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Duma Considers Mandatory Deportation for Illegal Immigrants

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Migrants who violate conditions of stay in Russia will face deportation if a new bill submitted to the State Duma is adopted and signed into law.

Foreign visitors who neglect immigration control procedures and fail to meet the conditions of entry will be subject to mandatory deportation, according to the draft bill submitted by Liberal Democratic Party deputies Igor Lebedev and Yaroslav Nilov, RIA Novosti reported Thursday.

Under current legislation, those who violate immigration procedures face a fine and administrative deportation.

The illegal migration issue has been in the spotlight recently after a police officer was brutally beaten in July while trying to detain a suspected sex offender at the Matveyevsky Market in Moscow.

In the aftermath of the attack, Moscow police raided several other markets and arrested hundreds of illegal immigrants, who were then placed in a temporary "tent camp" to await processing and in some cases deportation.

An opinion poll conducted by the All-Russia Public Opinion Research Center this week showed public support for tougher measures against offending immigrants. The issue has also been a focal point in the run-up to mayoral elections, with acting Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin calling for stricter immigration controls.

In May, Sobyanin said he did not like the idea of migrants from Central Asia receiving permanent residency in Moscow. "People with bad Russian and a completely different culture are better off living in their own country," he said, RIA News reported.

Earlier this year, the State Duma reviewed another bill requiring everyone who enters the country without a visa to pay a 30,000-ruble ($900) fee to cover any possible deportation costs, to "preserve the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation," Lenta.ru reported.

In June this year, Olga Kirillova, head of the Moscow branch of the Federal Migration Service, suggested forcing immigrants found guilty of immigration violations to do community work or other labor, Interfax reported.

Since the beginning of 2013, Moscow authorities have uncovered 300 counts of organized illegal migration, which resulted in 189 criminal cases against various organizations and 94 cases against apartment owners who had registered an illegal number of migrants at their places of residence, RIA reported.

In 2013, more than 17,000 crimes were committed by visitors, including 6,700 by migrants from countries that share a border with Russia, police said.

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