

Russian Prosecutors Seek Fine for Ex-Mayor Roizman Over Ukraine Comments

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Yevgeny Roizman during Thursday's court hearing in Yekaterinburg. **Donat Sorokin / TASS**

Updated to add details of the prosecutors' requested fine.

Russian prosecutors on Thursday recommended a fine for prominent Kremlin critic Yevgeny Roizman, on trial in the central city of Yekaterinburg for comments about the Ukraine conflict.

The prosecutor urged the judge to "find Yevgeny Roizman guilty and impose a fine of 260,000 rubles (around \$3,250)" over charges of discrediting the Russian military, according to Russian news agencies.

The 60-year-old former mayor had pleaded not guilty at the trial that began in early April and which could have seen him jailed for up to five years.

"It's completely unexpected," Roizman was cited as saying by state-run news agency RIA Novosti after the hearing.

"It's a really small request" but "let's not get ahead of ourselves," he said, noting the final verdict would be announced on Friday.

Roizman was accused of discrediting the army in a video he posted on YouTube in July 2022 in which he criticized Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

Since the start of the Ukraine conflict last year, the Kremlin has increased its efforts to silence dissent over the fighting and of President Vladimir Putin's leadership.

Roizman is among a dwindling number of prominent opposition figures who are not in jail or exile. Several have been jailed for criticizing the Ukraine conflict.

The prosecutor justified the lenient sentence recommendation by the "low gravity" of the offense and "mitigating circumstances" including the fact that Roizman has young children and is involved in charitable activities.

Related article: [Former Opposition Mayor Roizman On Trial for 'Discrediting' Russian Army](#)

Russian pop icon Alla Pugacheva published a letter in support of Roizman ahead of Thursday's hearing.

"I hope that the judiciary's foresight, integrity and independence are not completely lost in our long-suffering society and that you are undoubtedly following the current situation in the country," read the letter, which was addressed to the judge overseeing Roizman's Thursday court hearing.

"The future of our country lies with such people as Roizman, who live [to serve] the interests not only of citizens in their region, but also the interests citizens of the whole country. Yes! He protects, as he can, as his soul commands — [he is] a real patriot."

Roizman was placed on the Russian Justice Ministry's list of "foreign agents" in November.

"You have to make a difficult decision, to not be afraid of exonerating Yevgeny Vadimovich Roizman and let him go free," Pugacheva's letter continued.

However, the judge overseeing the court hearing declined to review the singer's appeal.

Pugacheva, Russia's most beloved pop singer whose musical career spans back to the Soviet period, herself [came out](#) against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in September, when she wrote in an Instagram post that Russian boys were dying for "illusory goals."

She, along with her children and husband, comedian Maxim Galkin — who was also designated a "foreign agent" by Russia last year — now live in Israel.

AFP contributed reporting.

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