

Putin Plans Alcohol Tax Cuts After Siberian Poisoning Tragedy

December 21, 2016



Russian President Vladimir Putin is preparing to slash taxes on alcohol in a bid to curb demand for cheap vodka “substitutes” such as perfume, aftershave and bath tinctures, [the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday](#).

The Kremlin has asked officials to present their plans by March 31, 2017.

Putin’s order follows a mass poisoning in the Siberian city of Irkutsk earlier this week.

The victims, aged 25–50, are believed to have consumed boyaryshnik — a bath lotion made from hawthorn berries, which is often used as a vodka substitute for its high alcohol content.

As of Wednesday, Dec. 21, 62 people had died from methanol poisoning.

The mayor of Irkutsk has declared a state of emergency in the region, and has ordered law enforcement officials to inspect all retail outlets currently selling boyaryshnik.

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