

Kasparov Complains of Police Abuse

By [Jonathan Earle](#)

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Kasparov, front, leaving a police station Monday after being questioned about biting a police officer's hand. **Misha Japaridze**

Opposition leader Garry Kasparov will ask investigators to check whether police illegally detained, assaulted and defamed him in connection with a raucous pro-Pussy Riot demonstration on Friday.

Video evidence shows police assaulting Kasparov while they muscled him into a police van outside the Khamovnichesky District Court, his spokesman said Monday in e-mailed comments.

But the footage doesn't corroborate officer Denis Ratnikov's claim that the former chess champion bit his hand during the tussle, spokesman Mig Greengard added. That accusation amounts to defamation, he said.

Ratnikov has called for a criminal investigation into the alleged attack, punishable by five years in prison.

Kasparov, 49, was seized by police while giving an interview outside the courthouse where three members of punk protest group Pussy Riot had just received two years in prison.

A video posted on Kasparov's website shows police carrying him by his hands and feet to a police van, where a struggle ensues. At one point, an officer identified as Ratnikov appears to punch Kasparov.

But Ratnikov says he was the one attacked, a claim Kasparov flatly denies. And on Monday, state-controlled NTV showed a clip of the officer's heavily bandaged hand.

Kasparov, who underwent questioning Monday, is scheduled to appear in court Thursday for allegedly participating in an unsanctioned rally, which carries a maximum fine of up to 30,000 rubles (\$930), thanks to newly toughened laws.

A total of 97 demonstrators were detained outside the courthouse on Friday.

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