Rights in Russia
Week-ending 20 June 2025

Russia's War against Ukraine

Ukraine and Russia carried out their fourth prisoner exchange this week under agreements reached earlier this month during talks in Istanbul. (The Moscow Times, 14/6/25)

Ukraine said Russia had returned 1,200 bodies. (The Guardian, 14/6/25; RFE/RL, 15/6/25; The Moscow Times, 16/6/25)

Russia is making it difficult for Ukraine to identify repatriated remains by sending badly mutilated bodies and mixing up body parts, a top Ukraine official said. (RFE/RL, 16/6/25)

A new investigation by RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reveals how Russian forces carried out systematic and deliberate killings of civilians in March 2022 in Bucha. (RFE/RL, 16/6/25)

Grassroots fundraising for the Russian military slowed significantly during the third year of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 16/6/25)

Russian soldiers, who enjoy high salaries and social benefits, have become popular suitors for some low-income women. (The Moscow Times, 18/6/25)

Law enforcement authorities have arrested pro-war blogger Mikhail Polynkov who reportedly criticized President Vladimir Putin. (The Moscow Times, 18/6/25)

Russia and Ukraine have carried out another prisoner exchange, both sides confirmed. (Meduza, 19/6/25)

A military court sentenced 48-year-old Yoshkar-Ola resident Vera Sidorkina to 18 years in prison on charges of treason for attempting to join the Free Russia Legion. (Meduza, 20/6/25)

Groups of Russian and Ukrainian prisoners of war have been exchanged, Russia's Defense Ministry said in a statement. (The Moscow Times, 20/6/25)

Other news

A Moscow court declared the websites of two companies offering Instagram profile verification services "extremist" and banned them in Russia. (Meduza, 13/6/25)

Russia's Interior Ministry issued a missing persons report for Seda Suleimanova, forcibly taken to the republic of Chechnya nearly two years ago. (The Moscow Times, 16/6/25)

A court fined Yelena Orlova, manager of a St. Petersburg bookstore, 20,000 rubles for selling a copy of a jailed Belarusian anarchist's memoirs. (The Moscow Times, 16/6/25)

The head of Russia's Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin, ordered a criminal case opened after a child poured water on an eternal flame memorial. (Meduza, 16/6/25)

Members of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation said the online bank Revolut froze their accounts apparently following a request from Russian law enforcement. (Meduza, 16/6/25)

The State Duma adopted a bill that will allow authorities to penalize "foreign agents" for misdemeanor offenses committed outside Russia. (Meduza, 17/6/25)

After months of government pressure, the Saratov-based media project Svobodnye Novosti ("Free News") announced last week that it had shut down. (Meduza, 17/6/25)

The State Duma adopted a law imposing limits on the use of non-Russian languages on public signage. (Meduza, 17/6/25)

Russia's Supreme Court ordered the dissolution of the center-right Civic Initiative party. (The Moscow Times, 17/6/25)

An EU diplomat was assaulted during a work trip to the city of Vladivostok by assailants EU diplomats assume may have been linked to the FSB. (The Moscow Times, 18/6/25)

Some sections of Russian highways will never have mobile coverage, head of state-owned road company Avtodor said, due to roads passing through "closed zones." (Meduza, 19/6/25)

Prosecutors allegedly told police to drop an investigation into allegations Oleg Deripaska was a client of an alleged sex ring. (The Moscow Times, 19/6/25)