The Moscow Times
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Lithuania Latest Country to Block Russia's Night Wolves Bikers

By The Moscow Times

April 29, 2015



Leader of the bikers club Night Wolves, Alexander Zaldostanov (F), nicknamed "Khirurg" (Surgeon), together with participants of a bike ride commemorating the 70th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two, arrives at the Russian consulate general in Brest, Belarus, April 28, 2015.

Lithuania has denied entry to a group of pro-Putin bikers who are traveling from Moscow to Berlin in order to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the allied victory over Nazi Germany.

The refusal came Tuesday evening when eight bikers belonging to the Night Wolves motorcycle club tried to cross into Lithuania, the BBC's Russian Service reported. Some of the bikers tried to enter from Belarus while others tried to enter via the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.

“Although they had visas, they could not produce other necessary documents, without which it is impossible to enter into the Schengen zone,” Lithuania's border guards were cited as saying. Some of the bikers did not have any technical documents with them at all, the report

added.

Lithuania, a former Soviet republic, regained its independence in 1990 and became an EU member in 2004.

Its refusal to allow the Night Wolves to cross its territory comes following the decision by Poland on Monday to deny entry to 10 Night Wolves bikers. Polish authorities earlier called the planned trip from Moscow to Berlin “a provocation,” Reuters reported.

The Night Wolves' trip comes as tensions between the West and Russia remain strained over the annexation of Crimea and Moscow's perceived support for pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine.

The Russian motorbike club, which is fiercely nationalist, has rallied against the Ukrainian government and celebrated the annexation of Crimea. Its leader, Alexander Zaldostanov, has also frequently appeared with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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