

Russia introduces jail terms for servicemen who refuse to go to combat — law

Those who voluntarily surrender to the enemy will face a prison sentence of up to ten years

MOSCOW, September 24. /TASS/. President Vladimir Putin has approved amendments to Russia's Criminal Code, under which those servicemen who refuse to follow a senior officer's order during martial law or to go to combat will be handed a prison sentence of up to three years, and if this entails grave consequences, such offenders may face up to ten years in prison, according to the law published on the official legal information portal.

The amendments are made to Article 332 of Russia's Criminal Code. Non-execution of the senior officer's order during martial law, in wartime or amid an armed conflict or combat operations, as well as refusal to participate in military or combat operations is punishable with an imprisonment of two to three years. However, those who refuse to go to combat, which entailed grave consequences, may face a jail term of three to ten years.

Under the new law, desertion during mobilization or wartime shall be punishable by up to 15 years behind bars. Article 338 of Russia's Criminal Code is supplemented with part three, according to which absence from the place of service without leave, desertion with weapons, as well as desertion of a group during the mobilization or martial law, in wartime or amid an armed conflict shall be punishable by an imprisonment for five years or up to 15 years.

The law declares periods of mobilization, martial law and wartime as aggravating factors in criminal sentencing.

Those who voluntarily surrender to the enemy will face a prison sentence of up to ten years. Article 352.1 'Voluntary surrender' is added to the Criminal Code. Under the article, this offense will be punishable by three to ten years in prison.

Nevertheless, a first-time offender can be released from criminal liability provided that the soldier has taken measures for his release, has returned to his unit or duty station, and has not committed any other crimes while in captivity.

Those convicted of looting during a military conflict or in wartime could face up to 15 years behind bars.

Under a new Article 356.1 added to the Russian Criminal Code, looting without any aggravating circumstances will be punishable by up to six years in prison, while a similar crime involving violence, not dangerous to life or health, or threats of using such violence will carry a prison term of up to 10 years.

The harshest punishment of eight up to 15 years in jail will apply to looting committed by an organized group in large amounts with threats to kill or inflict harm to health.

The failure to fulfill the defense procurement order in Russia will be punishable by up to 10 years behind bars.

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