

St. Petersburg Woman Jailed Over Army Criticism After Neighbor's Denunciation

By [AFP](#)

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Anna Aleksandrova. [@sotavisionmedia](#)

A Russian court on Tuesday jailed a woman for more than five years for criticizing the military on social media, allegedly after her neighbor denounced her.

Anna Aleksandrova, a 47-year-old hairdresser, was arrested in November 2023 over pseudonymous posts she made on VKontakte, Russia's largest social network.

Prosecutors accused her of sharing information about how to avoid being mobilized, and of being critical of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Russia has opened hundreds of criminal cases against its citizens for spreading "fake news" about the military since the beginning of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Saint Petersburg's Pushkinsky District Court sentenced her to five years and two months in prison and banned her from using social media for three additional years, the court's press

service said on Telegram.

Aleksandrova pleaded not guilty at the trial, saying she was set up by a neighbor with whom she was embroiled in a land dispute, according to independent news outlet Mediazona.

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Aleksandrova, a mother of two, has been in pre-trial detention for over a year.

She told the Current Time news outlet that investigators broke down the front door of her apartment during her arrest, and that one of them threatened to “destroy” her and her son.

Mediazona also reported that Aleksandrova’s health has deteriorated since her incarceration.

Since launching its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has waged an unprecedented crackdown on dissent that rights groups have likened to Soviet-era mass repression.

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