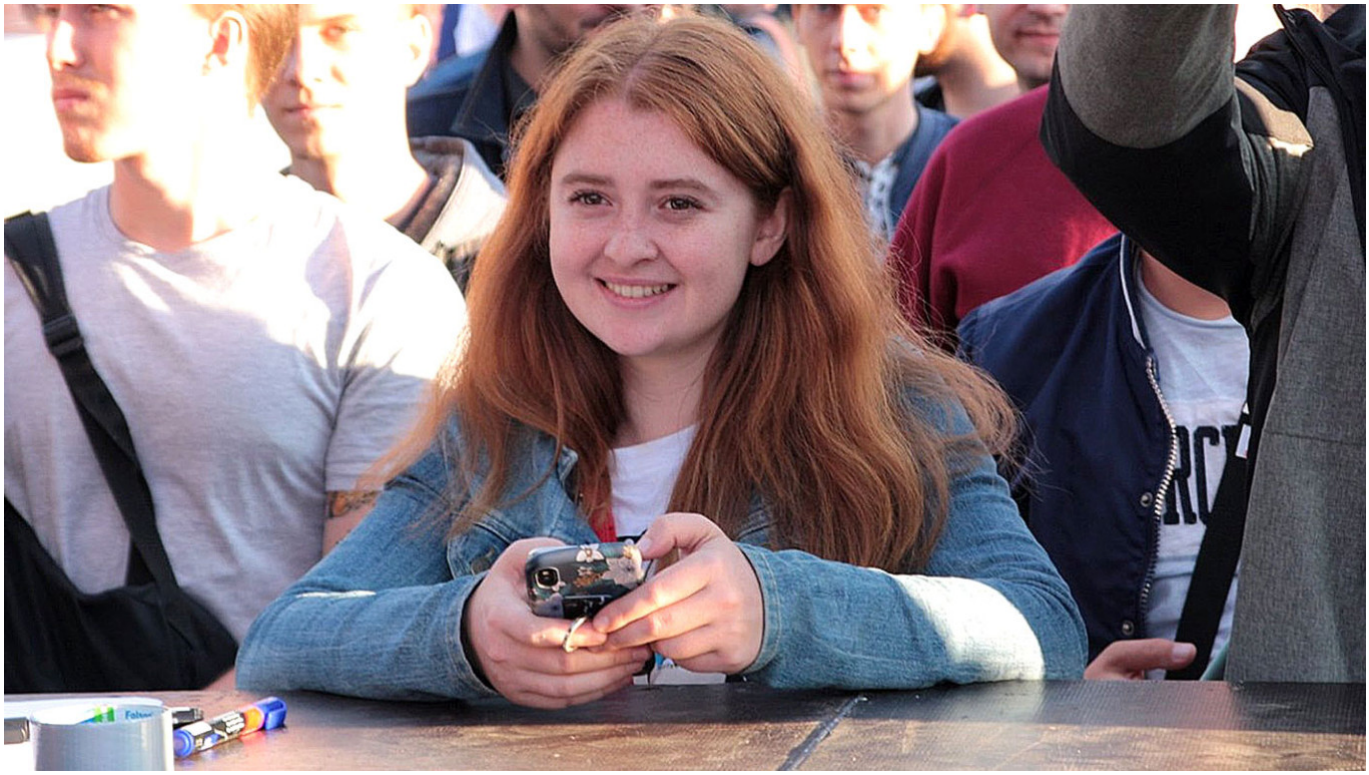
The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

St. Petersburg Journalist's Home Searched Over Exiled Colleague's Criminal Case – Reports

April 19, 2024



Ksenia Klochkova. **Yuri Bagrov / Facebook**

A journalist for a leading St. Petersburg news website has had her home searched by police in connection with a criminal probe against prominent exiled investigative journalist Andrei Zakharov, the outlet, Fontanka.ru, reported Friday.

Reporter Ksenia Klochkova was reportedly named a witness in the case against Zakharov.

"The searches at Ksenia's are allegedly part of this case because she's an acquaintance of Zakharov," Fontanka's editor-in-chief Alexander Gorshkov told the pro-Kremlin outlet gazeta.ru.

"But as far as I understand, dozens of journalists, and not just journalists, in St. Petersburg are friends and acquaintances of Zakharov," Gorshkov said.

Zakharov started his journalism career at Fontanka in 2010-16. He then worked for the RBC

news outlet, BBC Russia and the investigative outlet Proekt in 2016-22.

He left Russia in December 2021, saying he faced "unprecedented surveillance" following his designation as a "foreign agent" two months prior.

The Moskovsky Komsomolets tabloid reported earlier Friday that investigators launched a criminal case against Zakharov for violating the terms of his "foreign agent" status.

Fontanka said authorities seized Klochkova's electronic devices following the four-hour searches and now plan to interrogate her.

It clarified that the case against Zakharov was launched Wednesday in connection with his failure to comply with "foreign agent" labeling rules, confirming Moskovsky Komsomolets' earlier reporting.

"Foreign agents" face criminal charges for failing to comply with the legal requirements of the label, which carries a negative Soviet-era stigma. These requirements include submitting regular financial reports and detailed lists of income and spending, as well as prominently displaying a disclaimer on all articles, social media posts and other publications.

Authorities have not officially specified which charges Zakharov faces.

Zakharov expressed concern for Klochkova and said he had no information about which crime he was suspected of.

"This is an understandable consequence of my work," he wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/04/19/st-petersburg-journalists-home-searched-over-exiled-colleagues-criminal-case-reports-a84898