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Charges Dropped in Russia's First Criminal Draft-Dodging Case

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Mobilized men at an assembly point. **Sergei Kiselev / Moskva News Agency**

Prosecutors in the southern Russian city of Penza dropped all charges in what would have been the first criminal case for evading Moscow's "partial" mobilization, human rights lawyer Pavel Chikov said Friday.

"The Prosecutor's Office...recognized the decision to initiate [criminal] proceedings as illegal," Chikov wrote on his Telegram channel. "The suspect received the right to rehabilitation."

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The criminal case had been initiated against a 32-year-old man who allegedly refused to sign papers summoning him to the local conscript office and was subsequently detained by OMON riot police officers.

The suspect spent 48 hours in police custody and will be entitled for “compensation” for the unlawful detention, according to Chikov.

If convicted, the man would have faced a fine of up to 200,000 rubles ($3,407) or up to two years in prison.

The investigation said it intends to appeal the decision of the Prosecutor's Office and reopen the case, according to lawyer Chikov.

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