The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Sentenced to 24 Years for Army Office Arson Attempts

By AFP

November 14, 2024



Andrey Nikerichev / Moskva News Agency

A Russian military court sentenced on Thursday a man to 24 years in prison for the attempted arson of a military recruitment office, state media reported.

Russia has seen a spate of arson attacks on draft offices since it sent troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

Authorities have prosecuted those caught attempting to throw Molotov cocktails at military offices harshly, meting out several years-long sentences to alleged perpetrators.

The Second Western Military District Court sentenced crane operator Sergei Andreyev to 24 years in a prison colony on "treason" and "terrorism" charges after he twice attempted to set fire to an enlistment office in Moscow in autumn 2023, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

The first time the device did not explode and on the second occasion, it did, but caused no significant damage or casualties, the independent Sota Vision outlet reported, citing case materials.

The 24-year sentence is one of the longest handed down for such an offense.

Prosecutors accused him of working on behalf of Ukrainian secret services.

Investigators had found pyrotechnic components at his house when he was arrested in November 2023.

Andreyev's lawyers had asked for the "treason" and "terrorism" charges to be changed to "arson," which carries a lesser sentence.

Russian courts have opened hundreds of criminal cases against those prosecutors say oppose the Ukraine conflict, and are accused of working with Kyiv's army or undermining the military offensive.

Earlier on Thursday the same court sentenced a 43-year-old woman to eight years in prison for social media posts calling for President Vladimir Putin to be killed and reporting on alleged Russian atrocities in Ukraine.

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