

HRW criticizes detentions in Russia

by UPI

NAZRAN, Russia - An international human rights group Sunday criticized Russian authorities for detaining 12 journalists and others monitoring a protest. The 10 reporters and two human rights advocates allegedly were among dozens arrested Saturday during the violent demonstration by hundreds of people in Nazran, the capital of Ingushetia, in which a building was set on fire. Human Rights Watch said in a news release that the detentions undermine independent reporting. One of the journalists allegedly was beaten by police and several people were reportedly hospitalized, the organization said. "Ingush authorities are trying to silence dissent by stopping journalists from doing their jobs," said Holly Cartner, Europe and Central Asia director at Human Rights Watch, who called it "disgraceful" that two of the journalists, who were later released, were "ill-treated" for covering the protest. The other correspondents were transferred to Vladikavkaz, the capital of North Ossetia, in armored vehicles "for their own safety," HRW said. The Ingush government designated sections of Ingushetia as "counter-terrorist operation zones" allegedly to protect civilians from attacks by armed separatist groups based in neighboring Chechnya.

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