

Russian Federation

No. 8/2021

Russian journalist Dmitry Timoshenko repeatedly arrested, fined over protest coverage

No State reply

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Partners: CPJ ; EFJ/IFJ ; RSF

Detention and imprisonment of journalists 

Source of threat: State

Level 1 

Police in Khabarovsk have detained Dmitry Timoshenko, a correspondent for the independent regional newspaper Arsenievskie Vesti, three times since 16 January 2021, while he covered protests in the city; he was most recently arrested on 19 January in the afternoon and remains in custody. On 16 January, police detained Timoshenko while he was covering a protest in support of the region's former governor, who was arrested in July 2020. Police officers hit Timoshenko while he was held in their car, according to a statement by his employer, which did not specify the extent of any injuries he sustained. On 18 January, the Central District Court of Khabarovsk ordered

of any injuries he sustained. On 18 January, the Central District Court of Khabarovsk ordered Timoshenko's release and fined him 10,500 roubles (118 Eur) for alleged failure to comply with police and for disturbing traffic while he was covering a separate protest on 24 October 2020. Before he could exit the court following that sentencing, police detained him again, and held him until 19 January, when he was fined 75,000 roubles (840 Eur) for "repeated violation of the regulations on conducting rallies" in relation to a protest he covered on 24 November. After he was fined and ordered to be released, police detained Timoshenko while he was exiting the court, allegedly for participating in another unsanctioned event on 26 October. Repeated participation in unsanctioned events can carry a punishment of up to 30 days of administrative detention, according to Russian law. In Arsenievskie Vesti's statement, his employer denied that Timoshenko had illegally participated in any protests, and said he was being persecuted for his work. Khabarovsk authorities have repeatedly detained, released, and then rearrested journalists covering protests in the city, CPJ has documented. CPJ emailed the Central District Court of Khabarovsk and Irina Schegoleva, a representative of the Khabarovsk Region Ministry of Internal Affairs, for comment, but did not receive any replies.

UPDATE

27 April 2021

On 26 April 2021, Dmitry Timoshenko was questioned by the Investigative Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding "repeated violations of the rally legislation (Article 212.1 of the Criminal Code)." Timoshenko was detained and fined several times at rallies in support of ex-governor of the Khabarovsk Sergei Furgal, although he attended the rallies as a journalist. In February 2021, the court dismissed his case.

21 January 2021

Other journalists are being prosecuted for covering the mass protests against the detention of former governor Sergei Furgal, since 9 July 2020, in Khabarovsk: journalist Alexandra Teplyakova, who filmed the protests for the RusNews channel was also fined, for "disseminating Nazi symbols" (she had actually filmed a sign depicting a dog wearing a swastika); Alexandra Rounova, a correspondent for RusNews, had police raid her home on 20 January, under the pretext that authorities had identified a "Slavic cross" in one of her video clips. The police said they would also visit Sotavision correspondent Ekaterina Ichenko for a similar purpose.

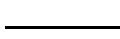
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