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Children's Hospice Founder Arrested and Charged Over 'War Fakes'

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Lida Moniava. **Lida Moniava / Facebook**

Lida Moniava, a prominent advocate for critically ill children's care, has been charged with spreading false information about the military, her attorney told Russian media on Wednesday.

Moniava was arrested following a police search of her home in Moscow earlier in the day and questioned by officials from the Investigative Committee, Russia's top investigative body.

Moscow's Simonovsky District Court is expected to rule on pre-trial detention measures, her attorney told the news outlet RBC.

The charge of spreading false information about the military carries a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison.

Moniava is the founder of the Moscow-based charity "Lighthouse," which operates hospices for seriously ill children and young adults in the Russian capital and surrounding region.

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After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Moniava created a foundation that provided shelter, medical supplies and food to people fleeing from the war. The organization also later helped Armenians fleeing from conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as Russians displaced from the Kursk and Belgorod regions.

That foundation suspended operations last September due to the dwindling number of refugees arriving in Moscow and the Moscow region.

Moniava was previously detained in January and in February. She was fined 45,000 rubles ($520) after being found guilty of "discrediting" the Russian military in posts on Telegram.

Despite facing pressure from the authorities, Moniava has refused to leave Russia.

"If I leave, critically ill children will end up in nursing homes and intensive care units for longer periods. Knowing that, I doubt I could live happily in some other country," she wrote earlier this year.

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