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Last Defendant Charged For 2012 Anti-Kremlin Protests Released

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Maxim Panfilov / Dmitry Ermakov / Moskva News Agency

A court in southern Russia has cleared the last defendant charged with participating in mass anti-Kremlin rallies following Vladimir Putin's election in spring 2012, closing the chapter on a string of cases against opposition figures that is collectively known as the "Bolotnaya case."

Four years after the anti-government protests, Maxim Panfilov was charged with snatching a helmet off a policeman's head in Moscow's Bolotnaya Square.

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On Monday, a district court in the southern city of Astrakhan ruled to transfer Panfilov from compulsory psychiatric treatment to outpatient care, his lawyer told the Mediazona news website.

“Thus, the last person held in isolation over the Bolotnaya case has been released,” Pavel Chikov, the head of the Agora legal rights NGO, wrote on his Telegram messaging app channel.

He said it was unlikely that new defendants in the case would appear because the statute of limitations will expire on May 6.

“There’s no point for Russia’s Investigative Council to set about getting new defendants, time will run out by the court dates anyway,” he wrote on Telegram.

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