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FSB Arrests Former Radio Liberty Reporter in Far East Russia

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EPA / TASS

Russia's FSB security service announced Thursday the arrest of a former Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) freelance reporter in the Zabaikalsky region on suspicion of treason.

The man, a 65-year-old resident of Chita, is accused of funneling intelligence on critical infrastructure to Ukrainian special services.

According to an FSB statement, the journalist provided information used to facilitate Ukrainian cyberattacks, which the agency claims "temporarily hindered regional authorities" in their official duties.

A judge ordered him to be placed in pre-trial detention. If convicted of treason, he faces a maximum sentence of life in prison.

While the FSB withheld the man's name, local and independent media earlier identified him

as Alexander Andreyev.

In addition to his work for the U.S.-funded RFE/RL, new outlets in Chita reported that he previously worked as a contributor for the opposition website Kasparov.ru and Mikhail Khodorkovsky's now-defunct MBKh Media.

Russia designated RFE/RL as a "foreign agent" and "undesirable" organization, effectively banning its operations in the country.

Law enforcement authorities have pursued criminal charges against multiple journalists connected to RFE/RL in recent years, including editor Alsu Kurmasheva, who was arrested in 2023 and then later released in a prisoner swap with the United States.

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