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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Officials Approve New Anti-Terror Law Protest

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Moscow City Hall has approved a new protest against Russia's new anti-terror laws, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Monday.

The demonstration, co-organized by opposition activist Leonid Volkov, has been agreed for Aug. 9 in the capital's Sokolniki Park.

Authorities had previously given permission for a demonstration against the so-called "Yarovaya package," but later revoked the permit on claims that inaccuracies had been found in the application documentation. Volkov, an ally of opposition activist Alexei Navalny, called the authorities' actions "illegal" and submitted a second application for a new event.

The protest is against a controversial raft of stringent anti-terrorism bills submitted by ultraconservative United Russia lawmaker Irina Yarovaya. The legislation was signed by President Vladimir Putin in June.

The proposals include harsher penalties for inciting or justifying terrorism online, restricting missionary work, and increasing the number of crimes with which children aged between 14 and 17 can be charged.

Communications companies will be required to monitor the content of phone calls and messages and to keep them on file for six months. All messaging apps which use encryption will also be required to add additional code allowing access to the Russian security services.

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