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Moscow Prosecutors Seek Jail Sentence for Exiled Comedian Semyon Slepakov

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Semyon Slepakov. **Igor Ivanko / Moskva News Agency**

Russian prosecutors have launched criminal proceedings against exiled comedian Semyon Slepakov after he was accused of running afoul of the country's laws on "foreign agents."

The Justice Ministry designated Slepakov a "foreign agent" in 2023 after he publicly criticized the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russia's Supreme Court later rejected his appeal against the designation.

Slepakov has been fined at least twice for failing to add a "foreign agent" disclaimer to his posts on social media.

On Monday, Moscow's Prosecutor's Office accused Slepakov of "having continued to disseminate messages and materials on social media in violation of foreign agent regulations" since October 2025.

Prosecutors said they sent a request to investigators to launch a criminal probe and press

charges against the comedian. Repeatedly failing to comply with Russia's laws on "foreign agents" carries a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

Slepakov, who rose to fame in the early 2000s as a participant on the comedy game show KVN, publicly spoke out against the war in the early days of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

He left Russia for Israel in October 2022 after pro-government figures called on the authorities to investigate him over his popular satirical songs, which often touch on political subject matter.

Authorities in Russia use the "foreign agent" label to target individuals they view as enemies of the state. Those designated must prominently display disclaimers on their publications, including social media posts, and provide extensive financial disclosures to the government.

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