

Punk Band Charged in Cathedral Concert

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Six members of punk band Pussy Riot have been arrested on charges of hooliganism stemming from an impromptu performance at Christ the Savior Cathedral last month, the Interior Ministry announced over the weekend.

Three women and a man were detained Saturday in connection with the Feb. 21 performance at Moscow's largest cathedral in which they sang a song called "Holy Sh--" from the pulpit.

The group — who wear knitted balaclavas, obscuring their identities — was stopped by security but fled the building before police arrived.

On Sunday, police arrested two other band members, the ministry said.

"These citizens were taken in on suspicion of committing a crime, one involving a gross violation of public order, including inciting religious hatred as part of a planned conspiracy," the ministry's press service said in a statement following the first round of arrests.

Police also seized documents and other materials related to the band during the arrests, the ministry said.

A lawyer for the group, Nikolai Polozov, confirmed the arrests and identified the male band member who was detained as Pyotr Verzilov, a former member of the radical art group Voina.

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