

Russian Police Issue Arrest Warrant for Exiled Opposition Figure Ilya Yashin

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Russia's Interior Ministry added exiled opposition figure Ilya Yashin to its list of wanted persons, the independent news outlet Mediazona [reported](#) Wednesday, citing a ministry database.

Yashin, a former municipal councilman in Moscow, was released from jail in August as part of a major prisoner exchange between Russia and Western countries. In 2022, he was [sentenced](#) to eight and a half years in prison for his criticism of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

It was not immediately clear what new charges Russian law enforcement authorities have pressed against the opposition figure as part of the warrant for his arrest.

“I don't know anything about this. But, apparently, they quietly pressed new criminal charges in order to arrest me right at the airport if I decided to return to Russia,” Yashin was quoted as saying by Mediazona when reached for comment.

“I’m not surprised, of course. This was to be expected,” he added.

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While still imprisoned in Russia, Yashin said he did not want to leave the country. He has said that prisoner exchanges like the one he was involved in this summer “encourage Putin to take more hostages.”

“I understood my imprisonment not only as a fight against the war but also as a fight for my right to live in my country and to pursue an independent political agenda,” Yashin said at a press conference in Germany after he was released.

Since then, Yashin has been involved in the Russian opposition movement in exile, taking part in an anti-Kremlin protest in Berlin in November.

AFP contributed reporting.

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