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Russian Ex-Presidential Candidate Briefly Detained

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Yekaterina Duntsova. **AP Photo / Alexander Zemlianichenko / TASS**

Updated with Ostorozhno Novosti report, Duntsova's remarks.

Former Russian presidential candidate Yekaterina Duntsova was briefly detained and taken in by police for a drug test, the Ateo Breaking Telegram channel reported late Sunday.

Duntsova, 40, a journalist and local politician from the Tver region northwest of Moscow, announced her bid for the presidency in November on a pro-peace, pro-democracy platform. The Central Election Committee (CEC) blocked her from registering as a candidate in December over alleged errors in her documents.

Earlier Sunday, Duntsova and her associates held a meeting in Tver to establish the organizing committee of a new political party, Rassvet (Dawn).

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"After the meeting of the party's organizing committee, law enforcement officers stopped the car that Duntsova was driving. She is now being taken to a drug treatment center to be tested for the presence of narcotic substances in her blood," Ateo Breaking wrote.

The Ostorozhno Novosti news outlet confirmed Ateo Breaking's report, citing an unidentified member of Duntsova's team.

Ostorozhno Novosti's source said that Duntsova did not refuse the test and that she does not use drugs.

She was later released after the test results came back negative, Ateo Breaking said.

"I just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time," Duntsova told the Baza Telegram channel.

When reached for comment by The Moscow Times, Duntsova said she had ended up in a "bad neighborhood where [drug dealers] drop off drugs."

"The traffic officers were young, they were just doing their job," she said.

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