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Moscow Police Detain Children Holding Anti-War Placard

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The children aged 7 to 11 were initially held with their mothers in a police van before being taken to a police station. **Alexandra Arkhipova / facebook**

Police in Moscow detained two women and five children who wanted to lay flowers at the Ukrainian Embassy as day six of Russia's deadly invasion of Ukraine came to a close Tuesday.

Researcher Alexandra Arkhipova said the children aged 7 to 11 were initially held with their mothers in a police van before being taken to a police station and eventually released hours later. Photos of their detention showed the children holding a poster saying "No to War."

"None of what's happened is holding up in my head," Arkhipova, an anthropologist at the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration, wrote on Facebook about the detentions.

A video attachment showed one of the women explaining to a crying girl from inside a cell that "the task is for fewer people to gather and say they're against the war."

Arkhipova said police allegedly threatened to strip the women, Yekaterina Zavizion and Olga Alter, of custody over the five children.

They face a trial and a fine on unspecified charges, Arkhipova added.

“The parents are in fear,” she wrote.

The OVD-Info website, which monitors protests and arrests across Russia, points out that children up to the age of 14 cannot be legally held for more than three hours.

It said that authorities have arrested more than 320 anti-war protesters across 33 Russian cities over the past hours.

A total of 6,840 people have been detained since President Vladimir Putin ordered what is officially referred to as a “special military operation” in neighboring Ukraine.

Hundreds of thousands in Europe and around the world took to the streets to condemn the war, which has led to displacement, civilian deaths and triggered unprecedented Western sanctions.

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