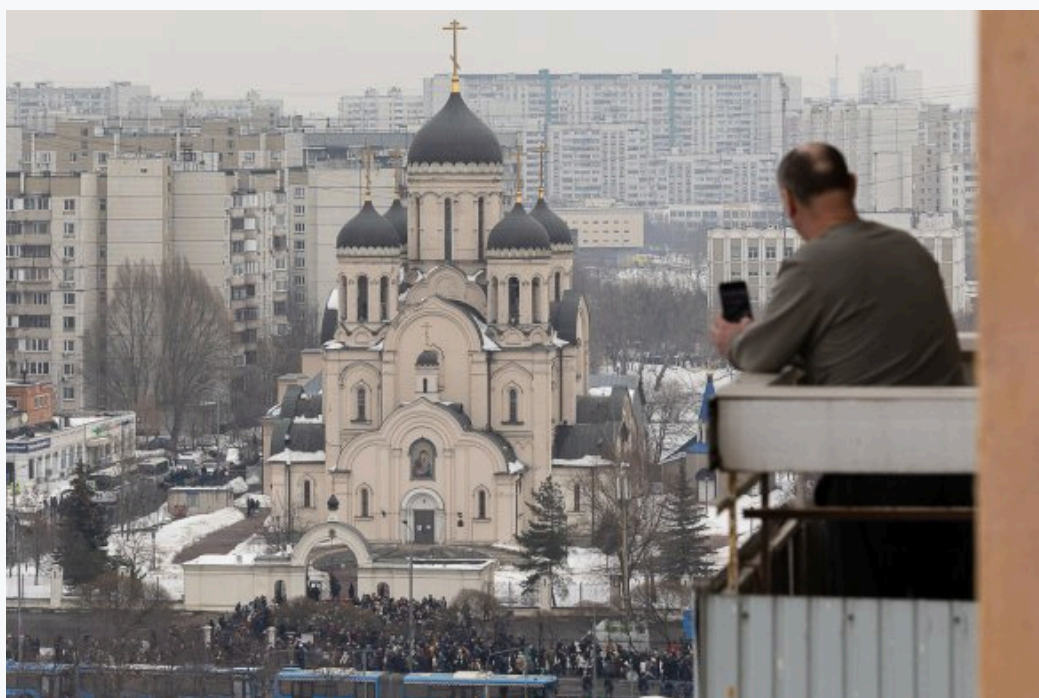
On 16 February, the Federal Penitentiary Service on its website **published** a press release, reporting the death of Alexei Navalny. The authors of the text claimed that the major Kremlin's opponent «felt bad after the walk», and that the medical workers who «immediately» arrived at the scene were unable to do anything. Propaganda news channel Russia Today soon **wrote** that a «detached blood clot» was the cause. OVD-Info considers the incident a murder.



That very evening, Russians began laying flowers at monuments to victims of repression to honour Navalny's memory. Several hundreds of people faced detention due to the mourning events. The politician's mother, Lyudmila Navalnaya, **fought** for over a week to get her son's body and bury him publicly. During this time, she was threatened that «something will be done» with her son's body, she was told she must agree to the terms of law enforcement officers and organise a secret funeral because «time is not working [in her favour], the corpse is decomposing».

OVD-Info **ran** the 'Dyatel' [Woodpecker] campaign, where people could send their appeals to the Investigative Committee demanding that Navalny's body be handed over to his relatives. A little less than 100 thousand people sent such appeals.

The politician's funeral took place on 1 March in Moscow: the service was held at the Mother of God Soothe My Sorrows Church and buried at the Borisovsky Cemetery. On the day of the funeral, OVD-Info **became aware** of more than 90 arrests throughout Russia.



A man is taking a photo of those who came to bid farewell to Alexei Navalny at the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God Soothe My Sorrows, 1 March 2024 / Photo: Meduza



People gathered to bid farewell to Alexei Navalny at the Church of the Icon of the Mother of God Soothe My Sorrows / Photo: Meduza



Alexei Navalny's funeral service / Photo: Meduza



People express condolences to Lyudmila Navalnaya at the exit from the church / Photo: Meduza



People walking from the church to the Borisovsky Cemetery / Photo: Alexander Gronsky



The coffin with the politician's body is being brought to the Borisovsky Cemetery / Photo: Meduza



Those gathered at the Borisovsky Cemetery during Alexei Navalny's funeral / Photo: Meduza



Those gathered at the Borisovsky Cemetery during Alexei Navalny's funeral / Photo: Meduza



People gathered at the spontaneous memorial to Alexei Navalny's on the outskirts of the Borisovsky Cemetery / Photo: Meduza



The queue to the Borisovsky Cemetery persisted until late evening /
Photo: Meduza

Even after sending Alexei Navalny to a high-security prison beyond the Arctic Circle, where he died, the authorities did not cease the persecution of his supporters and those suspected of associating with them. Three of the politician's lawyers — Igor Lipsker, Vadim Kobzev, and Igor Sergunin — are currently in a **pre-trial detention centre**, while two others, Olga Mikhailova and Alexander Fedulov, have been **put** on the wanted list. The prosecution aims to toughen the sentence for Lilia Chanyшева, the former head of the Navalny Headquarters in Ufa (a Russian megapolis in the European part of the country): initially, she was **sentenced** to seven and a half years in prison, but the prosecution considers this punishment too lenient. Rustem Mulyukov, an activist involved in the same case with her, is being **denied** release, despite his disability.

In February, former member of the Nizhny Novgorod (the capital of an intensely populated region 430 km away from Moscow) branch of the 'Yabloko' party, Mikhail Sharygin, was **sent** to a pre-trial detention centre: he is facing prosecution in connection with the case of 'underground Navalny Headquarters'. Sergey Streknev from Yaroslavl Oblast

(a region 250 km away from Moscow), was **sentenced** to three years in prison for his connection to such Headquarters. Vyacheslav Hertzberg from Syktyvkar (a regional capital 1,300 km away from Moscow), was **fined** 300,000 rubles (US\$3,240) for donating to the Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) after this organisation was banned by the Russian authorities.

PERSECUTION FOR ANTI-WAR STANCE

>860

individuals became defendants of the “Anti-War Case” by the end of February 2024

>13

verdicts were issued against opponents of the war in February 2024

Sociologist **Boris Kagarlitsky** and co-chairman of ‘Memorial’ **Oleg Orlov** had their fines for anti-war statements replaced with actual prison sentences during their appellate hearings. Both were taken into custody in the courtroom. Kagarlitsky received a five-year prison term for the live stream «Explosive Birthday Greeting of Mostik the Cat» (the live stream involved discussions about the attacks on the Crimean Bridge on 8 December 2022, the day following Vladimir Putin’s birthday. Mostik the Cat was previously used in Russian propaganda as a mascot for the Crimean Bridge, his name also translates as ‘little bridge’ — *OVD-Info*), while Orlov received two and a half years for his article «They Wanted Fascism. They Got It».

Earlier in the month, it was disclosed that a criminal case concerning ‘fake news’ about the Russian army had been initiated against a paediatrician, Nadezhda Buyanova. Authorities **conducted** a search of her home based on a complaint from the widow of a soldier who fought in Ukraine. In St. Petersburg, 18-year-old Darya Kozyreva was detained after she **brought** a poster featuring a fragment of Taras Shevchenko’s poem ‘My Testament’ to his monument.

Convicts involved in the ‘anti-war case’, artist **Lyudmila Razumova**, schoolchild **Yegor Balazeykin**, and activist **Ivan Kudryashov**, have reported a significant deterioration in their health. **Valeriya Zotova**, convicted of attempting to set fire to a military aid collection point, is facing pressure and being denied medical assistance in prison.

OVD-Info regularly updates **infographics** on individuals facing criminal prosecution for their anti-war stance.



REPRESSIVE RULE-MAKING

On 14 February, Vladimir Putin **signed** into law legislation allowing for the seizure of assets and the rescinding of honorary titles from individuals convicted under repressive laws. The following day, another bill targeting ‘foreign agents’ was submitted to the State Duma: the Parliament members

suggested prohibiting businesses from advertising with foreign agents. The legislation quickly passed all stages of reading, and on 11 March, it received Presidential approval.

Journalist Ekaterina Gordeeva announced that her YouTube project 'Tell Gordeeva' will be put on pause due to adoption of this statute. Furthermore, journalist Alexey Pivovarov had to cut down a part of his team because he would not be able to pay salaries due to reduced income.

'FOREIGN AGENTS' AND 'UNDESIRABLE ORGANISATIONS'

'Foreign agents'

11

**new "foreign agents" were added to the register
in February 2024**

In early February, the editor-in-chief of 'Pskovskaya Guberniya' [Pskov Governorate] was arrested in absentia as suspected of violating the obligations of a 'foreign agent'. To initiate this proceeding, law enforcement officers needed two enacted judgments on administrative violations of the Russian foreign agent law and one more violation of this law. The parents of activist Itil Temnaya, who had left Russia, were searched at their place. She assumes that under this article a criminal case was initiated against her.

Oppositionist Lev Shlosberg, also a resident of Pskov, was fined under the foreign agent law three times in one day. Another foreign agent record against oppositionist Ilya Yashin was returned to the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor) for revision. The politician himself and his

lawyers assume that criminal proceedings may be initiated against him under the article on violating the obligations of a ‘foreign agent’.

On 1 March, the ‘Nuzhna pomosh’ [Need help] foundation, which cooperates with multiple Russian charitable organisations, was placed on the [register of foreign agents](#). Less than two weeks later, employees of the ‘Nuzhna pomosh’ [told](#) reporters that more than 80 organisations had terminated contracts with the foundation or asked to ‘temporarily’ withdraw them from the website.

‘Undesirable’ organisations



new “undesirable organizations” became known in February 2024

In the middle of the month, a draft law was [introduced](#) to the State Duma. It would make it possible to recognise organisations whose founders or participants are foreign government bodies as undesirable.

A report was [drawn up](#) against ‘Yabloko’ party member Alexander Efimov under an administrative article on cooperation with an ‘undesirable’ organisation due to an interview he gave to members of ‘Golos’ [Voice], an election observers movement. Russian law enforcement officers believe that ‘Golos’ [Voice] is a part of the European Network of Election Monitoring Organisations (ENEMO), which was labelled as ‘undesirable’ in the fall of 2021 by the Russian government.

‘EXTREMIST’ ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

End of this month, the Khabarovsk Regional Court **recognised** the ‘Ya/My Furgal’ [I’m/We’re Furgal] movement as an extremist organisation. The Prosecutor’s office claims to have discovered certain ‘foreign centres’ that were reportedly actively coordinating the movement of residents of the region who were dissatisfied with the arrest of their elected governor.

In February, yet another organisation that denies the collapse of the USSR was also **banned** as extremist — this time in Krasnoyarsk Krai (a large Siberian region).

Searches at Jehovah’s Witnesses’ places happened in at least four Russian regions this February: in the **Jewish Autonomous Oblast** (a small region in the Far East), **Nizhny Novgorod Oblast** (an intensely populated region 430 km away from Moscow) and **Vladimir Oblast** (region 185 km away from Moscow), as well as in the **Primorsky Krai** (an economically and strategically important advanced region in the Far East). In addition, a criminal case under extremist law was **initiated** against a believer from Karachay-Cherkessia (a small region in the northwestern **Caucasus**). In Smolensk (the capital of a region bordering Belarus), two Jehovah’s Witnesses were **given** suspended sentences.

PERSECUTION OF POLITICIANS, ACTIVISTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

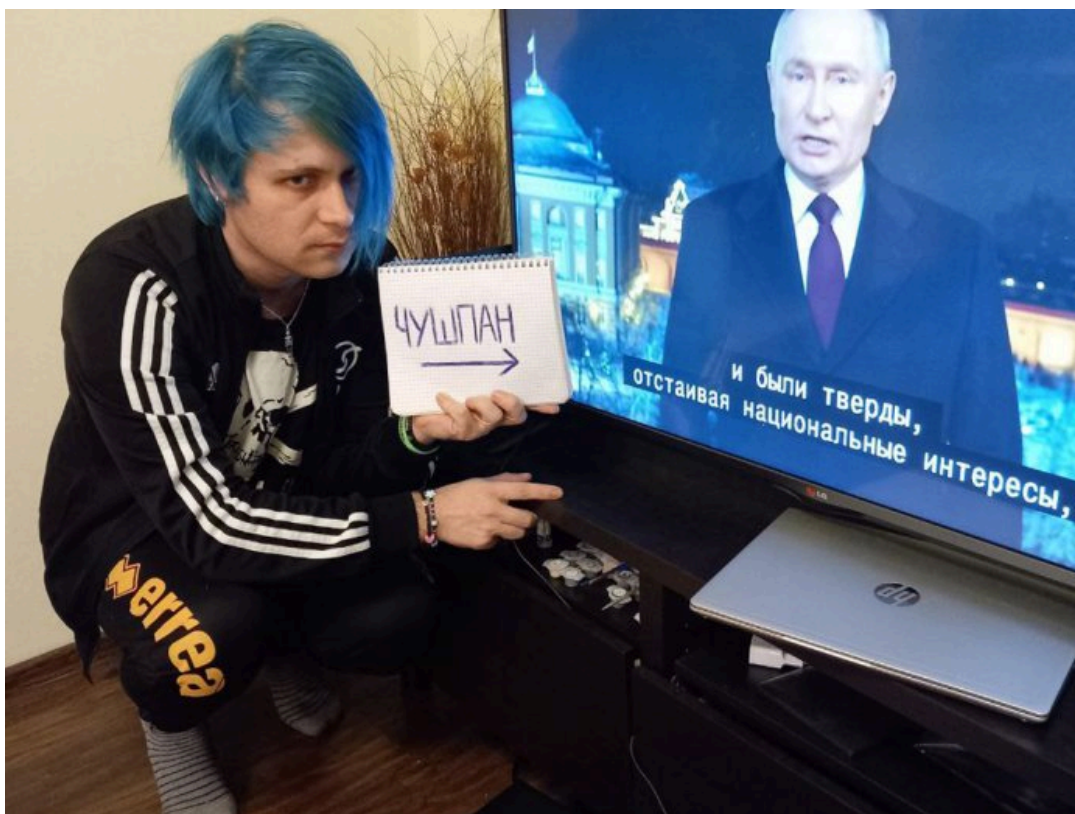
The wife of convicted ‘Memorial’ member Bakhrom Khamroev **told** Mediazona that her husband survived a beating in the ‘Vladimir Central’ Prison.

The human rights activist was **brought** to the institution on 20 December, when the administration confiscated a Quran from him. Over the next month, he demanded at least five complaints about the conditions of detention

to be accepted. On 23 January, according to Zukhra Khamroeva, her husband was taken out of his cell under the pretext of a search and severely beaten. She shared that «he was beaten in the legs, in the groin, in the kidneys, there were bleeding scratches on his back, and he lost consciousness from a blow to the head».

Ex-head of the Kuzbass (a region located in Southwestern Siberia) branch of 'Golos' Sergey Piskunov **was sent** to a pre-trial detention centre under the article on lewd acts. Before that, he had been searched in the case of organising an extremist community. During the trial, journalists were told that the extremist article was «not yet brought against him». However, on 1 March, they **initiated** a case against him under the article on repeated violation of 'foreign agent' legislation.

Yury Chilikin, an activist of the Left Socialist Action from Nizhny Novgorod (a Russian megapolis 430 km away from Moscow), **has been remanded** in custody because of several tweets authored by him. Specific charges against him have not yet been revealed. A 62-year-old public activist accused of blackmailing the chairman of the Chaikovsk City Duma **was sent** to a pre-trial detention centre in Perm Krai (region in the Urals).



Yury Chilikin holding a poster reading 'chushpan' (derogatory slang term, roughly equivalent to 'patsy') during Putin's New Year's speech / Photo: Yuri Chilikin's social networks

'StopXam' [Stop a Douchebag] activists Kirill Kotov, Kirill Bunin and Aleksei Gorbachevsky **have been sentenced** to six years in a colony for assaulting law enforcement officers. The reason for the case was the conflict between the activists and officers of the Interior Ministry's special unit 'Grom' [Thunder], which took place in June 2022.

PERSECUTIONS RELATED TO FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Persecution of journalists

Kirill Sukhanov, Commercial Director of 'Ostorozhno, Media' [Beware, Media], along with Arian Romanovsky and Tamerlan Bugayev, authors of the Telegram channel 'Tushite Svet' [Turn off the Light], **have been sentenced** to seven years in prison or longer periods for extorting Sergei Chemezov, the head of Rostec (State Corporation for the Promotion of the

Development, Manufacture, and Export of High Tech Products). Ksenia Sobchak, the founder of 'Ostorozhno, Media' [Beware, Media], commented on the sentence, stating that she «fulfilled all agreements to ensure mitigation». «Why such disparity? Just to take revenge?» — she wrote.

Cases of incitement to terrorism, extremism and anti-state activities

23

cases of incitement to terrorism, extremism, and anti-state activities were initiated this year by the end of February 2024

Activist Nadezhda Rossinskaya (Nadine Geisler) **was sent** to pre-trial detention centre as a suspect in the case of calls to donate to the Ukrainian army. After the start of the full-scale invasion, she organised the women's volunteer movement 'Army of Beauties'. This initiative **aimed** to gather humanitarian aid for civilians in Ukraine and assist individuals in escaping from areas affected by shelling.

Cases of rehabilitation of Nazism and desecration of soldiers' graves

Throughout February, law enforcement officers continued to bring cases of 'obscene' actions at Eternal Flame memorials. For instance, schoolchildren from Altai Krai (South Siberian region) **faced prosecution** for 'rehabilitation of Nazism' after constructing a snow phallus at a memorial, while a **resident** of Kirov Oblast (region 430 km to the East of Moscow) was prosecuted for heating wires on the Eternal Flame. Moreover, a case **was initiated** in Vladikavkaz (the capital of a region in the Northern Caucasus) for desecration of burial sites due to vases with flowers being scattered on the graves of 'Special Military Operation fighters', and

in **Kaliningrad** (the capital of the Russian enclave region bordering Lithuania and Poland) because individuals had a picnic at the Eternal Flame and were jumping over it.

Cases of offending religious feelings

Nikita Zhuravel, a defendant in the Quran burning case, **was sentenced** to three-and-a-half-years in a penal colony.

Meanwhile, **Roman Kvitkovsky**, who was swearing in a church in Kansk (a town in Krasnoyarsk Krai, a large Siberian region), has been sentenced to two years and three months.

Volgodonsk (town in Rostov Oblast, a Southern region) blogger Yury Kravtsov, who was ‘crucified’ on Halloween, was **fined** 80,000 roubles (US\$ 850).

Darya Krichker, an artist and owner of a tattoo studio from St. Petersburg, **was detained** at Pulkovo airport as a suspect in a criminal case of wounding religious feelings. The reason was her works on religious themes. The case was brought by the ultra-conservative movement ‘Sorok Sorokov’ [‘Forty forties’ — an old Russian euphemism for an ‘endless’ number of churches in Moscow].

The case of artist Vasily Slonov

Local artist Vasily Slonov was searched in Krasnoyarsk (the capital of Krasnoyarsk Krai, a large Siberian region): he was accused of repeatedly displaying Nazi symbols because of photos of his works imitation prison tattoos. In autumn 2023, the artist **was fined** a thousand rubles (US\$10) under the article for displaying extremist symbols because of an installation with a tattooed nevalyashka [Roly-poly toy]. After the criminal case was initiated, the court **sent** Slonov under house arrest.



Photo: Vasily Slonov's social media

PERSECUTIONS RELATED TO FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

12 times this year, Moscow resident Alexander Silakov has been detained while trying to reclaim his seized apartment

In early February, Alexander Silakov, who used to stand near the Prosecutor General's Office demanding to bring back his captured business and flat, **was sent** for compulsory treatment.

During their weekly protests with the demands to return their husbands home, Russian soldiers' wives faced **pressure**. Journalists were also detained during several of these rallies over the month (**1, 2**).

Rallies in commemoration of murdered politician Boris Nemtsov were prohibited in such cities as **Barnaul** (the capital of a region in South-Western Siberia), **Kirov** (the capital of a region 430 km to the East of Moscow), **Moscow**, **Kazan** (the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan). In Novosibirsk

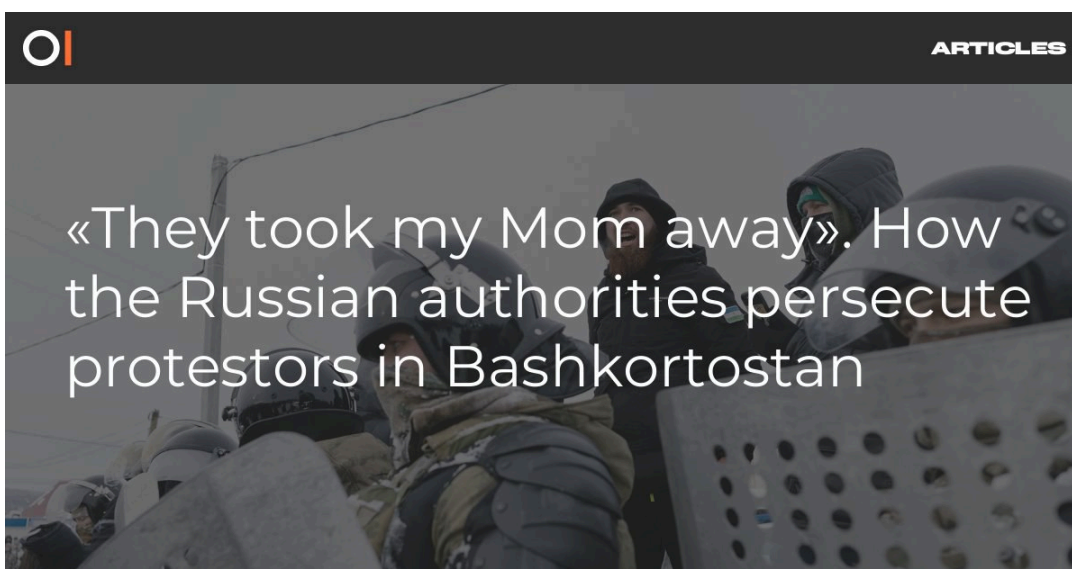
(often called the capital of Siberia), a planned demonstration against political repressions was also **prohibited**. In Rostov (a densely populated capital city of a southern region), a Communist Party of the Russian Federation supporters' rally was cancelled after permission **was withdrawn**. Chechens were **warned** against holding commemorative rallies on the 80th anniversary of the Vainakh nation's deportation to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Baymak protests case

≥80

individuals charged in the case of protests against the sentence of Bashkir activist Fayil Alsynov

Minneyar Bayguzakov, a protester who participated in demonstrations supporting Fayil Alsynov in Baymak, a small town in the Republic of Bashkortostan, **committed suicide** in February due to pressure from law enforcement officers. According to the defendants' support group, during interrogations, Minneyar was so severely beaten that it resulted in abrasions and issues with urination and his kidneys. He was asked to write 'some statement', allegedly compromising other protest participants, but he refused to do so.



PRESSURE ON LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



finances were imposed by Russian courts in February 2024 for “displaying extremist symbols” because of rainbows images

In February, law enforcement officers conducted raids on queer parties in **Petrozavodsk** (the capital of the Republic of Karelia in the North-West of Russia) and **Leningrad Oblast** (the region surrounding St. Petersburg). Following the first raid, state-controlled media reported how they «suppressed the activities of a community targeting individuals with non-traditional sexual orientation», while footage from the second raid was broadcast on the ‘REN TV’ channel.

The Ministry of Justice **demanded** to eliminate the fund assisting transgender individuals called ‘Transgender’, because, in the opinion of officials, it «absolutises personal freedom, actively propagating permissiveness, immorality, and selfishness».

FORCEFUL DEFENCE OF 'PUBLIC MORALITY'

In early February, Meduza published an unofficial list of entertainers banned from performing in Russia. It had several dozen musicians listed and was circulated among Russian producers. Later, it was revealed that concerts of several musicians mentioned on the list were cancelled: in particular, **Shortparis**, **Rita Dakota**, the musical band **Slot**, and **Lolita**.

In **Ekaterinburg** (a megapolis, the capital of the Urals region) and **Tula** (the capital of Tula Oblast, 185 km away from Moscow) law enforcement officers conducted several round-ups of sex-parties, **Popoff Kitchen**, **Kinky Party** projects and

a Petersburg bar **S'AIN'T** announced they were closing due to tightening legislation and pressure from pro-government activists.

REPRESSIONS AGAINST THE RESIDENTS OF ANNEXED CRIMEA

In annexed Crimea, journalist and human rights defender **Lutfiia Zudieva**, activists **Ilias Muslimov**, **Lenur Iakubov**, **Shevket Kiiamov**, imam **Izet Saifullin**, the chairman of the religious community **Idris Iurdamov**, and also the chairman of the Sudak Regional Mejlis, **Ilver Ametov** had their homes searched by Russian law enforcement officers.

Crimean activists **Irina Danilovich** and **Amet Suleymanov**, who are in Russian colonies, have faced refusals of medical assistance.

Server Mustafayev, the convict in the 'Hizb ut-Tahrir' case and a Crimean Tatar human rights defender, was **transferred** to strict detention conditions, which prevented him from continuing his studies at the Law faculty.

Ещё почитать



Reports and data