

Senior Moscow Official Predicts Release of Bolotnaya Suspects

By [The Moscow Times](#)

September 27, 2013

The  **Moscow Times**

Moscow's top culture official has voiced confidence that the 12 men and women on trial for an opposition demonstration on Bolotnaya Ploschad last year will be freed.

Sergei Kapkov, who heads City Hall's culture department, did not specify whether the suspects might be released as part of a planned amnesty to honor the 20th anniversary of the Russian Constitution on Dec. 12.

"I do not know when exactly. But I have enough experience to predict how the process works," Kapkov told Dozhd television on Thursday.

The Bolotnaya defendants are on trial on politically tinged charges of inciting riots on Bolotnaya Ploschad on May 6, 2012, the day before President Vladimir Putin's inauguration.

The idea to declare an amnesty for nonviolent offenders to honor the 20th anniversary of the

Constitution was proposed earlier this month by head of the Kremlin's human rights council, Mikhail Fedotov.

At a meeting with Russia experts in the town of Valdai Club earlier this month, Putin said he did not rule out an amnesty for the Bolotnaya defendants. But he emphasized that any decision on their fate would have to comply with legal procedures.

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