The Moscow Times
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Russia Arrests Yabloko Deputy Head Over 'Army Fakes'

October 02, 2025



Maxim Kruglov **Yabloko press service**

Russian investigators have arrested the deputy chairman of the liberal Yabloko party on criminal charges of spreading "false information" about the military, law enforcement authorities said Wednesday.

The Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, said the charges against Maxim Kruglov were linked to an April 2022 Telegram post in which he shared so-called "false information" about the Russian military's actions against civilians in Ukraine.

He faces five to 10 years in prison on the charges.

Russian forces withdrawing from the Kyiv suburb of Bucha in late March 2022 left behind widespread evidence of killings and other atrocities against civilians during the early weeks of Russia's full-scale invasion.

Moscow denies its forces committed atrocities in Bucha and claims Ukraine and its Western

allies staged the bloody scenes.

Kruglov served as a Moscow city councillor from 2019-2024 and became Yabloko's deputy chairman in December 2023.

He joins a long list of people jailed for speaking out against the war in Ukraine. Russia outlawed "discrediting" and spreading "deliberately false" information about the military shortly after it invaded Ukraine in 2022.

Another senior Yabloko member, Lev Shlosberg, was arrested in June for allegedly "discrediting" the military after he called for a ceasefire in Ukraine during a January debate with historian Yury Pivovarov.

Following searches of his apartment, his 96-year-old father's home and Yabloko's Pskov office, Shlosberg was placed in a temporary detention facility before being moved to house arrest pending trial.

Meanwhile on Tuesday, a St. Petersburg court accepted a prosecutor's lawsuit seeking to label a book by former local opposition deputy Boris Vishnevsky as "extremist material."

Kruglov, Shlosberg and Vishnevsky have all been designated as "foreign agents" in Russia.

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