

Kalashnikov's Relatives Take Companies to Court Over Toy AK-47s

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The AK-47 assault rifle.

Relatives of Mikhail Kalashnikov, the late designer of Russia's famed assault rifle, are suing Russian importers of Chinese toys for trademark infringement over toy guns that feature "AK-47" markings.

The M.T. Kalashnikov firm, which was founded by the designer together with his daughter and grandson, is seeking damages ranging from 100,001 rubles (\$2,172) to 300,001 rubles from each of the three defendants — companies based in southern Russia and the Far East, RIA Novosti reported Wednesday, citing materials from the Supreme Arbitration Court.

The lawsuit also says that custom officials had previously sued the three defendants for similar copyright violations.

Courts at that time ruled that the markings of AK-47 on the imported Chinese toy guns

constituted unauthorized use of a registered trademark and fined the companies 30,000 rubles (\$650), the report said.

Kalashnikov, who died last year aged 93, became a national icon and acquired worldwide fame for designing the AK-47 in 1947. The rifle is used in many countries and its name is widely recognizable around the world.

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