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## **RUSSIANS ARRESTED IN KOSOVO RELEASED**

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Six Russian nationals arrested in Kosovo two days ago have been released and have left Kosovo.

TASS is reporting this, citing the spokesperson for the Russian embassy in Belgrade, Yuri Pichugin.

"The situation has been resolved. According to the decision of the court in Podujevo, they paid a money fine and left Kosovo accompanied by Russian officials in Pristina," he said.

Reports on Wednesday said that a group of 11 persons "of Serb and Russian nationality" who have been arrested near Podujevo are currently kept in up to 48-hour investigative detention.

RTS said it learned this from the Kosovo police.

Further procedure will be decided on by a prosecutor after the detained persons have been questioned.

The six Russian and five Serbian citizens, who have been named by the Kosovo police with their initials and year of birth - were arrested on Tuesday for illegally crossing the administrative line.

The Kosovo police said in a statement, carried by the KoSsev website, that they had "obtained information in advance" that Serb and Russian citizens would try to illegally cross into Kosovo from central Serbia, in a village near the town of Podujevo.

The prosecutor, the Bar Association of Kosovo, and the Russian liaison office in Pristina have been informed about the case, the statement said.

Reacting to this, head of the Serbian Government's Office for Kosovo and Metohija Marko Djuric on Wednesday demanded the urgent release of the group.

In a written statement carried by Beta, Djuric said he "most severely condemned the treatment arbitrarily inflicted by the provincial police and judiciary of the group of Serbian and Russian nationals, who were detained near the administrative line, while visiting Kosovo and Metohija, as well as an attempt to politically abuse this case."

Djuric said that their release was deliberately delayed on the pretext that the relevant court was too busy to deal with their case.

"I would like to stress that among the arrested are a pregnant woman and a minor, which makes this unnecessary traumatization of Serbian and Russian nationals even more inhumane," Djuric

said, adding that the Office for Kosovo and Metohija, through the liaison officer and in cooperation with the Russian diplomatic and consular network, had provided the necessary legal assistance to the arrested.

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Kaynak/Source: