

Russia Releases Young Protester, Jails Second Protester for Hurting Cop's Finger

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Samariddin Radzhabov **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

A court in Moscow has ruled to fine and release protester Samariddin Radzhabov for throwing a plastic water bottle at police during anti-government rallies this summer, the Mediazona news website [reported](#) Tuesday.

Minutes earlier, the Tverskoy District Court sentenced another protester Sergei Surovtsev, 30, to two and a half years in prison for pushing a riot police officer with a metal barrier.

Radzhabov, 21, was the youngest person to be [arrested](#) after protests for fair elections swept the Russian capital in July and August. Prosecutors asked the judge to put the aspiring rapper behind bars for three and a half years.

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The Meshchansky District Court found Radzhabov guilty of throwing a plastic bottle at police, Mediazona reported. However, the judge took into account Radzhabov's time served in pre-trial detention when she ruled to release him.

The judge ordered Radzhabov to [pay a fine](#) of 100,000 rubles (\$1,600), according to Mediazona.

Authorities [detained](#) the second protester, Surovtsev, late in November, months after he participated in an opposition rally over the summer.

The court ruled that Surovtsev had hit the fingers of a riot police officer with a metal crowd control barrier after moving it "to block the movement of other law enforcement officers," Mediazona [reported](#).

The IT worker was charged with inflicting non-life threatening harm to a police officer. He denied his guilt.

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Thousands were detained and dozens arrested on criminal charges at the rallies over the summer, which grew into the biggest sustained protest movement in the Russian capital in years.

Groups including priests and actors [spoke out](#) in support of the defendants, calling their prosecutions unjustified and decrying what they say are disproportionately harsh prison sentences.

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