

Russia Revokes Citizenship of Azerbaijani-Born MMA Fighter Amid Diplomatic Spat

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Javid Rzaev. @readovkanews

An Azerbaijani-born MMA fighter [said](#) Russian authorities revoked his citizenship, the latest fallout from a growing diplomatic row between Moscow and Baku.

Javid Rzaev, 30, told the RBC news outlet that he was informed of the decision by an FSB security officer in the southern Saratov region.

Pro-Kremlin media [published](#) a video on Wednesday purporting to show the moment Rzaev was told his Russian passport was being annulled over actions allegedly threatening the country's "political and social stability." The officer in the video said Rzaev could appeal the decision within 30 days.

Rzaev is currently serving a two-year corrective labor sentence over a nightclub altercation. He was convicted of aggravated assault in April for attacking a DJ in November 2024.

The Russian Boxing Federation [banned](#) Rzaev for life last July and [filed a complaint](#) with police after he called a fellow fighter a “Russian pig” during a tournament in Moscow. He later posted a video apology on Instagram, calling Russia his home and [expressing](#) hope to “earn back” the public’s trust.

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Javid’s denaturalization came amid an all-time low in relations between Russia and Azerbaijan following the deaths of two Azerbaijani men during police raids in the city of Yekaterinburg last month.

Authorities in Azerbaijan launched a criminal investigation into the men’s deaths, accusing Russian law enforcement officers of torture. Russia’s Foreign Ministry denied wrongdoing, saying the June 27 arrests were lawful.

Azerbaijani police arrested at least 10 Russian citizens in apparent retaliation, while Russian authorities have jailed six ethnic Azerbaijani men in connection with a murder investigation in Yekaterinburg.

Earlier this month, the head of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Yekaterinburg had his Russian citizenship [revoked](#) and was [deported](#) from the country.

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