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Russian Security Forces Raid Moscow Punk Concert – Reports

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Riot police officers in Moscow. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russian security forces disrupted a punk music festival at a Moscow nightclub Tuesday evening, stopping concertgoers and checking their phones for subscriptions to opposition and anti-war Telegram channels, exiled media reported.

Officers from the National Guard and OMON riot police arrived at the MO[TRI] club in northeast Moscow shortly before the Harvest Fest concert was due to begin, witnesses told the outlets IStories and Dozhd.

According to their accounts, police ordered attendees to lie face down on the floor as they searched phones and identity documents.

Those found to be subscribed to anti-war channels on Telegram were pressured to sign contracts with the Defense Ministry, IStories cited a source as saying.

Several people whose phones showed subscriptions to Ukrainian channels were beaten, the

source added.

Batons and stun guns were reportedly used against those who resisted, one source told Dozhd.

Officers recorded attendees' phone numbers and photographed their identity documents, the reports said.

It was unclear whether anyone was arrested. The rights group OVD-Info said a lawyer arrived at the club but was barred from entering, with police telling him that those present would be released after their phones were checked.

The club eventually announced that the concert was canceled without specifying why.

The incident followed a separate incident in Moscow on Monday, when security forces shut down a New Year's performance by the Kirill Ganin Conceptual Theater featuring nude actors.

Russia has stepped up pressure on musicians, artists and cultural venues since the start of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, targeting those seen as promoting dissenting or anti-war views.

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