The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Father Facing Charges After Daughter's Anti-War Drawing Escapes House Arrest

March 28, 2023



Alexei Moskalev in court. **SOTA**

A local court in the town of Yefremov in Russia's Tula region on Tuesday sentenced single father Alexei Moskalev to two years in a penal colony for repeated violation of wartime censorship laws that criminalize "discrediting" the Russian military, Mediazona reported.

However, Moskalev himself reportedly escaped from house arrest on the eve of his sentencing and was not in court to hear the verdict and sentencing being announced.

"The verdict was announced today, but the defendant was not present because he escaped last night," court press secretary Olga Dyachuk announced at the hearing, according to Mediazona.

Dyachuk's statement was met with a round of applause from Moskalev's supporters in the courtroom.

Moskalev's case received widespread public attention on March 1 when he was arrested for

posting comments on Russian social media platform Odnoklassniki about alleged Russian atrocities committed in the Ukrainian town of Bucha and the murder of Ukrainian prisoners of war in an attack on Olenivka prison in eastern Ukraine.

“If you ask for an opinion about the special military operation in Ukraine, I believe even more than 90% of people here in court would say that they are against it. And I agree with them,” Moskalev was cited as saying in his closing statement ahead of the verdict on Monday.

Related article: In Photos: Rural Russian Town Shaken by Trial Over Child's Drawing

Moskalev’s 12-year-old daughter Masha, who was initially left home alone after her father’s arrest, was subsequently placed in a foster care facility in Yefremov. Though Moskalev was released from the detention facility and placed under house arrest the following day, the authorities have refused to return Masha to her father.

Prohibited from seeing or talking to her father on the phone, Masha is also banned from receiving visitors at the foster care facility, according to the independent rights watchdog OVD-Info.

A court on Tuesday ordered Masha to be placed into the care of social services during her father’s imprisonment, according to Mediazona.

The Moskalev family first came to the attention of local law enforcement back in April when Mashsa drew an anti-war painting in her sixth-grade art class that featured a Ukrainian and Russian flag with the phrases “No to war” and “Glory to Ukraine” written on it, as well as a woman shielding her child from Russian missiles.

Moskaleva’s art teacher flagged the painting to the school principal, who in turn reported the incident to the authorities.

Days later, Moskalev was charged with “discrediting” the Russian military for anti-war comments he had made on social media, while his daughter was visited at school by Federal Security Service (FSB) officers.

Local child protection authorities in January filed a legal petition to curtail Masha's parents' access to their daughter. A court hearing on the case is scheduled for April 6, according to the independent rights watchdog OVD-Info.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/03/28/father-facing-charges-after-daughters-anti-war-drawing-escapes-house-arrest-a80640