

"Was served nothing but a glass of boiling water and a cutlet".

A resident of Molodechno talks about her detention, conditions on the inside and the trial for her non-violent protest activity

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On September 13, a peaceful march took place in Molodechno. According to our correspondents, no less than 8 people were arrested right after it. The next day, Natalia Shidlovskaya was arrested for her participation in the event (the police came to the place where she lived). She was left in a temporary detention center until trial. Natalia told the Regional Newspaper about the detention, conditions in the Molodechno Temporary Detention Center and the trial.

On September 14, Natalia woke up because of the doorbell. She didn't know if the police officers had introduced themselves – her father opened the doors. The policemen wearing civilian clothes urged Natalia to come with them.

In the Molodechno district police department, a protocol was drawn up for Natalia for participating in an unauthorized rally under Article 23.34 of the Administrative Code. Natalia did not admit her guilt. She waited another hour in the police department, and then the staff informed her that the girl was staying in the department until the trial.

– I asked them on what basis my detention was taking place. I didn't hear anything sensible in response. They took all my things, put me in a so-called "glass". A "glass" is a room about three by three meters with a bench by the wall and a barely burning light bulb," says Natalia.

Natalia says that she is very dissatisfied with such conditions. She spent about four hours in the "glass", after which she was moved to the Temporary Detention Center itself.

- The neighbor was kind, I am very grateful to her for the blanket she gave me. It was incredibly cold. The conditions were as following: a hole in the floor for a toilet bowl, a sink, beds with smelly mattresses and pillows without pillowcases, a bedside table. The food can hardly be called so.

During the time that Natalia spent in the temporary detention facility (more than a day), she was once given nothing more than a glass of boiling water and a cutlet for this entire time.

- The attitude of the police was neutral, no one beat or humiliated anyone. My cellmate was periodically given cigarettes as she asked.

The next day Natalia was brought to court. Her parents had found her a lawyer. Natalia told that it was hard for her to understand how exactly the police had been able to identify her by a video they had shot.

In court Natalia was charged a fine of 25 basic values (725 rubles \ 250 euros). This is the average real take-home pay of a common belarusian worker.

– I was very afraid that they would keep me locked down for some more days, because the conditions there were just a tad better than in Auschwitz. Dad wrote a petition for me to be released before the trial, based on my disability certificate and the fact that I was not a menace to society. The petition was not even taken into account, since the personnel whose job was to process such claims had already gone home after their working hours were over.

Natalia adds that she is very worried about what is happening in the country, for innocent convicted people.

– I took part in international student seminars in Auschwitz and Dachau, the places that used to be Nazi concentration camps. And, unfortunately, I see an obvious parallel between the events of the Holocaust and what is happening in my country today.