

Moscow Scraps 9th Consecutive Gay Pride Parade

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The streets of central Moscow will not be bursting with gay pride in 2014 as city authorities have refused to sanction the parade for the ninth year in a row.

Well-known LGBT activist and parade organizer Nikolai Alexeyev vowed to move forward with the event on May 31 even if it meant doing so without permission, according to news portal Gay Russia. Alexeyev told Gay Russia that the parade proposal was rejected on the basis of a federal law banning the propagandizing of non-traditional sexual relations around minors.

A spokesperson for the Regional Security Department's public events office told The Moscow Times by telephone Tuesday that Alexeyev had been refused permission to hold the parade. The department's spokesperson refrained from explaining the specific reasons underpinning the decision, but said that officials generally consider a variety of factors, including concerns of public disorder and the gay propaganda law.

Prior to the passage of the gay propaganda law, Moscow authorities consistently pointed

to the potential for public disorder as grounds for rejecting gay pride parade applications.

Frustrated with Moscow's record of refusal, Alexeyev previously challenged the bans in Russia's domestic court system.

Finding these efforts unsuccessful, he turned to the European Court of Human Rights on three different occasions between 2007 and 2009. The ECHR ruled in 2010 that the repeated rejections constituted a violation of the right to free assembly and protection from discrimination.

Alexeyev has said that he is prepared to take further legal action to challenge this year's rejection.

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