

St. Pete Bans July 31 Rally

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The  **Moscow Times**

St. Petersburg City Hall has banned a rally that the opposition planned to stage on July 31 on Dvortsovaya Ploshchad, saying a building on the central square will be undergoing restoration that day, Fontanka.ru reported.

The authorities have not proposed an alternative place for the rally despite being required to do so, the report said. Rally organizers promised to gather despite the ban.

Moscow City Hall earlier banned a similar rally for July 31, the anniversary of a yearlong campaign to rally on the final day of every month with 31 days to highlight Article 31 of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of assembly. No previous rally has been sanctioned, and many have been violently broken up by police.✕

(MT)