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Russian 'Wedding Photobomb' Couple Jailed for Treason – Reports

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Baltic affairs expert Antonine Zimina. **facebook.com / ziminaak**

A Russian couple has been sentenced to lengthy prison terms for blowing a secret agent's cover in their wedding photos, the state-run TASS news agency reported Thursday.

Baltic affairs expert Antonina Zimina and her husband Konstantin Antonets were charged with treason after Zimina's old classmate, a Federal Security Service (FSB) counterintelligence officer, appeared in their wedding photos. The photographs with the FSB agent's true identity were said to have circulated on social media and on Baltic television.

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The Kaliningrad District Court found the couple guilty of high treason and sentenced Zimina to 13 years in a penal colony and Antonets to 12 years in maximum-security prison in a closed trial, TASS quoted Zimina's father as saying.

Prosecutors had asked for 14 years in a penal colony for Zimina and 13 years in a maximum-security facility for Antonets. The charges carry a maximum prison sentence of 20 years.

State prosecutors accused Zimina of disclosing the FSB agent's identity to Latvian intelligence services in 2015 online, TASS reported. Previous reports citing unnamed sources said Antonets had obtained classified information on Russian intelligence agencies' activities as a lawyer in the Kaliningrad region's economy ministry.

Zimina's father told TASS that the couple has maintained innocence since the start of the trial and plans to appeal the court ruling before it comes into effect.

A wide range of Russians, including scientists and journalists, have in recent years been accused of high treason or disclosing state secrets.

The number of Russia's criminal cases surrounding treason, espionage and state secrets has grown fivefold in the past decade and peaked after the annexation of Crimea and the start of the eastern Ukraine conflict in 2014, according to a tally by the independent Mediazona news site.

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