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Russian Court Jails Woman for Wearing 'Extremist' Rainbow Earrings

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A court in the central Russian city of Nizhny Novgorod has jailed a woman for wearing rainbow earrings, the human rights group Egida reported late Wednesday, marking the second case of its kind after Russia banned the so-called "LGBT movement" as an "extremist" organization in November.

According to Egida, law enforcement agents tasked with combating "extremism" detained the woman after a group of "aggressive people" approached her and her friend at a local cafe and filmed them on camera.

A video shared by ultra-conservative bloggers showed an unidentified man threatening to turn the pair into the police for wearing a Ukrainian flag pin and rainbow earrings.

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The woman, who was identified as Anastasia Yershova in court documents, was questioned by police and then brought before a judge, who cited the Russian Supreme Court's November ruling when ordering her arrest.

“Also, during the process, the earrings themselves were examined, and it was found that they have the shape of a frog with an image of a 7-color rainbow,” Egida quoted an unnamed defense attorney as saying.

Nizhny Novgorod’s Sormovsky District Court found Yershova guilty of publicly displaying symbols of an “extremist” organization, a misdemeanor offense, and jailed her for five days.

“We were confident we would win the court case,” the defense lawyer said, according to Egida. “But it turned out to be an unexpected decision.”

The ruling was handed down one day after a photographer went on trial in the southern city of Saratov, the country’s first case for displaying an LGBT symbol.

The photographer, 33-year-old Inna Mosina, maintained that the rainbow flags she shared on her Instagram page do not represent LGBTQ+ symbols.

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