

Moscow Court Issues Arrest Warrant for Pyotr Verzilov Over War Fakes

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Mediazona publisher Peter Verzilov. **Anatoly Zhdanov / Kommersant**

An arrest warrant for exiled Russian activist and Mediazona publisher Pyotr Verzilov has been issued by a Moscow Court in absentia on charges of spreading “knowingly false” information about the Russian Armed Forces, Mediazona [reported](#) on Monday.

Verzilov, who is also a member of the anti-Kremlin activist group Pussy Riot, was accused of spreading “fake news” for two posts on Twitter and Instagram in which he commented on the Russian military’s alleged atrocities in Bucha, Mediazona said.

Verzilov, 35, was [placed](#) on Russia’s foreign agent list by the country’s Interior Ministry in 2021. Currently in exile, his current location is not common knowledge, though he was in eastern Ukraine at the start of the month, according to his social media.

He now risks up to 10 years in prison if he returns to Russia.

Shortly after the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russia criminalized the spread of

information about Russia's military that deviated from the Kremlin's narrative of the war.

The law also introduced jail terms of up to 15 years for the publication of "knowingly false information" about the Russian military.

In total, the Russian authorities have opened some 480 criminal cases against critics of the war since then, [according to](#) the independent police watchdog OVD-Info.

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