

Detention Prolonged of Psychiatric Patient Suspected in May 6 Violence

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A sign for Basmanny District Court, where Thursday's hearing was held on the detention of Mikhail Kosenko.

A Moscow court on Thursday extended by four months the detention of a disabled former serviceman accused of taking part in violence that broke out at a May 6 opposition rally.

Speaking at the Basmanny District Court on Thursday, investigators said that the gravity of the charges against Mikhail Kosenko, a psychiatric patient diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1999, could tempt him to hide from authorities, pressure witnesses and destroy evidence, Interfax reported.

In his defense, Kosenko denied that he could hide from investigators, saying he was tied to his home, where he receives social-welfare payments and medical care.

"I'm a seriously ill man, a second-grade invalid with a psychiatric illness. I suffered shell

shock while serving in the army," Kosenko said, according to RIA-Novosti.

But the Basmanny court judge sided with investigators, ignoring prominent rights defenders Lev Ponomarev and Lyudmila Alexeyeva's offers to vouch for the accused.

The ruling comes a day after the same court prolonged the arrests of anarchist Andrei Barabanov and body builder Maxim Luzyanin, both also suspected of clashing with police on Bolotnaya Ploshchad during an opposition rally on May 6.

At least six suspects in the case will remain under arrest until Nov. 6.

Authorities have questioned more than 1,200 people, including 54 police officers, and conducted about 30 raids while investigating the causes of the Bolotnaya violence, Interfax reported.

Thursday's court hearing is the latest in a string of efforts by authorities to crack down on unsanctioned protest activity.

President Vladimir Putin on June 8 signed into law new rally rules raising fines for disorder at demonstrations to 300,000 rubles (\$9,250) for participants. A few days later police raided the homes of opposition figures including Alexei Navalny, Ksenia Sobchak, Ilya Yashin and Sergei Udaltsov in connection with the investigation into the violence at the May 6 rally.

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