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TV Cameramen Accused of 'Showing Genitals' to Putin

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The Federal Guard Service has accused two television cameramen of "showing their genitals" to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin as he whizzed past in an official motorcade.

The two cameramen, who work for Dozhd and Russian Travel Guide television, deny the allegation, saying they saw the flashing blue lights of the motorcade on Kutuzovsky Prospekt on Tuesday night and decided to pull out their cell phones to film it.

"We saw flashing blue lights and decided to shoot a cell phone video," Dozhd cameraman Vladimir Komissarov said in an interview broadcast on his channel.

According to Dozhd, a Federal Guard Service official approached Komissarov and Alexander Fyodorov several minutes later at a bus stop and accused them of "showing their genitals" to the "presidential" motorcade. Without introducing himself, the official demanded that they delete the video, which they did.

Gazeta.ru, citing a police officer, confirmed that the motorcade was Putin's.

Federal law does not ban taking photos and videos of state officials' cars, even with Putin inside.

Nevertheless, the two cameramen were driven to a police station and only released more than 12 hours later.

On Wednesday afternoon, they stood before a judge on hooliganism charges, but the hearing was postponed until July 13. Both deny any wrongdoing.

If tried and convicted, they face anything from a minimum fine of 2,500 rubles ($89) to a maximum punishment of 15 days in jail.

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