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Russian Blogger Goes on Trial for 'Inflicting Pain' on the Cop He Says Beat Him Up

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Russian blogger Stanislav Kalinichenko **Stanislav Kalinichenko / Facebook**

A district court in Kemerovo heard opening arguments this Thursday in a criminal case against Stanislav Kalinichenko, a local blogger accused of "inflicting pain" on a police officer during his arrest in June 2016.

According to Kalinichenko, however, police only brought the charges after he complained about being brutally beaten in their custody.

The blogger says he was with his friend near his home when he was arrested for consuming alcohol in public (which he denies). "The police grabbed my arms and started pushing me into their backseat. I asked them to tell me on what grounds they were doing this, but they didn't answer. When they didn't manage to get me in the car, [Officer] Oparin took out a stun gun and jabbed it into me, sending me backwards. Threatening to shock me, Oparin and his

partner (the driver) pushed me into the car and closed the door," Kalinichenko told the court, according to the news site Taiga.info.

The blogger said he was then taken to a local police station, where half a dozen officers took turns kicking and punching him, before locking him in a room.

"Then Oparin grabbed me from behind by the neck, cutting off my air, so I couldn't scream. He held me like that for a while," Kalinichenko said, telling the court that he lost consciousness "at least twice" during these beatings.

Later on, another officer allegedly grabbed a video camera belonging to Kalinichenko's brother and smashed it on the ground, trying to destroy footage of the abuse. The next morning, during another interrogation, the same official reportedly threatened to kill Kalinichenko's relatives.

The blogger was swiftly convicted of illegally consuming alcohol, though the police refused to test his blood for alcohol levels, and his family wasn't allowed to attend his hearing.

Police also refused to investigate Kalinichenko's claim that he'd been beaten while in custody, instead opening a case against him for "inflicting pain" on the officer he says beat him.

"Suddenly, it turns out that I apparently bumped one of those guys with my head, while they were beating me," Kalinichenko said in court on Thursday. His trial will resume on June 1.

During the winter protests that swept several major Russian cities in 2011 and 2012, Stanislav Kalinichenko became known for sharing videos of the demonstrations on his LiveJournal blog. In 2015, he was controversially fined 150,000 rubles ($2,600) for reposting an image of a supposedly "extremist" political leaflet. The court convicted him, despite the fact that the leaflet did not appear on the government's official registry of extremist materials.

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