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Inmates at Urals Prison Go On Hunger Strike

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Yury Tutov / TASS

Inmates at a prison in the Urals have gone on a hunger strike, with some demands including visitation rights for multiple wives and English-language conversation.

Fifteen inmates from the labor camp No. 5 in the city of Nizhny Tagil started their hunger strike on July 19, the RIA Novosti news agency reported this week, citing a spokesperson for the local branch of the Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN).

Regional prosecutors say the inmates are using the strike to force out the prison leadership and soften the regime at the high-security prison.

Among the more exotic demands, one Muslim inmate has asked to be allowed to have dates with his multiple wives — in turns— and another inmate has complained that he is not allowed to speak on the phone in a foreign language, the RIA report said, identifying the language as English.

Three inmates also inflicted wounds on themselves in what the region's FSIN branch has called "blackmail," targeted at the prison authorities.

Earlier this month, an inmate at the same prison appealed to President Vladimir Putin in a video uploaded to YouTube, complaining of torture at the facility.

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