

# Hundreds Protest Dog Hunting

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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**The**  **Moscow Times**

Hundreds of protesters descended on central Moscow's New Pushkin Square on Sunday to condemn dog hunting — a hobby that has stirred public anger after dozens of dogs were poisoned in a city park last month.

At the protest rally organized by the Green Leash movement, demonstrators urged authorities to find and punish so-called dog hunters, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

Authorities had urged rally participants not to bring dogs to the event because there were fears that dog hunters had laid poison around parts of the square, hoping to ruin the rally and rack up more victims.

But despite the warning, dozens of rally-goers brought their pets, Itar-Tass reported, adding that about a thousand people took part in the protest. RIA-Novosti put the number of attendees at closer to 500.

Speaking at the rally, celebrated actor and producer Leonid Yarmolnik told the crowd that dog

hunting was a reflection of the moral degradation of Russian society.

"People who kill their fellow creatures, they can't call themselves human beings," Yarmolnik said, according to Itar-Tass.

The Green Leash movement has said that more than 1,500 stray and domestic dogs have fallen prey to dog hunters over the past several years.

Sunday's rally follows a September episode in which at least 70 dogs died after exercising in a popular Moscow park named in honor of the 50th anniversary of the October Revolution.

At the time, police announced that they suspected dog hunters of deliberately laying out poisoned ground meat to kill dogs. An animal cruelty case was opened, although no one has been detained since.

The charge carries a maximum sentence of two years in jail.

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