

Russia Charges Blogger Varlamov With ‘Discrediting’ Army

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Blogger Ilya Varlamov. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Popular travel blogger Ilya Varlamov has been [charged](#) with “discrediting” the Russian armed forces, the independent news website Mediazona [reported](#) Thursday, citing the Moscow court system’s open database of cases.

Moscow’s Tverskoy District Court registered a lawsuit against Varlamov that was filed by the local prosecutor’s office. The blogger is accused of “discrediting” the army — an administrative charge for first-time offenders.

The court database provides no further details about the charge, including a possible hearing date. Varlamov, who runs a YouTube channel with over 5 million subscribers, has publicly criticized Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Scores of Russians have been charged with “discrediting” the military since lawmakers passed wartime censorship laws shortly after the February 2022 invasion.

Repeat offenders risk being jailed for up to five years, while those convicted of “spreading false information” — another wartime censorship law — face up to 15 years in prison.

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Last year, Russia’s Justice Ministry added Varlamov to its list of “[foreign agents](#),” a label that requires individuals and entities to display a lengthy disclaimer in any publications and submit regular financial reports.

A Moscow court [fined](#) Varlamov 30,000 rubles (\$334) earlier this month for refusing to label his publications with the “foreign agent” disclaimer.

Varlamov, who is recovering from [surgery](#) after he was injured on a ski trip last year, did not immediately comment on the charge against him.

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