

Police End Anti-Mayor 'Day of Wrath'

August 12, 2010

The  **Moscow Times**

An unsanctioned rally against Mayor Yury Luzhkov was cut short by police, who cordoned off the site hours in advance and detained 35 protesters Thursday evening.

Left Front leader Sergei Udaltsov and human rights champion Lev Ponomaryov, who staged the rally dubbed "Day of Wrath," were among those detained in front of City Hall, Ekho Moskvyy reported.

Protesters called for a "Moscow without Luzhkov" and were asked to bring "black marks" made out of paper or cloth that symbolized distrust in Luzhkov, the organizers said in a statement.

"In particular, participants claim that Mayor Yury Luzhkov, as the city's chief, carries direct responsibility for the capital's unpreparedness for the heat wave and the wildfires," Udaltsov said before being dragged to a police bus, Interfax reported.

Luzhkov spent the first days of August on a European vacation that he did not immediately interrupt, despite the heavy smoke that was choking the city, causing death rates to skyrocket.

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