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Worker at Russian Military's Patriot Park Accused of Treason – BBC

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Nikolai Martynov. **Nikolai Martynov / VK**

An employee of the Russian Defense Ministry's military-themed park outside Moscow has been arrested on treason charges, the BBC Russian service reported Thursday.

Nikolai Martynov, 26, worked as an engineer at Patriot Park, which displays Russian and Soviet military equipment on its sprawling 5,400-hectare grounds.

He was arrested on Feb. 21 on treason charges, according to the report. There was no information available of what exactly Martynov was accused of, BBC Russian said.

The maximum penalty for treason is life imprisonment.

According to BBC Russian, Martunov was a member of the pro-Kremlin volunteer movement "We Are Together" and a member of the "SportVolunteer" movement which organizes free sports activities.

Martynov also sold handmade chevrons online, reportedly sewing chevrons of law

enforcement agencies, the Wagner mercenary group and Chechnya's Akhmat military unit, BBC Russian said.

Martynov is one of dozens of Russians who have found themselves behind bars on treason charges in recent years.

Russian authorities opened a record number of treason cases in 2023, said the human rights project Perviy Otdel, which specializes in cases being investigated by the Federal Security Service (FSB).

A record 70 cases were submitted to courts last year, 63 of which were for high treason, Perviy Otdel said. Seven others were for "confidential cooperation with a foreign state or organization."

Perviy Otdel attributed the record number of treason cases to "provocations by FSB officers" who trick anti-war Russians into incriminating themselves online.

President Vladimir Putin in 2023 signed off on a law increasing the maximum penalty for "high treason" from 20 years to life imprisonment.

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