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Putin Declares Patriotism Russia's Only National Idea

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A man waves Russian national flag as he stands in cold waters of the Black Sea during Orthodox Epiphany celebrations in the port city of Yevpatoriya, Crimea.

President Vladimir Putin considers patriotism the only national idea in Russia, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

“We don't have and there can't be any other unifying idea, apart from patriotism,” Putin was quoted by Interfax as saying at the meeting of the Leaders Club, a union of entrepreneurs from 40 Russian regions.

“And that is a national idea,” he added.

Putin also pointed out that in order to implement patriotism as a national idea, it is not enough if “the president or anyone else has only once said it,” the RBC news website reported.

“It is necessary to constantly talk about it, at all levels,” Putin was quoted by RBC as saying.

This is not the first time Putin has mentioned the importance of patriotism in Russia.

In June 2015, the president said that the “sacred duty” of Russians is “to be faithful to the great values of patriotism,” the RIA Novosti news agency reported at the time.

In October 2015, he claimed that patriotism and love for the motherland should be “moral guideline” for teenagers in Russia, the TASS news agency reported at the time.

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