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Muscovites Rally in City Center Against Parking Zones Expansions

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A heavily attended rally to protest the introduction of new paid parking zones in Moscow took place at Pushkinskaya square in the city center Tuesday nights, the Dozhd television channel reported.

The protest was organized by Communist party parliament members as a "meeting with the supporters". Up to 1000 people participated, Dozhd said.

Moscow police estimate the number of attendees was much lower – up to 500, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

After police intercepted the rally, several activists were detained and a parliament member was beaten, the BBC Russia news site reported Tuesday.

At least five of the protesters were taken to the police station after detention, the OVD-Info website reported.

The protesters demanded the paid parking program outside Third Ring Road be cancelled and

Moscow City Hall transport department head Maxim Liksutov be fired, Ekho Moskvy radio reported.

Muscovites have been protesting against paid parking zone expansion on a regular basis. In addition to politicians and lawmakers from the Communist party, hundreds of people participated in the rallies.

Moscow City Hall introduced several paid parking zones expansions this year with the last expansion scheduled to take place Dec. 26. Approximately 300 paid parking spots are expected to start operating between Third Ring Road and the Moscow Ring Road (MKAD) by the end of the year.

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