

Memorial considers mathematician Bogatov a political prisoner

Muscovite Dmitry Bogatov has been charged, without evidence, of inciting acts of terrorism against the authorities

Immediately after the unexpectedly large nationwide anti-government protests on 26th March 2017, criminal investigations were instigated in relation both to this protest and incitement to take part in the planned mass protest on 2nd April. A large group of investigators was set up to work on these cases. There are grounds to believe that one of the aims of these demonstrative actions by the authorities has been to deter potential protesters. One of the victims of this campaign is Dmitry Bogatov, who has no record of civil society activism.

Dmitry Bogatov has been accused of posting on the internet on 29th March 2017, under the pseudonym of “Airat Bashirov,” “materials inciting organisation of riots in central Moscow” on 2nd April, and a message “sent to an unlimited number of people with the aim of inciting them to carry out actions to frighten the population and endanger human life, and similarly leading to other serious consequences.”

On 6th April Bogatov was detained in his apartment in Moscow.

On 7th April Evgeny Naidenov, a judge sitting in Moscow’s Presnensky district court, refused a request by investigators to remand Dmitry Bogatov in custody under [Article 212](#), Section 3, of the Russian Criminal Code (“Incitement to riot”) on the grounds that he had been charged with a minor offence. However, Bogatov was not released, but taken to the Investigative Committee in handcuffs.

On the night of 7–8 April, the charges against Bogatov were changed to those of “preparing the organisation of riots” (Article 30, Section 1; Article 212, Section 1, of the Russian Criminal Code) and “public incitement to carry out terrorist activity through the internet” ([Article 205.2](#), Section 2, of the Russian Criminal Code).

On 10th April the same judge sitting in Presnensky district court remanded Bogatov in custody for two months.

At the remand hearing, Bogatov’s lawyers unsuccessfully requested that CCTV footage, in which it is clear that Bogatov left a supermarket with his wife four minutes before the material he is accused of publishing on the internet was posted, be added to the materials of the case. Bogatov’s walk home, according to one of his lawyers, takes about 17 minutes.

The sole piece of evidence in the investigation is the web address (IP) that was used by one “Airat Bashirov”. This address belongs to Dmitry Bogatov. However, it is known that on 19th July 2015 on his IP-address Bogatov registered an exit node of [Tor](#) (The Onion Router), that is, he allowed his own address to be used by all those who aim for anonymity on the internet. [Tor](#) enables logging onto websites indirectly through several node points. The most vulnerable part of this system is the exit node which is last in line, and whose IP is known to the terminal site. That is the kind of node that Bogatov had at his home, as do many people all over the world. It is absolutely legal.

Posts in the name of Airat Bashirov have continued to appear on the forum SysAdmins.ru even after the arrest of Dmitry Bogatov.

The person writing under this name has [admitted to journalists that he authored the posts in relation to which Bogatov has been charged](#). He has stated that he wanted to annoy his political opponents and he never dreamed of any kind of terrorism.

We consider that Dmitry Bogatov has been detained for political reasons, and did not commit any crime. Furthermore, in our opinion, it is clear the investigation deliberately and illegally brought more serious charges against Bogatov to secure his detention in a pre-trial remand facility.

Memorial Human Rights Centre (Moscow) demands the immediate release of Dmitry Bogatov and the end of his prosecution.

Recognition of a person as a political prisoner, or as someone prosecuted for political motives, does not imply that Memorial agrees with their views or statements, or supports their statements or actions.

For more information about this case, see [here](#).

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