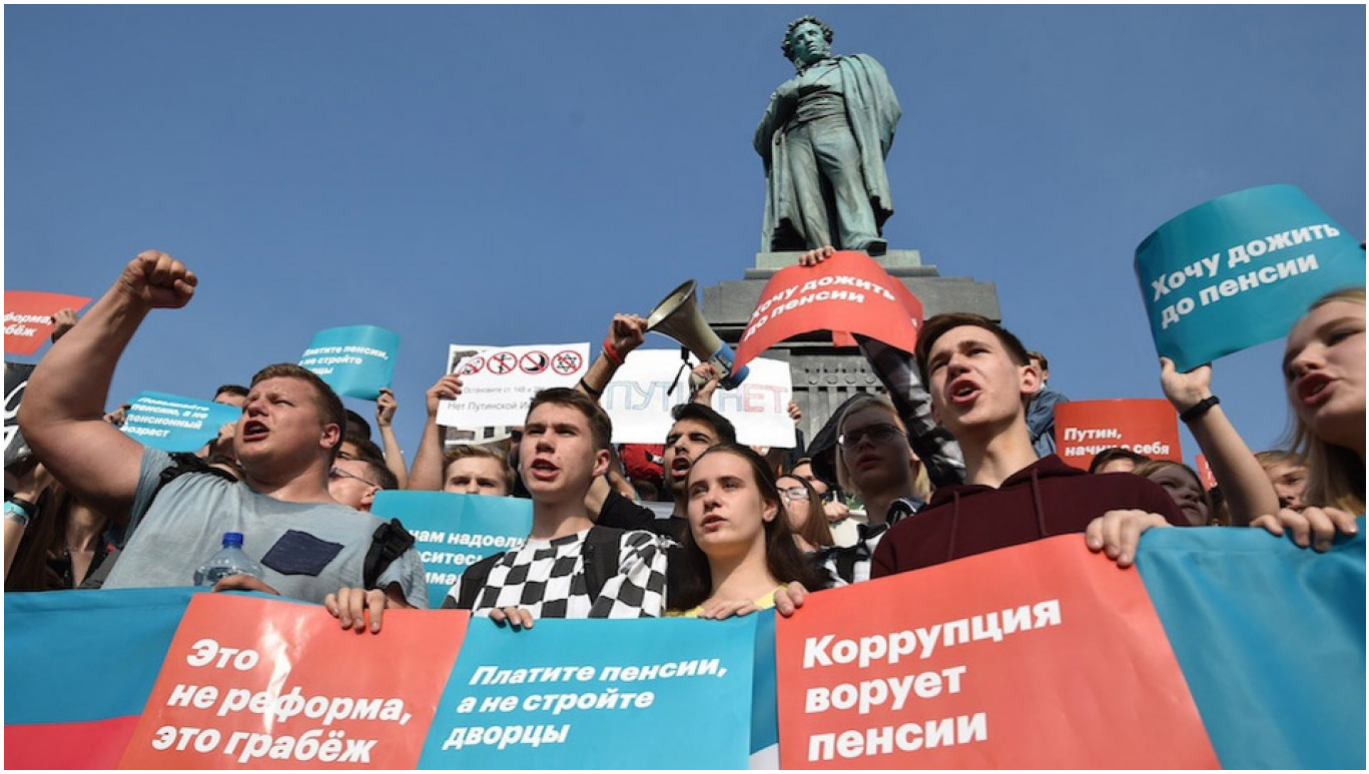
The Moscow Times
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More Than 150 Detained in Pension Protests Across Russia

September 09, 2018



Dmitry Serebryakov / TASS

At least 153 protesters were detained on Sunday as thousands of supporters of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny protested across Russia against planned increases to the pension age.

After being amended by President Vladimir Putin, the reforms envisage raising the retirement age for men to 65 from 60 and to 60 from 55 for women. The proposed pension changes, which are currently going through parliament, have shaved around 15 percentage points off Putin's popularity rating. They are the most unpopular government measure since a 2005 move to scrap Soviet-era benefits, which led to nationwide pensioner protests.

OVD-Info, a rights organization that monitors detentions, said 153 Navalny supporters had been detained by police on Sunday in 19 towns and cities, including some of Navalny's closest aides.

In Moscow, where the authorities had rejected an application from Navalny's supporters to

protest, around 2,000 people gathered in the central Pushkin Square, the Interior Ministry's estimates said.

Includes reporting by Reuters.

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