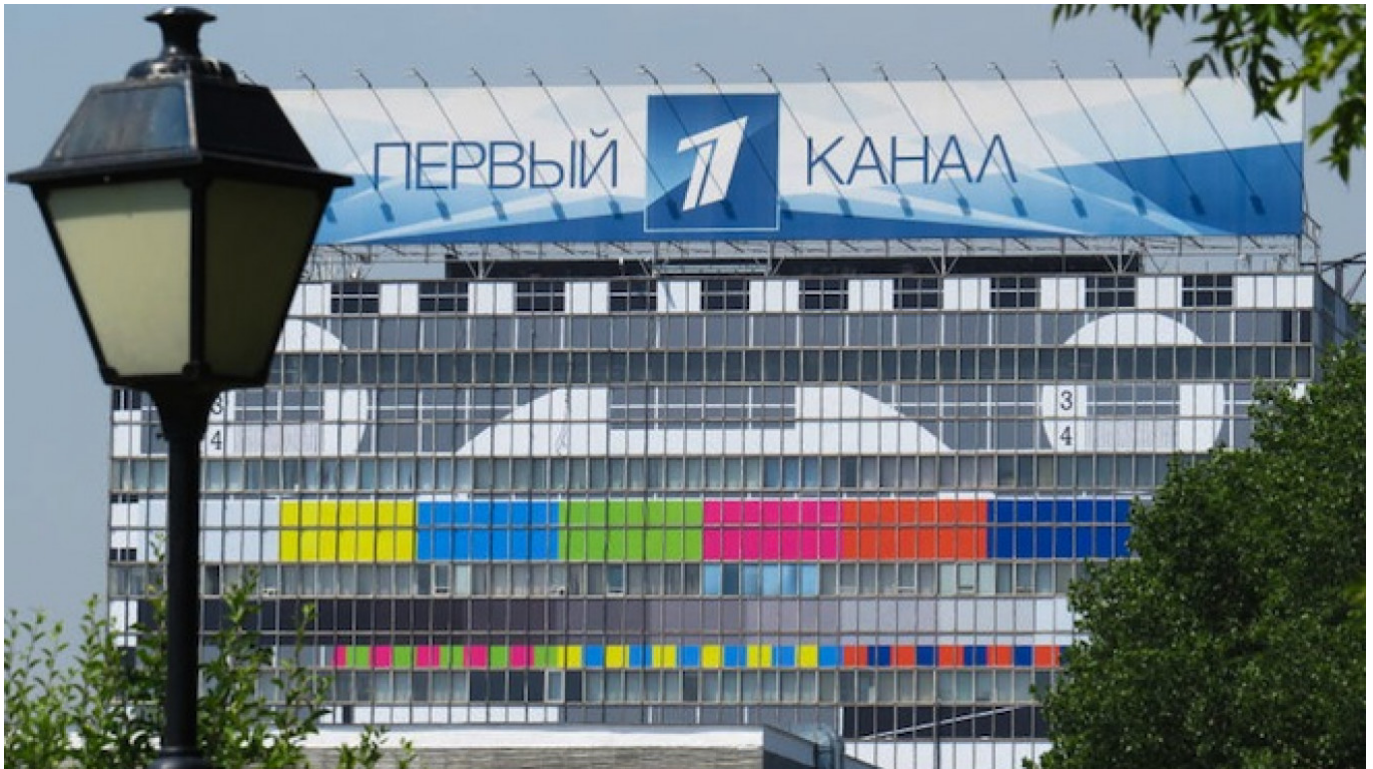


Ukraine Deports Russian Journalist

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The Russian state owns a majority stake in Channel One.

Russia's Investigative Committee has opened a criminal case after a journalist from the country's state-owned Channel One was detained in Ukraine and deported by security services, the committee said in a statement Thursday.

A case has been opened into false imprisonment and obstruction of the lawful professional activity of journalists, the statement said.

Alexandra Cherepnina, a journalist at Russia's largest television network Channel One, was detained Wednesday in Kiev and then deported back to Russia, where she arrived later the same day. She was also barred from visiting Ukraine for the next three years.

“The fact that Cherepnina was released without charges confirms that her forcible detention and deportation are connected with her writing and telling the truth about events currently happening in Ukraine,” Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin said.

Markin's Ukrainian colleagues had a different interpretation of Cherepnina's work in Ukraine. According to a statement posted by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) on its Facebook page

Thursday, by deporting the journalist, the agency “has blocked a propaganda campaign conducted by Russian special services.”

Cherepnina was deliberately misinforming the Russian public by describing Ukrainian soldiers as “militants who brainwash children with the aim of popularizing hatred toward Russia,” the SBU said.

The Russian state owns a majority stake in Channel One. Several other Russian journalists have been barred from Ukraine since a bloody conflict broke out in the country's east last spring between pro-Russian rebels and the central government in Kiev.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Cherepnina's deportation was “categorically unacceptable.”

The Kremlin calls on all Russian journalists to exercise “extreme caution” while working in Ukraine, Peskov told RIA Novosti.

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