

Activist from Soldiers' Mothers Committee Hospitalized After Police Detention

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A 73-year-old activist from the Soldiers' Mothers Committee who accused the government of sending Russian troops to fight in Ukraine has been hospitalized with heart trouble after spending two days in jail on fraud charges, her lawyer said.

Lyudmila Bogatenkova, who chairs the rights group's branch in the North Caucasus town of Budyonnovsk, is being treated at a cardiology unit in a local hospital, lawyer Andrei Sabinin said, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday.

Bogatenkova was released from police custody on Monday after being held in jail over the weekend and signing a statement that she would not leave town, the RFE/RFL website cited her lawyer as saying.

She is accused of defrauding a local man of 800,000 rubles (\$19,500) by "deceiving him about the possibility of providing expert legal help in defending his son's interests" in 2011-2012,

a spokesperson for the local prosecutor's office was quoted as saying Tuesday by Interfax. The report did not specify what constituted the alleged deception.

Bogatenkova, whose group fights for the rights of Russian servicemen, rose to prominence in 2012 after investigating the death of soldier Alexander Yemelyanov, who died after allegedly being beaten by his commanding officer and receiving no medical help, Russian media reported.

Recently, she was looking into reports that Russian troops were being dispatched to fight alongside pro-Moscow separatists in Ukraine, fellow activists said.

Sergei Krivenko, a member of the presidential Human Rights Council, told Dozhd television that he viewed Bogatenkova's detention "as revenge for her recent human rights activities, for publishing information about soldiers' deaths."

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