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Moscow Court Jails 5 Pussy Riot Members in Absentia Over 'War Fakes'

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Sergei Gapon / AFP

A court in Moscow sentenced five members of the exiled feminist protest group Pussy Riot to prison in absentia on charges stemming from their anti-war performances, the news website Mediazona reported Monday.

Maria Alyokhina, Taso Pletner, Olga Borisova, Diana Burkot and Alina Petrova were accused of spreading "false information" about the Russian military in a December 2022 music video called "Mama, Don't Watch TV."

They were also accused of committing "obscene acts" with President Vladimir Putin's portrait during an April 2024 performance in Munich, Germany. One Pussy Riot member urinated on a photo of the Russian leader during that performance.

Moscow's Basmanny District Court found all five Pussy Riot members guilty of the charges.

Alyokhina, the most high-profile member, received the highest prison sentence of 13 years

and 15 days in absentia. Pletner was sentenced to 11 years, while the other three women received nine-year sentences each.

Prison sentences issued in absentia usually take effect once a person is extradited to Russia.

The five Pussy Riot members, through their lawyers, informed the court that they reject the charges and consider their prison sentences to be politically motivated.

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