Rights in Russia
Week-ending 6 February 2026

Russia's War against Ukraine

Russia's Justice Ministry on Friday labeled the exiled news outlet Novaya Vkladka a "foreign agent" on accusations that it openly opposes Russia's war against Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 30/1/26)

Bill Browder is campaigning for sanctions on refineries in India, China and Turkey that process Russia's oil and may funnel between $500m and $1bn a day to Russia. (The Guardian, 31/2/26)

Kazakh authorities deported Alexander Kachkurkin, an IT specialist with both Ukrainian and Russian citizenship who grew up in Crimea, to Russia, where he was immediately arrested and charged with treason over alleged money transfers to Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 2/2/26; Meduza, 5/2/26)

Violent crimes by Russian men who have returned from the front, many of them convicts who were freed to fight in Ukraine, have been a problem that is as persistent as it is gruesome. (RFE/RL, 3/2/26)

The Russian government said it would allocate 1.27 billion rubles ($16.6 million) to cover three months of housing costs for nearly 21,000 families displaced as a result of Ukraine's incursion into the southwestern Kursk region. (The Moscow Times, 5/2/26)

Ukraine and Russia concluded a second round of US-brokered talks in Abu Dhabi, with the two sides conducting a major prisoner swap. (The Guardian, 6/2/26; RFE/RL, 5/2/26)

Other news

Authorities in Moscow arrested a 16-year-old suspect in connection with the murder of a high-level official at Russia's state censorship agency, Roskomnadzor. (Meduza, 31/1/26)

2026 has seen a rapid rise in the cost of basic necessities as prices for vegetables, fruit, meat, dairy products, pet food, and other everyday goods have climbed sharply. (Meduza, 2/2/26)

Russian education authorities have advised universities and research institutions to assess the risks of employees' planned work trips to so-called "unfriendly" countries and decide in advance whether such travel should be approved. (The Moscow Times, 2/2/26)

Linguists at Russia's Academy of Sciences are calling for the protection of curse words after the head of the Russian Orthodox Church criticised increased use of obscenities. (The Moscow Times, 2/2/26)

Europe's top human rights court ruled that Russia subjected opposition activist Alexi Navalny to "inhuman treatment" following his arrest in 2021. (The Moscow Times, 3/2/26)

The newly formed Platform for Dialogue with Russian Democratic Forces at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) held its first meeting. (The Moscow Times, 3/2/26)

Krasnoyarsk region announced plans to limit the sale of alcohol, joining a growing list of regions that have adopted tougher measures aimed at curbing alcohol consumption. (The Moscow Times, 3/2/26)

Armenian police investigators identified two Russians as suspects in the murder of Chechen woman Ayshat Baimuradova who was said to have fled domestic violence. (The Moscow Times, 4/2/26)

President Putin dismissed his longtime ally and former Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov as special representative for environmental protection and transportation. (The Moscow Times, 4/2/26)

Stand-up comedian Artemy Ostanin was sentenced to 5 years 9 months in prison for jokes that 'incited hatred' and 'insulted the religious feelings of believers'. (The Moscow Times, 4/2/26)

A survey by the Public Opinion Foundation for the Central Bank said perceived inflation now stands at 14.5%. (The Moscow Times, 5/2/26)

Russian authorities opened a criminal case against Meduza correspondent Andrey Pertsev on charges of participating in the activities of a designated "undesirable" organization. (Meduza, 5/2/26)

Police in Altai region carried out raids targeting the local branch of Russia's Communist Party, arresting at least two regional lawmakers on embezzlement charges. (The Moscow Times, 5/2/26)

Italy said it had thwarted a wave of Russian cyberattacks targeting websites linked to the upcoming Milan-Cortina Winter Olympics. (The Moscow Times, 5/2/26)

In 2026, ordinary Russians face tax hikes and a state that has been rewired for war, with funding for welfare, education and healthcare crowded out. (The Guardian, 6/2/26)

Russian education officials said they would slash 47,000 paid spots for university students, the cuts in total accounting for 13% of student places at universities nationwide. (The Moscow Times, 6/2/26)