Rights in Russia
Week-ending 3 April 2026

Russia's War against Ukraine

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio accused Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of lying for suggesting US security guarantees depend on Ukraine's withdrawal from Donbas. (RFE/RL, 27/3/26)

Violent crime committed by active-duty Russian servicemen has surged since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. (The Moscow Times, 31/3/26)

North Korea's state news agency and Russian counterpart TASS have agreed to counter jointly what they call "disinformation" delivered by their "many enemies". (The Moscow Times, 31/3/26)

Authorities in Ryazan region have ordered businesses to nominate a minimum number of employees for contract military service. (The Moscow Times, 31/3/26)

Russia's Supreme Court rejected a cassation appeal and upheld a 16-year prison sentence against Alexander Skobow, a 68-year-old dissident convicted of "justifying terrorism" and participating in the activities of an organization designated as terrorist. (Meduza, 1/4/26)

Russia's Higher Education and Science Ministry told the rectors of the country's largest universities that at least 2 percent of students must sign contracts with the Defense Ministry. (Meduza, 1/4/26)

Russian human rights groups say such cases are becoming more common, with intoxicated men allegedly pressured or tricked into signing military contracts. (RFE/RL, 2/4/26)

Russia's government expanded a gasoline export ban to apply to producers, coming as Ukraine ramps up its attacks against refineries and oil terminals across the country. (The Moscow Times, 2/4/26)

Other news

A rash of stabbings, shootings and other violent incidents involving students in Russian schools has spread across the country in recent weeks. (The Moscow Times, 27/3/26)

The Justice Ministry designated Pavel Talankin, co-director of "Mr. Nobody Against Putin," a "foreign agent," after the film won best documentary at the Oscars. (The Moscow Times, 27/3/26)

A Moscow judge sentenced exiled author and investigative journalist Andrei Soldatov to four years in prison in absentia for violating Russia's "foreign agent" law. (The Moscow Times, 30/3/26)

Russia's Digital Development Minister Maksut Shadayev said the government will begin cracking down on the use of virtual private networks, or VPNs. (The Moscow Times, 31/3/26)

Russia's General Prosecutor's Office on Tuesday designated Tufts University and its Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy as "undesirable" organizations. (The Moscow Times, 31/3/26)

Russia is in the midst of a vast, slow-moving effort to splinter its internet from the rest of the world, say activists and experts, with steep consequences for millions of people. (The Guardian, 31/3/26)

Rare wartime protests have hit Russia's Novosibirsk region as farmers are standing up to authorities, resisting orders to cull thousands of cattle over concerns about disease. (RFE/RL, 31/3/26)

In Yekaterinburg, on the day of a protest against internet blocking, police tried to detain a 17-year-old college student and his 18-year-old acquaintance. Both said officers beat them. (Meduza, 1/4/26)

About 30% of the books in Yekaterinburg's libraries will have to be pulled from circulation because they were purchased with money from billionaire George Soros's foundation. (Meduza, 1/4/26)

Russia blocked the option to top up Apple ID balances from mobile phone accounts at midnight on April 1. (Meduza, 1/4/26)

Russia's Digital Development Ministry asked the country's largest online platforms to block access for users with active VPNs by April 15. (Meduza, 2/4/26)

Dagestan's Supreme Court sentenced former State Duma deputy Ilya Ponomarev in absentia to 19 years in prison in connection with the October 2023 antisemitic pogrom at Makhachkala's airport. (Meduza, 2/4/26)

The CEO of Vimpelcom, which operates under the Beeline brand, proposed on Thursday that mobile internet restrictions should apply only to subscribers who are deemed suspicious. (Meduza, 2/4/26)

Some authors are refusing to make changes to their books to bring them into compliance with Russia's law banning the "propaganda" of drugs. (Meduza, 2/4/26)