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# Russia Presses Criminal Charges Against Meduza Founder Timchenko

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Galina Timchenko. **AP / TASS**

Russian authorities on Tuesday pressed criminal charges against Galina Timchenko, the founder and publisher of the exiled news website Meduza, accusing her of organizing the activities of an "undesirable" organization.

In a statement, the Moscow branch of Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, alleged that Timchenko posted videos online that stirred public protest sentiment and involved people in the activities of an "undesirable" organization.

Investigators said they were considering whether to place Timchenko on the country's wanted list.

Timchenko, 64, served as editor-in-chief of the Lenta.ru news site until 2014, when she was dismissed by its Kremlin-linked owner. Following her departure, she and former Lenta.ru staff relocated to Latvia to establish Meduza, which was labeled a "foreign agent" in 2021.

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In 2023, Russian prosecutors branded Meduza an "undesirable" organization, banning it from operating inside the country and criminalizing any association with it.

The Justice Ministry designated Timchenko as a "foreign agent" the next year, accusing her of opposing the country's "special military operation" in Ukraine and spreading "inaccurate information aimed at forming a negative image of the Russian armed forces."

In June 2024, a Moscow court handed Timchenko a 14,000-ruble ($175) administrative fine on charges of participating in an "undesirable organization."

According to data collected by the exiled Mediazona news website, Russian courts have issued more than 130 fines related to involvement with media outlets designated as "undesirable." Fifty-four of these administrative cases involve Meduza directly or mention the publication by name.

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