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Irate Cops Jail Rapper for Hooliganism

By Alexander Bratersky

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Noize MC

Noize MC, a social rapper who has targeted bureaucrats, corrupt politicians and police officers in his songs, was jailed on hooliganism charges in Volgograd for verbally abusing police during a live show to thousands of fans.

The conflict started when police officers attempted to stop the group's drummer, Pavel Teterin, from collecting coins from a crowd with his baseball cap during a concert Saturday, said Alexander Berger, spokesman for Noize MC, whose real name is Ivan Alexeyev.

It was a symbolic gesture, but the police officers took it for real panhandling, Berger said by telephone Tuesday.

The police's response prompted the enraged 25-year-old rapper to perform his 2008 song "Smoke Bamboo!" — a composition that accuses police officers of violence, corruption and stupidity.

The song's chorus consists of the lyrics: "Citizen! Halt. Halt. Turn out your pockets, slap, slap. Now your kidneys, kick, kick. Well off you go, just smoke bamboo."

Noize MC also referred to Volgograd police officers as "animals with red emblems on their heads" during the show, Berger said.

He said Noize MC used no profanity, but a city police spokesman said otherwise.

"Citizen Alexeyev used foul language to address the policemen providing security at the concert, telling them to bugger off and performed this song for them," the police spokesman said Tuesday, RIA-Novosti reported.

Police detained Noize MC after the show, and the local magistrate handed him a 10-day sentence for hooliganism, without elaborating on the nature of the hooliganism that he was being punished for, Berger said.

Noize MC appealed, asking for forgiveness for his actions, which he blamed on stress caused by the birth of his son on Thursday. But a Volgograd court upheld the sentence Tuesday, Berger said.

A popular underground musician, Alexeyev achieved nationwide recognition with his song "Mercedes 666," dedicated to a February traffic accident in Moscow involving the car of LUKoil vice president Anatoly Barkov that left two women dead.

The song blamed Barkov for the incident and accused him of having police — who initially blamed the women for the crash — cover up for him. No one has been charged with wrongdoing in the accident.

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