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Activists Detained for Bizarre Reindeer Protest in Moscow Center

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The reindeer was on display as part of a Christmas exhibition called “Magical Forest.”

Animal rights activists have been detained after staging a creative protest in central Moscow that involved locking themselves in a cage with a reindeer at a holiday display on Tverskoi Bulvar.

From inside the cage of Rudolph the reindeer on Sunday, the activists unfurled banners reading: "We demand that the animals be returned to normal conditions!" and "Animals are not decorations, stop abusing them!"

The reindeer was on display as part of a Christmas exhibition called "Magical Forest," which opened on Tverskoi Bulvar in mid-December. Apart from the reindeer, other animals taking part in the holiday display include geese, roosters, a goat, a sheep and an owl, Dozhd television reported late Sunday.

The activists protesting the display were soon detained and transported to a police station, where they faced administrative fines.

The organizer of the holiday event said in comments carried by the Russian News Service after the incident that she intended to file a complaint with police over the activists' stunt, since they had allegedly fed the reindeer a carrot.

Administrators at the Moscow Zoo last week spoke out against the exhibit in comments to radio station Ekho Moskvy, saying the conditions the animals were being kept in were "incompatible with moral principles and humaneness."

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