

Rights in Russia

June 2014

Right of association On 4/6 President Putin signed into law a bill enabling the Justice Ministry to register NGOs as 'foreign agents' without their consent. On 9/6 the Ministry added five NGOs to the 'foreign agent' register. On 4/6, Tatarstan prosecutors demanded Agora Human Rights Association register as a 'foreign agent'. On 24/6, 26/6, 27/6, a Moscow district court said Golos, Jurix and Public Verdict must register as 'foreign agents'.

Freedom of expression On 3/6 reports said Roskomnadzor and the FSB had drafted regulations requiring Internet companies to reveal their users' details at the request of law enforcement agencies. On 25/6 OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media Dunja Mijatović criticized amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation that could further increase government control of the Internet. On 30/6 President Putin signed into law a bill making dissemination of online material deemed extremist a criminal offence. On 5/6 the FSB briefly detained Anna Sharogradskaya, director of the St. Petersburg-based Regional Press Institute, at Pulkovo airport ahead of a trip to the U.S., confiscating her computer and USB drives. On 9/6 a Moscow court sentenced the five men convicted in the 2006 murder of Anna Politkovskaya to terms in prison (two to life). On 15/6 Russia's Investigative Committee said the body of journalist Galina Koshcheyeva missing since 10/6 had been found on 14/6 in a forest in Kirov region with traces of violence.

Right of assembly On 11/6 Chekhov City Court in Moscow region ruled that Mikhail Kosenko, convicted in the May 6, 2012 Bolotnaya Square riot case, be released from a psychiatric hospital to continue treatment as an outpatient. On 20/6 Moscow City Court heard an appeal filed by eight Bolotnaya protesters, slightly reducing sentences of two of them.

Crimea On 24/6 Amnesty International called on the Russian authorities to investigate allegations that Oleg Sentsov, the filmmaker arrested last month in Crimea on suspicion of plotting terrorist acts, has been tortured, return him to Crimea; and drop charges related solely to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. In a letter to Russian authorities, European film-makers expressed concern about Sentsov's fate.

North Caucasus In Dagestan, a suspected militant was killed and a police officer wounded in a counterterrorist operation on 4/6; two were killed by a bomb in a car in Ghunib district on 9/6; a man was reportedly shot dead on the Buinaksk-Untsukul highway on 9/6; police killed two suspected militants on 26/6 and one other suspected militant on 27/6. In Kabardino-Balkaria, four suspected militants were killed on 9/6; three more were killed and two police officers wounded on 12/6; and some 50 Muslims in a detention center went on hunger strike to protest conditions on 12/6. The Ministry of Culture banned a film about the deportation of Chechens under Stalin. On 14/6 in Stavropol the body of Zamir Taibov was found with traces of torture, a day after he had been called in for questioning by the FSB.

Aleksei Navalny On 20/6 Moscow investigators searched Navalny's apartment in connection with allegations he defrauded an opposition party in 2007, confiscating several items. The Investigative Committee said they found an allegedly stolen picture during the search.

Law enforcement agencies On 16/6 eight former police officers in Tatarstan were given prison terms ranging from two to 15 years for torturing suspects at the Dalny detention facility in Kazan, including one case in March 2012 in which the victim died.

Stalinism On 17/6 a petition was launched to save the Perm-36 GULAG Memorial Museum.

Public Chamber On 1/6 elections for seats in the Public Chamber ended in scandal as opposition candidates were weeded out amid vote rigging allegations.