

65 Protesters Detained in Bolotnaya Anniversary Rally in Moscow

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Protestors rally on Bolotnaya Square in December 2011.

Russian police detained at least 65 people who gathered on central Moscow's Bolotnaya Square to honor participants of the massive anti-Kremlin protests that took place three years ago.

All of the detainees from the Wednesday rally have been released, some after a "prophylactic talk" or after pledging to report to the police the next day and provide "explanations" for their participation in the unsanctioned gathering, OVDInfo news portal reported.

The authorities had warned opposition activists not to assemble on Bolotnaya Square on the anniversary of the May 6, 2012 protests against President Vladimir Putin's government that erupted into clashes with police. Some of the participants in those events are serving lengthy prison terms.

About 100 people defied the warning and gathered on Bolotnaya, Grani.ru news portal reported, citing one of the participants.

Beside the rally on Bolotnaya, opposition activists held two more rallies in the center of the Russian capital — a picket at the nearby Tretyakovskaya metro station in support of Bolotnaya prisoners, which had been authorized by the authorities, and a march along the Garden Ring, which proceeded without government permission, Grani.ru reported.

About a dozen people, some of them wearing ski masks, marched along the Garden Ring, carrying a banner that read "Freedom to Bolotnaya prisoners" and firing smoke grenades, according to a video Grani.ru posted online.

Participants also chanted "Raze prisons to the ground, raze venal judges to the ground, raze Putin's gang to the ground," before running away and ending their two-minute rally, Grani.ru reported.

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