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Moscow Migrant Detention Camp Staff Fired After Slit-Wrist Protest

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More than a dozen staff members at a temporary detention center for migrants in Moscow were fired after several detainees slit their wrists, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

Eight foreign nationals including Uzbeks, Tajiks and Georgians slit their wrists in early February to protest against the conditions of their incarceration, Lenta.ru reported. None of them died.

The center's 15 administrators were dismissed in the aftermath of the incident, Interfax reported, citing Olga Kirillova, head of the Moscow office of the Federal Migration Service.

"Those who tried to cut their wrists had multiple previous criminal convictions," Kirillova said in comments carried by Interfax. "They behave as if they were in prison, refusing to conform to basic requirements by carrying prohibited weapons."

Human rights activists and diplomats from the Uzbek Embassy reportedly visited the center

to inquire about the incident.

In December, municipal authorities opened the center, able to hold up to 1,000 detainees, on the outskirts of Moscow. Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said at the time that local courts had ordered the deportation of 35,000 migrants since the start of 2014.

Self-harm protests are rare but not unheard of in Russia. In 2013, 350 inmates at a prison in the Irkutsk region cut themselves to protest against their facility's administration, Russian media reported at the time.

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