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Russian Man Jailed 13 Years for Donating $54 to Ukrainian Army

By AFP

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Sergei Bobylev / TASS

A Russian court has sentenced a man to 13 years in prison on "treason" charges after he was reported to have donated around $54 to Ukraine's military.

The Moscow City Court said Friday it had found Alexander Kraychik guilty of "high treason" saying he provided "financial assistance to a foreign state [to support] activities against the security of the Russian Federation."

Russian authorities have opened dozens of "treason" cases against individuals they claim have acted to support Ukraine since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The allegations range from arson or sabotage on Russian military facilities and infrastructure sites, to providing information on Russian army installations or sending funds to groups supporting Kyiv.

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State media and rights groups reported Kraychik had transferred 50 euros on Feb. 26, 2022 — two days after Russia launched its invasion — to a Germany-based organization raising money to support Ukraine's army.

He was arrested in 2023 while attempting to leave Russia on a flight to Turkey after Federal Security Service (FSB) officers had days earlier confiscated his phone during a search at his work, the Memorial rights group reported.

Kraychik's 13-year jail sentence was handed down on Nov. 1, but the court announced the verdict only on Friday. The court said Kraychik was "motivated by political and ideological hatred."

His case echoes that of U.S.-Russian citizen Ksenia Karelina, who was sentenced to 12 years in prison on "treason charges" for donating $50 to a pro-Ukraine charity.

Karelina, who normally lives in the U.S., was arrested in January while visiting family in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg.

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