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CEO of Russia's Largest Book Publisher Detained in LGBTQ+ 'Extremism' Probe

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Yevgeny Kapyev. **Yaroslav Chingaev / Moskva News Agency**

Law enforcement authorities have detained the CEO of Russia's largest publishing house for questioning in connection with an ongoing investigation into LGBTQ+ "extremism," Russian media reported Tuesday.

Yevgeny Kapyev, head of the publishing giant Eksmo, was taken in by police following a search of the company's Moscow office.

Law enforcement sources told the Kommersant newspaper that officials are considering pressing charges of organizing the activities of an "extremist" group, a designation Russia's Supreme Court applied to the so-called "international LGBT movement" in late 2023.

Eksmo confirmed Kapyev's detention to the Interfax news agency, noting that the questioning is linked to a criminal probe launched in May 2025. Last year, several Eksmo employees were arrested on suspicion of violating laws against LGBTQ+ "propaganda" and "extremism."

Pro-Kremlin media reported that an ongoing investigation focuses on the distribution of LGBTQ+ literature, specifically the 2021 bestseller "Summer in a Pioneer Tie."

The novel, which depicts a relationship between a teenager and a counselor at a Soviet-era summer camp, has been a frequent target of conservative lawmakers.

In 2023, Eksmo acquired Popcorn Books, the original publisher of "Summer in a Pioneer Tie," after it was forced to close under legal pressure.

Three senior managers from Popcorn Books and the Eksmo imprint Individuum remain under house arrest as part of the LGBTQ+ "propaganda" and "extremism" investigation.

The Supreme Court's 2023 ruling effectively criminalized all public advocacy or displays of LGBTQ+ lifestyles, leading to a wave of arrests, shuttered businesses and the removal of hundreds of titles from Russian bookstores and libraries.

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