

The information is aggregated from open source online resources and our own practice. In these newsletters, we will update you in brief on everyday human rights violations in numbers and facts.

Summary: Friday 23 April 2021 to Friday 30 April 2021

Arrests on Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance day

26 April 2021 marked 35 years since the Chernobyl disaster. In 1986, a fire at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant led to one of the most devastating nuclear catastrophes ever experienced. As the consequences of the accident continued to affect Belarus and the region, civil rights activists in had Belarus organised annual ‘Chernobyl marches’ on 26 April. However, Belarusian authorities refused to give activists permission for the 2021 march.

Moreover, police and special forces’ personnel were excessively patrolling Minsk streets on Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance day. Military vehicles were stationed in the city. At least six people were arrested, and many were stopped and searched.¹

Politically motivated arrests and sentences in Belarus continue

Belarusians continue to be arrested, charged, and tried on politically motivated grounds. Some of the recent developments include:

- The Investigative Committee finished investigating cases against six political prisoners. Siarhei Tsikhanouski, Artsiom Sakau, and Dmitry Popov were charged with organising mass riots, inciting hatred against the authorities, threatening the head of the Central Electoral Commission, and using force against public authorities. Mikalai Statkevich was charged with organising mass riots. Ihar Losik and Uladzimir Tsyhanovich were charged with organising mass riots and disobeying public authorities;²
- Thirty people who participated in peaceful marches in their neighbourhoods were arrested;³
- Siarhei Mironov and his mother Sviatlana Mironova were sentenced to 30 days in jail for participating in “unauthorised public events”. Mironova has already served two sentences on the same grounds, and Mironov has also served a sentence on the same grounds;⁴
- Three people in Minsk were arrested for shouting “Long live Belarus” from their windows. Two of them were sentenced to 10 days in jail;⁵
- Yulia Yakubovich was sentenced to two years of restriction of liberty for allegedly blocking traffic during “unauthorised protests” in Minsk;⁶ and

¹ <https://news.tut.by/society/728196.html?tg>

² <https://news.tut.by/society/728506.html?tg>

³ <https://news.tut.by/society/727800.html?tg>

⁴ <https://news.tut.by/society/728335.html?tg>

⁵ <https://news.tut.by/society/728095.html?tg>

⁶ <https://auto.tut.by/news/road/726068.html?tg>

- Mariya Voinova was fined by Mogilev court because his signature in the police protocol was considered by the court to look like the “A.C.A.B” abbreviation, which is included in the list of extremist materials kept by the Belarusian State Security Committee.⁷

Maryia Kalesnikava celebrates birthday in prison

Maryia Kalesnikava celebrated her 39th birthday behind bars. A musician by background, she joined the team of presidential candidate Viktor Babaryka in 2020 and continued to lead public protests after his arrest.⁸

On 16 September 2020, she faced formal charges under Part 3 of Art. 361 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Belarus. On 10 February 2021, Kalesnikava faced additional charges of “conspiracy to seize power with unconstitutional means” (Part 1 of Art. 357) and “creating and managing an extremist formation” (Part 1 of Art. 361-1).

On 4 March 2021, Kalesnikava received the International Women of Courage Award.⁹

⁷ <https://news.tut.by/society/728313.html?tg>

⁸ <https://news.tut.by/economics/727882.html?tg>

⁹ <https://www.state.gov/2021-international-women-of-courage-award-recipients-announced/>