Rights in Russia
Week-ending 9 August 2024

Russia's War against Ukraine
The Russian government's dismantling of civic freedoms since its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 is a dramatic escalation of its sustained assault on fundamental rights spanning more than a decade, Human Rights Watch said in a report. (HRW, 7/8/24)

Pianist and anti-war activist Pavel Kushnir died in pretrial custody in Birobidzhan on July 27 as a result of a hunger strike in protest against Russia's war on Ukraine. (RFE/RL, 3/8/24)

Journalist Dmitry Kolezev was sentenced in absentia to 7.5 years on a charge of "distributing false information about the Russian military motivated by political hatred." (RFE/RL, 6/8/24)

Russian prosecutors asked for a 15-year prison sentence for Ksenia Karelina, a dual U.S.-Russian citizen who has been held in Russia since January and pleaded guilty to a charge of treason for donating to a charity that supports Ukraine. (RFE/RL, 8/8/24; RFE/RL, 7/8/24)

Andrei Kurshin, a Russian military blogger who criticized Moscow's conduct in the Ukraine war, was sentenced to six and a half years in jail for spreading "fakes" about the army. (The Moscow Times, 7/8/24)

A court in Russia's Republic of Bashkortostan sentenced Marat Zaripov, a resident of the city of Neftekamsk, on August 6 to three years in prison over six comments he made in private online conversations on a charge of making calls for terrorism. (RFE/RL, 6/8/24)

A court in Russia's Urals city of Yekaterinburg sentenced Rustam Fararitdinov -- the half-brother of self-exiled Bashkir activist and Kremlin critic Ruslan Gabbasov -- to 5 1/2 years in prison on terrorism charges on August 7. (RFE/RL, 7/8/24)

Chinese banks have tightened their restrictions on payments from Russia out of fear of triggering U.S. secondary sanctions. (RFE/RL, 7/8/24)

Navalny / The Prisoner Exchange
The Moscow City Court on August 7 upheld a lower court's decision last month to issue an arrest warrant for Yulia Navalnaya, the widow of opposition politician Aleksei Navalny, on a charge of taking part in an extremist group's activities. (RFE/RL, 7/8/24)

Yulia Navalnaya, the widow of Russian opposition politician Aleksei Navalny, says her late husband should have been among those released from Russian jails and prisons last week in a major prisoner swap between Moscow and the West. (RFE/RL, 8/8/24)

Veteran Russian human rights defender Oleg Orlov said he hasn't adjusted to freedom yet after being released last week from a Russian jail in the largest prisoner exchange between Russia and Western countries since the Cold War ended. (RFE/RL, 8/8/24)

Memory / Right of Assembly
A group of cossacks and other pro-government activists disrupted an annual event in the northwestern republic of Karelia commemorating the victims of Stalin's purges, the Memorial human rights group said Monday. (The Moscow Times, 5/8/24)

Legislation
Russian President Vladimir Putin on August 8 signed into law a bill allowing any foreign entity, including those established by state organs of third countries, to be declared "undesirable." (RFE/RL, 8/8/24)

Internet
The YouTube video-hosting site and app have stopped being accessible across Russia, thousands of Internet users in the country said online on August 8. (RFE/RL, 8/8/24)