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Russian Prosecutors Seek New Sentence for Imprisoned Journalist Ponomarenko

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Journalist Maria Ponomarenko. **SOTAvision**

Russian state prosecutors are seeking a two-year prison sentence for jailed Siberian journalist and activist Maria Ponomarenko on charges of assaulting prison guards, her employer RusNews reported Monday.

Ponomarenko, 46, was sentenced to six years in prison in February 2023 for spreading "fake news" about Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Authorities charged her with assaulting prison guards in the fall of 2023.

Ponomarenko, who was designated a political prisoner by the human rights group Memorial, has denied both charges.

State prosecutors asked the Shipunovsky District Court in the Siberian region of Altai to combine her current six-year jail sentence with the requested two-year sentence, RusNews reported.

During a hearing last Monday, RusNews reported that Ponomarenko was placed in an isolation cell for 30 days. She accused prison authorities of abuse, saying her time in solitary confinement triggered severe panic attacks.

Ponomarenko, who has been diagnosed with histrionic personality disorder, slit her wrists in September 2022 while in pre-trial detention, claiming mistreatment.

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