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Kalashnikov Corporation Set Up to Consolidate Arms Makers

By The Moscow Times

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Children with Kalashnikov, also known as AK-47, assault rifles participating in a military training program. **Vladimir Filonov / MT**

The Kalashnikov Corporation, set to absorb major Russian small-arms makers, has been officially established, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said Monday.

"The Kalashnikov Corporation has just been officially registered. Happy birthday!" Rogozin, who oversees the Russian defense industry, said on Twitter.

The new Kalashnikov Corporation, first proposed by Rogozin last year, was due to be registered in time for Russia's Arms Makers Day, September 19. It will include Izhmash, Izhmekh and some other small-arms manufacturers under the famed Kalashnikov brand.

Izhmash has been manufacturing Kalashnikovs since the world-famous assault rifle first went into mass production in 1949, while Izhmekh is best known for producing Makarov

and Yarygin pistols.

However, both companies have been recently experiencing financial difficulties and a sharp drop in output. The government is now hoping to revive them by merging them under the new brand.

Mikhail Kalashnikov, 93, the designer of the Kalashnikov assault rifle, personally authorized the use of his name for the new corporation in February. Izhmash chief Konstantin Busygin earlier denied media rumors that Russia's most famous firearm designer asked to be paid for the use of his name, saying that Kalashnikov is a "true patriot" and the question of money was not even raised.

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