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Yekaterinburg Street Musician Detained After Performing in Support of Arrested Band

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Police have detained a local street performer in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg after he played songs in support of an arrested St. Petersburg street band that went viral for anti-Kremlin performances, the rights group OVD-Info reported Tuesday.

Yevgeny Mikhailov, known by the stage name Zhenka Radost, was charged with petty hooliganism and held at a police station overnight, pending a court hearing.

The charges, which Mikhailov's lawyer said stem from swear words in one of the songs he performed, carry a maximum punishment of 15 days in administrative detention.

"I'm alive and well, the trial's tomorrow," Mikhailov, who has performed on the streets of Yekaterinburg for more than three years, wrote on his Telegram channel.

Mikhailov said he was motivated to be "braver and more open" after the arrest of the trio

Stoptime, whose members were last week sentenced to 12-13 days of administrative detention for blocking pedestrian access to a metro station while busking outdoors in St. Petersburg.

Lead singer Diana Loginova, who performs under the name Naoko, was also charged with "discrediting" the Russian military. The misdemeanor offense is punishable by a fine and can lead to criminal prosecution if repeated within a year.

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Investigators reportedly argued that Loginova "discredited" the Russian military because Ukrainian citizens listen to the original song she covers during drone strikes on their homes.

Stoptime's arrest followed a viral video showing the band performing a banned song that references both the Ozero dacha cooperative linked to President Vladimir Putin's associates and the Swan Lake ballet, which came to symbolize the death of a Soviet leader.

Since the arrest, musicians and social media users across Russia have begun performing the songs covered by Stoptime and sharing videos under the hashtag that translates as "Free Naoko." The movement's emblem — an image of ballet dancers — has since appeared on leaflets and protest art in several cities.

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