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Putin Spokesman Denies Russian President Is Out of Town for Birth of Love Child

By Peter Spinella

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President Vladimir Putin's spokesman denied rumors Friday that the president was out of town to attend the birth of his child.

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Forbes that "information about the birth of a baby fathered by Vladimir Putin does not correspond to reality," the magazine reported.

"I plan to ask some wealthy people to organize a contest for the media's best whopper of a tale," Peskov said, referring to media speculation about the purported birth.

Swiss tabloid Blick reported earlier Friday that Alina Kabayeva, a former Olympic gymnast-turned-parliamentarian, was rumored to have recently checked in at a private maternity hospital in the Swiss canton of Ticino.

Speculation about Putin's whereabouts began swirling this week after the president canceled an official trip and was not seen at a public event for several days. Peskov denied media reports that the president was ill.

Putin has been rumored for years to be dating Kabayeva. He announced that he was divorcing his wife in 2013. The following year, during his annual marathon press conference, he said he loved someone and that someone loved him in return.

In 2013, Peskov denied that Putin had secretly wed Kabayeva at a 17th-century monastery.

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