Moscow's Annual Nationalist March Runs Into Hitches With Authorities

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October 23, 2014

A nationalist organization known for organizing Moscow's annual Russian March, a nationalist street gathering traditionally held on the National Unity Day public holiday on Nov. 4, has run into bureaucratic problems after City Hall rejected its request to hold the event.

Dmitry Dyomushkin, leader of the nationalist organization known as "Russians," told The Moscow Times that the event's organizers had submitted requests to City Hall outlining more than 10 potential routes for the march, in an effort to come to a "compromise" with municipal authorities. He claimed that their request was turned down because authorities deemed organizers were "incapable of choosing a route."

"We were asked to resubmit our application and outline only one route," Dyomushkin said. "We are preparing to resubmit our documents the way authorities requested and discussing where the event should take place. We are negotiating with City Hall right now. We will do

what they ask, and there will definitely be a Russian March this year."

The march is traditionally held under slogans such as "Russia for the Russians" and "Russian Jobs for Russian People."

Alexei Mayorov, head of the city's security and anti-corruption department, said Dyomushkin's requests had been rejected because the organizers he listed already appeared in requests to hold other events on the same day, state news agency RIA Novosti reported.

Earlier this month, City Hall turned down the group's request to hold the march in downtown Moscow. With the exception of 2012 when it went ahead in the center, in recent years authorities have forced the nationalist march into the city's suburbs, though unlike some opposition rallies, it has always been authorized.

Last year's march, held in Moscow's southeastern Lyublino district — home to a large number of Central Asian migrant workers — drew some 20,000 people, according to organizers. The police said that 8,000 people had participated in the event, and some 30 participants had been detained for covering their faces and chanting Nazi slogans, state news agency RIA Novosti reported at the time.

Similar nationalist marches were also held last year in St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk and Krasnoyarsk.

The Russian March has been held since 2005, when the National Unity Day public holiday was introduced. The holiday, which replaced another holiday marking the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, commemorates Russia's defeat of Polish invaders in 1612.

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