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Jailed Russian Opposition Activist Mikhail Kriger Declares Hunger Strike

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Mikhail Kriger. **SOTAvision**

Jailed Russian opposition activist Mikhail Kriger has been on a dry hunger strike since Friday in protest of his repeated placement in solitary confinement, his supporters said.

Kriger, 65, who is serving his seven-year sentence at Correctional Colony No. 5 in the Oryol region, first launched a hunger strike on Sept. 25. He started a dry hunger strike — meaning he is abstaining from both food and water — on Friday after a planned visit with his daughter was canceled.

"The last straw for the hunger strike was the cancellation of our visit by the colony administration. I begged him to start eating, but anyone who knows my father knows it's useless to try to persuade him," his daughter Katya Kriger said in a Facebook post on Friday.

Kriger has said he believed that prison authorities were deliberately trying to isolate him to prevent contact with other inmates.

The prison administration said Kriger would be brought to the medical ward and force-fed once his condition became serious enough, according to his support team. He is currently seen by a doctor twice a day.

Kriger was sentenced to seven years in prison in 2023 for anti-Kremlin social media posts that prosecutors said "justified terrorism" and "incited hatred."

Kriger has repeatedly denounced the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine and during his trial said he was being "persecuted" for his "anti-war and openly pro-Ukrainian position."

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The Nobel Peace Prize-winning human rights group Memorial designated Kriger a political prisoner.

The anti-Kremlin activist group Pussy Riot has raised alarm over Kriger's hunger strike and called on followers to write letters to Kriger and the prison administration.

Shirley Manson, the lead singer of the rock band Garbage, publicly called on the prison chief to stop placing Kriger in solitary confinement, calling his hunger strike "a desperate act by a man deprived of humane treatment and the most basic human contact."

"I urge you, as a person with both power and conscience, to end his isolation immediately and allow him to serve his sentence among the general prison population," Manson said.

Kriger's nephew, 24-year-old journalist Artyom Kriger, is also serving a 5.5-year prison sentence on charges of "extremism" over alleged ties to the late opposition figure Alexei Navalny.

Artyom Kriger and three other journalists were accused of "collecting material, preparing and editing videos" for Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation and his Navalny LIVE YouTube channel. His employer, the independent news outlet SOTAVision, has repeatedly denied the accusations, saying he has never worked for Navalny's organizations.

The Memorial group has also designated Artyom Kriger a political prisoner.

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