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Detained U.S.-Russian Journalist Hit With Fresh Charges

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Radio Liberty editor Alsu Kurmasheva. **Yegor Aleyev / TASS**

Russian authorities have opened a new criminal case against detained U.S.-Russian journalist Alsu Kurmasheva, the state-affiliated news agency Tatar.Inform reported Tuesday.

Kurmasheva, a journalist for the U.S.-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), was arrested in October in Kazan, the capital of Russia's republic of Tatarstan, for failing to register as a "foreign agent."

The new charges against Kurmasheva are linked to an alleged violation of Russia's wartime censorship laws, according to Tatar.Inform.

Russian authorities accuse Kurmasheva of "spreading knowingly false information" about the Armed Forces by means of promoting and distributing a book of interviews with Russian citizens opposing the invasion of Ukraine, the news outlet reported.

The book titled "No War: Stories of 40 Russians Opposing the Invasion of Ukraine" was

released by Kurmasheva's employer — RFE/RL's Tatar-Bashkir division Idel.Realii — last year.

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"We strongly condemn the decision of Russian authorities to introduce additional charges against Alsu," Idel.Realii quoted RFE/RL's acting president Jeffrey Gedmin as saying Tuesday.

"Journalism is not a crime. It is time to put an end to this cruel persecution," he added.

Earlier on Tuesday, Tatarstan's Supreme Court upheld the previous ruling of a district court in Kazan to extend Kurmasheva's pretrial arrest until Feb. 4, 2024.

Kurmasheva, a dual U.S. and Russian citizen who has been living in Prague, is accused of violating a total of three articles of the Russian Criminal Code.

In addition to accusations of violating Russia's "foreign agent" and "army fakes" laws, a Russian court found Kurmasheva guilty of failing to notify the authorities of her American citizenship.

Kurmasheva is the second U.S. journalist to be arrested in Russia this year.

Last month, a Moscow court extended the pre-trial detention of Wall Street Journal correspondent Evan Gershkovich, who was arrested on treason charges in the Ural's city of Yekaterinburg in March.

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