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Russian Court Rules to Deport Chinese LGBT Blogger

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Chinese blogger Haoyang Xu had lived in Kazan with his partner since 2021. **Gela Gogishvili / Facebook**

A Russian court has arrested a Chinese blogger for seven days and ruled to have him deported from the country one day after he was detained on charges of distributing "LGBT propaganda," the independent rights monitor OVD-Info reported Thursday.

Haoyang Xu and his partner Gela Gogishvili, who is a Russian citizen, were accused by a Kazan court of publishing videos where they "touch each other on different parts of their bodies, including sexual organs." The court also said that Xu "promoted sex changes among minors."

The bloggers' lawyer disputed the claims, arguing that they warn audiences that their blog contains adult content with an 18+ disclaimer.

Related article: Russia Arrests Chinese LGBT Blogger, Partner for 'Gay Propaganda' Violation

On Wedneday, police arrested the couple after allegedly receiving complaints over videos

published on social media channels where they document their life as an openly gay, interracial, non-Slavic couple living in Russia.

Gogishvili was released from custody the same day, but was required to attend Thursday's court hearing.

The couple, who met in Moscow and have been living in the republic of Tatarstan's capital Kazan since 2021, were targeted by St. Petersburg-based anti-LGBT activist Timur Bulatov in March and have since faced death threats and harassment over their social media posts.

In November, Russia expanded its controversial law against so-called "gay propaganda" to outlaw virtually all public expression and depictions of LGBT relationships and lifestyles.

Under the new rules, foreigners who break the law would be expelled from the country.

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