The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

77-Year-Old Russian Activist Detained Over Protest Calling for Teenagers' Release

December 05, 2018



Lev Ponomaryov (Sergei Fadeichev / TASS)

Moscow's District Court on Wednesday sentenced veteran human rights activist Lev Ponomaryov, 77, to 25 days in jail for violations of Russia's law on public assembly, Interfax reported Wednesday, citing a court representative.

According to prosecutors, Ponomaryov wrote an online post encouraging people to attend an unsanctioned rally on Oct. 28 outside the Federal Security Service (FSB) headquarters in Moscow. The rally, which called for the release of a group of teenagers detained over their alleged involvement in an online extremist organization, was attended by about 1,000 people in the capital and resulted in mass arrests.

Related article: How a Teenage Girl's Chat Group Became an FSB Snare

“We consider the court decision to be absolutely illegal, as the protest took place in the form of a national gathering, without banners and slogans, which rules out the need to receive permission from the authorities,” a spokesperson for the “For Human Rights” NGO, which Ponomaryov heads, told Interfax.

The group said it would appeal the decision at the European Court of Human Rights.

Russian prosecutors are currently investigating 10 members of the Novoye Velichiye (“New Greatness)” group, most of whom are in their late teens, for extremist activities. Critics of the process have said that the case was fabricated by the authorities. Prosecutors are also investigating members of a leftist organization called Set' for allegedly planning a series of bombings in Russia.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/12/05/77-year-old-russian-activist-detained-over-protest-calling-for-teenagers-release-a63718