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Visa Issues Ensnare Concert Backers

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The Federal Migration Service intends to fine organizers of a Moscow concert up to 800,000 rubles ($27,200) for violating visa laws, RIA-Novosti reported Sunday.

Nine foreign artists who performed at the 90s Super Disco concert at the Olimpiisky sports complex on March 9 came to the country on tourist visas, agency spokeswoman Zalina Kornilova said.

"The foreigners were from the United States, Britain and Greece. They have already left Russia, having paid fines of 3,000 rubles. Those employing them face a fine of 250,000 rubles to 800,000 rubles," Kornilova said.

"There's no difference between a foreign citizen working on a building site and one performing at a concert. The rules apply to everyone," she added.

This is the third high-profile visa violation in recent weeks. It follows French journalist Anne Nivat's expulsion from Russia after researching a book while on a business visa in February and eight American citizens being fined on March 2 for conducting charity work after arriving on tourist visas.

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