

Russia Opens Criminal Case Against Journalist Zygar Over ‘War Fakes’

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Mikhail Zygar. Elena Ternovaja (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Update: Zygar has been added to Russia's wanted list on unspecified charges, the independent Mediazona news website [reported](#) on April 9.

Russian authorities have pressed criminal charges against journalist Mikhail Zygar for spreading “fake news” about the Russian military, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency [reported](#) on Wednesday, citing an anonymous law enforcement source.

According to the Baza Telegram channel, which is purported to have links to Russian law enforcement, Zygar is [accused of spreading](#) false information on social media about atrocities committed by the Russian army in the Ukrainian city of Bucha.

Russian troops occupied Bucha, located west of Kyiv, shortly after Moscow sent troops into Ukraine in early 2022. More than 450 people [were massacred](#) during the Russian occupation, according to the Ukrainian authorities.

Moscow [denied](#) that its army carried out atrocities against the city's civilian population, instead accusing Kyiv and its Western allies of staging the scenes.

If convicted, Zygar, who currently lives outside of Russia, could face up to 10 years in prison.

Zygar, a former editor-in-chief of the independent broadcaster Dozhd, was added to Russia's list of “foreign agents” in 2022.

Since Moscow launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russian authorities have [opened](#) at least 297 criminal cases for spreading “fakes” about the war, according to the independent rights watchdog OVD-Info.

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