

Putin Jokes About Ruling Until He's 120

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Prime Minister Vladimir Putin joked during a meeting with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi that they could hang on to their jobs until they are 120 years old.

Berlusconi visited Putin at his Novo-Ogaryovo residence west of Moscow on Friday after attending a Kremlin-backed forum in Yaroslavl.

Berlusconi said he planned to finance an institute that would research ways of extending the average lifetime to 120 years.

"So we will be prime ministers until at least the age of 120?" Putin replied, RIA-Novosti reported.

Berlusconi, 73, said this was unlikely because prime ministers work hard and "often get tired."

"You won't believe it. I haven't had a single day of holiday this year," he said, adding that Putin, 57, also has had "no time for leisure" in recent weeks.

Last month, Putin was at the forefront of a government effort to douse rampant wildfires — and public anger over the fires. In addition to helping dump water on wildfires from the pilot's seat of an airplane, Putin went on a tour of the Far East that saw him shoot whales with a crossbow, examine mammoth bones and drive a yellow Lada car down the new Chita-Khabarovsk highway.

Putin told Berlusconi that the two should get together for a short vacation.

(MT, AP)

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