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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Red Square 'Closed for Repairs,' Blocking Opposition Flashmob

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A flashmob planned on Red Square by an opposition group was blocked Sunday as police closed Red Square for repairs, Gazeta.ru reported.

The event, called “White Square,” urged participants to “make Red Square white” by walking around wearing white ribbons, a reference to the color that has been used as a symbol for the opposition movement.

Twitter users spread news of the closure using the hashtag “belaya ploshchad,” or “white square” Sunday.

“Red Square is closed 'for repairs' all day. The cowardly authorities are afraid of us. But 'white square' will happen. Come to the Zero Kilometer!,” one participant tweeted, calling for participants to regroup just outside Red Square.

Twitter users later reported that authorities were also moving to close Manezh Square, where the Zero Kilometer monument is located.

The White Square flashmob was supposed to take part under the For Honest Elections campaign. An official Facebook group for the event said “89 percent of you voted to make Red Square white for one day (April 1). And since this is April Fools' Day, let's keep make a fool of the Moscow police. Come take a walk in the historical center of Moscow with friends at any time April 1.”

More than 3,700 people confirmed participation in the event.

In March, Solidarity activist Olga Shorina told Interfax 33 people, mostly members of Solidary, had been detained for wearing white ribbons near Red Square.

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