The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Medvedev Backs Title Changes

August 30, 2010



President Dmitry Medvedev speaking Monday to a group of Russian youth athletes at his Gorki residence outside Moscow. He said he supports the title change advocated by Chechnya's president. **Yuri Kochetkov**

President Dmitry Medvedev said he backs an initiative by Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov to abolish regional presidential titles but added that he won't insist on uniform titles for the country's 83 regional leaders.

"I think this should be decided by the regions themselves," Medvedev said in an interview with Rossia state television, excerpts of which were carried by Interfax on Monday.

Earlier this month, Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov announced that he would drop his presidential title because there should only be one president in the country, causing the heads of other North Caucasus republics to follow suit.

Kadyrov's initiative was immediately backed by an unidentified Kremlin official, who told national media that the unifying all regional leaders' titles had long been on the agenda but should be carried out voluntarily.

But it raised concern in some regions, most notably Tatarstan, that it amounted to a new attempt to strip their powers in favor of the federal government.

Medvedev said Monday that the initiative could lead to more clarity. "While the titles can generally differ, they really should not lead to confusion and misunderstanding," he said.

The initiative "should be considered, and maybe the law should be changed," he said.

Medvedev apparently did not mention Kadyrov in the interview, which was to air late Monday on Rossia television.

Medvedev also called for the renaming of regional parliaments, many of which are called State Duma, just like the federal lower house of parliament is called in Moscow. "We also have some State Dumas among the regional legislatures. This can lead to confusion. ... If the regions themselves are ready for this, I will have no objections," he said.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/30/medvedev-backs-title-changes-a1023