

Siberian Court Jails Veteran Activist for Attacking Police Officers

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Natalia Filonova. **Sibir.Realii** RFE/RL's

A court in the Siberian republic of Buryatia has sentenced activist Natalya Filonova to nearly three years in prison on charges linked to anti-mobilization protests that swept Russia last fall, the regional news outlet Lyudi Baikala [reported](#) Thursday.

Filonova, a 61-year-old pensioner and a veteran activist, was detained at a September 2022 rally in Buryatia's capital Ulan-Ude against Russia's "partial" military mobilization for the war in Ukraine.

Prosecutors argued that following her detention, Filonova attacked four officers who were transporting her to a local court in a police vehicle.

Police officers Andrei Laptev, Artur Symbelov, Sergei Romanov and Ayur Danzanov maintained that the pensioner beat and scratched them, breaking one officer's finger and stabbing another one's face with a pen.

Filonova [denied](#) the accusations against her.

“Instruments of the crime that were confiscated from me during the search were a notebook and a pen! You will not believe it, but, according to the investigation, it was with these objects that I tried to dispose of the valiant Buryatian police,” Filonova [said](#) in an interview with the independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta earlier this month.

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Filonova was found guilty of attacking law enforcement and will serve her two-year, 10-month sentence in a corrective labor colony.

Prosecutors had requested a three-year sentence for the activist.

Filonova is the adoptive mother of a 16-year-old son with a disability.

Following Filonova’s arrest, her son moved in with the activist’s relatives. Soon after, foster care services forcefully [transferred](#) him to a hospital and then to an [orphanage](#), where he still remains.

“The boy was safe with the relatives. This, of course, is an attempt to put pressure on the activist,” Buryatian human rights defender Nadezhda Nizovkina [told](#) regional RFE/RL affiliate Sibir.Realii last December.

Russia’s Memorial human rights organization [recognized](#) Filonova as a political prisoner in March 2023.

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