The Moscow Times
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Yabloko Deputy Leader Jailed 7 Years for ‘War Fakes’

June 25, 2026



Maxim Kruglov. **Yabloko_press / Telegram**

A judge in Moscow sentenced the deputy leader of the liberal Yabloko party to seven years in prison on Wednesday after finding him guilty of spreading "false" information about the Russian military.

Maxim Kruglov, a former Moscow city councilman, was arrested in October over social media posts from April 2022 discussing civilian deaths following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, including in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha.

A judge at Moscow's Zamoskvoretsky Court found Kruglov guilty and handed down the seven-year sentence, according to the state-run RIA news agency.

In court, Kruglov pleaded not guilty, arguing his posts were intended solely as a call to investigate allegations that the Russian military carried out a massacre of civilians in Bucha during the early days of the war.

Kruglov is the latest in a series of Yabloko politicians to face criminal prosecution in recent years.

Law enforcement authorities placed Lev Shlosberg, the head of the party's Pskov branch, under house arrest last summer. In December, a court fined party chair Nikolai Rybakov for publishing a photo of the late opposition activist Alexei Navalny on social media.

Yabloko is one of Russia's oldest opposition parties, but it has been largely sidelined in recent decades, losing most of its influence and facing ongoing bureaucratic restrictions that prevent its candidates from running for office.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
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