

Banks to Disclose State Officials' Accounts

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Banks will have to disclose all information on accounts and transactions of candidates for state jobs, according to a bill introduced to the State Duma on Thursday, Interfax reported.

The bill, ordered by President Dmitry Medvedev, is the latest step in the Kremlin's attempt to curb graft among bureaucracy.

Banks will have to provide all data on property of potential officials and their families at the request of state agencies examining the background of candidates, Medvedev said at a meeting with United Russia members at his Gorki residence outside Moscow.

Medvedev did not say which agencies would inspect the data or whether it would be made public, but added that real estate registry bodies would also be required to disclose information on candidates' property.

The bill also spells out punishments for officials who get involved in business and civil servants who fail to prevent graft by colleagues, Medvedev said, without elaborating.

No date for a first hearing in the Duma was set Thursday.

Medvedev's announcement follows a complaint by Prosecutor General Yury Chaika, who said Wednesday that current legislation does not allow prosecutors to request information about officials' bank accounts.

During the United Russia meeting, Medvedev also called on the party to draft a bill increasing penalties for workplace safety violations and asked the government and businesses to come up with proposals on how to improve the living standards of factory workers, Interfax said.

The president spoke against extending the 40-hour working week, saying such proposals stemmed from entrepreneurs not interested in the modernization of their businesses.

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