The Moscow Times
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Prosecutors Seek Criminal Charges Against YouTuber Yury Dud Over 'Foreign Agent' Law Violations

June 30, 2025



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Moscow prosecutors announced Monday that they are seeking criminal charges against prominent YouTuber and journalist Yury Dud for repeatedly violating Russia's "foreign agent" law.

Dud, 38, was designated a "foreign agent" in April 2022, weeks after condemning Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine as an "imperial frenzy." He left the country shortly after and later failed to overturn the designation in court.

The Moscow Prosecutor's Office accused Dud of continuing to distribute content online without the required "foreign agent" disclaimer. He was fined twice already for failing to publish his content with the label.

Breaking Russia's "foreign agent" law multiple times carries a maximum prison sentence of

two years.

Authorities use the “foreign agent” label, which carries Soviet-era connotations, to target individuals and organizations they view as enemies of the state. Those hit with the designation are required to submit rigorous financial reports to the Justice Ministry, as well as display “foreign agent” disclaimers in publications and social media posts.

Dud, a former sports reporter, launched his long-form interview channel on YouTube in 2017. It has since gained more than 10 million subscribers and often features high-profile public figures, including politicians, musicians, journalists and businesspeople.

Prosecutors said they have referred the case to investigators to pursue criminal charges against Dud.

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https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/06/30/prosecutors-seek-criminal-charges-against-youtuber-yury-dud-over-foreign-agent-law-violations-a89621