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Presidential Amnesty Granted to 2 Bolotnaya Suspects

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Two opposition activists who stood accused of participating in the May 2012 Bolotnaya riots have been exempt from prosecution under the terms of a presidential amnesty, a news report said.

The Investigative Committee closed its case against Polina Strongina and Oleg Melnikov on the basis of an amnesty issued by President Vladimir Putin in December to mark 20 years since the founding of the Russian Constitution, RBK reported Friday.

Strogina, who was charged with participating in mass riots, has since been removed from house arrest and will return to her hometown of St. Petersburg in the coming days, Itar Tass reported Thursday, citing her lawyer Dinar Idrisov.

Strongina was arrested last month for supposedly throwing a bottle at police officers during the 2012 demonstrations, which saw thousands of people gather on Bolotnaya Ploshchad in Moscow to protest against the re-election of President Vladimir Putin.

Fellow activist Oleg Melnikov has also been exempt from prosecution in accordance with the amnesty, his lawyer Irina Biryukova said Wednesday on her Facebook page.

In total, about 30 people have been charged with participating in the 2012 Bolotnaya riots, with a Moscow court handing out lengthy prison terms to seven defendants back in January.

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