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Pussy Riot Trial Enters Second Day

By The Moscow Times

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Female punk bank Pussy Riot posing for the cameras

One of the plaintiffs in the trial against female punk band Pussy Riot reluctantly accepted the apologies of the defendants for their performance at a Moscow cathedral as the trial entered a second day Tuesday.

Meanwhile, popular British writer Stephen Fry called on his more than 4.6 million followers on Twitter "to do everything to help Pussy Riot" and "pressure Putin" in connection with the trial, in which three young women face up to seven years in prison on charges of hooliganism for singing a song that contained obscenities and denounced President Vladimir Putin at Christ the Savior in February.

The three defendants — Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 22; Maria Alyokhina, 24; and Yekaterina Samutsevich, 29 — have been under arrest since early March.

The trial opened Tuesday in a courtroom in Moscow's Khamovnichesky District Court that could accommodate only 10 journalists, leaving about 30 unable to attend the hearing,

Interfax reported.

But after the early afternoon break, the hearing was transferred to Monday's courtroom, the largest in the court, the news agency said.

On the first day of the trial, dozens of journalists had to be divided into two groups, taking turns to sit in the courtroom.

The defendants asked the judge, Marina Syrova, to interrupt the trial because they hadn't had enough sleep or food, Interfax reported. Syrova first rejected the request, citing medical references, which said the defendants were fit to attend the trial.

When the band's lawyer Violetta Volkova threatened to ask for Syrova to be replaced, the judge promised to interrupt the trial so the defendants could eat and sleep.

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