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Moscow Police Investigating FSB Graduates' Mercedes Joyride

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A ride in Mercedes-Benz SUVs through Moscow organized by graduates of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) Academy last month has attracted the attention of the Moscow police, media and high-ranking officials, the Meduza news agency reported on Monday.

A video of the rally that showed tens of black luxury SUVs cruising the roads of central Moscow and the graduates smiling on camera with wine glasses in their hands quickly went viral and reached state television's Channel One.

A report aired on Sunday claimed that the participants violated the law and that the SUVs should have followed the previously agreed route, accompanied by traffic police cars.

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The stunt, according to employees of a car rental company, may have cost between 250,000

and 300,000 rubles ($3,900-4,700), Meduza reported.

One of the rally participants, Vsevolod, claimed that the cars were lent to them by elder Academy graduates. There was nothing wrong or inappropriate in the event, he added, as there were no traffic violations.

The traffic police promised to investigate the event and are currently examining the online videos.The FSB reacted to the videos later on Monday by launching its own investigation, according to a statement on the FSB website.

Former FSB Major General Alexander Mikhailov condemned the manner in which the graduates celebrated, calling the rally "a manifestation of merchant manners" and comparing it to "festivities with coachmen, gypsies and bears."

"They violated all the basic tenets of working in the [State Security] agencies," Mikhailov added.

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