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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Women Relatives of Mobilized Soldiers Stage Sit-In at Russian Defense Ministry

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Wives and mothers of mobilized Russian soldiers seeking their return from the war in Ukraine have staged a sit-in protest outside the Defense Ministry in central Moscow, according to videos shared by participants Monday.

“We’ve brought sleeping bags and everything we need to wait for when we’ll finally be heard,” one woman could be heard telling a police officer who approached the group.

Video shared on protest organizer Paulina Safronova’s Telegram channel showed officers initially addressing the women with restraint, but later becoming increasingly confrontational with some of the protesters.

President Vladimir Putin declared a “partial” mobilization of 300,000 reservists in September 2022, seven months after launching the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Embed:

> Жены мобилизованных вышли к зданию Минобороны в Москве, с собой они взяли спальники
>
> Сейчас с ними беседует полиция. Одному из сотрудников на видео они говорят, что никакого отношения к движению «Путь домой» не имеют, это же указано в сообщении движения в телеграме. Родственницы… pic.twitter.com/ipxwLSkv7O
>
> — Дождь (@tvrain) July 8, 2024

Nearly two years later, a number of these mobilized soldiers and their family members have become increasingly vocal against the military's refusal to release them.

Russia had previously allowed mobilized soldiers' female relatives to stage weekly protest actions in central Moscow, seemingly unwilling to antagonize relatives of men fighting in Ukraine.

Safronova was previously seen protesting against the mobilization with "Put Domoi" ("Way Home"), a movement of wives and mothers that Russian authorities branded a "foreign agent" in May.

The protesters at Monday's sit-in noted that they were not affiliated with "Put Domoi."

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