

‘Unbearable’ Military Censorship Forces Closure of Novosibirsk Newspaper

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The town of Berdsk in the Novosibirsk Region. **Sergfokin (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

An independent newspaper in the Novosibirsk region town of Berdsk has announced its [closure](#) after 20 years due to “unbearable” wartime censorship.

Founded in 2003, Kurier.Sreda emerged as one of the main sources of news in Berdsk, a town of around 100,000 people and a suburb of the region’s capital city Novosibirsk.

“We tried to live under military censorship for two years. I can say now that it’s unbearable,” Kurier.Sreda’s editor-in-chief Galina Komornikova wrote in a farewell column.

“I can’t recall a single quiet month in all 25 months of living under military censorship,” Komornikova added, decrying claims of violations from the police, the Federal Security Service (FSB), as well as Russia’s media watchdog Roskomnadzor.

Independent Russian media has faced unprecedented pressure since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. News outlets that remain in the country have been

saddled with steep fines for publishing information that contradicts the Kremlin's narrative of the war, while some journalists have been jailed.

Komornikova said Kurier.Sreda was forced to pay 1.5 million rubles (\$16,200) in fines for simply failing to label foreign agents in its articles.

“Once we received a notice from some region's prosecutor's office accusing us of having the word ‘war’ on our website,” the chief editor wrote, adding: “I looked at the text and the word ‘war’ appeared in 2020.”

The Kremlin often punishes critics for referring to its invasion of Ukraine as anything other than a “special military operation.”

Kurier.Sreda's website stopped updating local news on Monday, April 1.

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