

Russian Newspaper Calls for Robot Riot Cops to Be Unleashed on Anti-Corruption Protests

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Law enforcement officers line up along a street as they block a rally in Moscow. **Sergei Karpukhin / Reuters**

A pro-Kremlin newspaper has called for robotic riot cops to be used against demonstrators if more anti-corruption protests take place without government approval.

Russian tabloid Komsomolskaya Pravda said that police could use robots to shower protesters with tear gas and rubber bullets in a bid to subdue unauthorized gatherings.

"There really is enough money to suppress any illegal rally or large-scale provocation in the Internal Affairs Ministry arsenal," the newspaper wrote. "There are cars with water cannons, and [redacted] guns that shoot tear gas and light-and-noise grenades."

The article also claimed that officers could use armed robots to harness these weapons

without "putting themselves at risk." "Kicking a robot is useless - and it hurts your feet," the newspaper said.

The newspaper made the claims after top Russian official publicly ~~had~~ pledged to unleash the country's full police arsenal on future unapproved protests.

"If these 'provocations' begin to ~~have~~ appear more frequently, we can put the expansive arsenal at our ~~had~~ disposal into play," the deputy chief of Russia's Internal Affairs Ministry [Igor Zubov told the TASS news agency.](#)

He also said that the riot police who ~~had~~ patrolled central Moscow on Sunday had been instructed to keep the ~~the~~ number of arrests to a minimum and not to use force.

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Zubov confirmed that one police officer had been injured during the unrest, enduring a head trauma. "He suffered alone and he suffered seriously," Zubov said. "The National Guard and I will draw appropriate conclusions from this."

Aside from traditional tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets, Russia's riot police bought a [non-lethal psychoacoustic system](#) to disperse crowds in April 2016. The system, which emits noises designed to cause ~~had~~ discomfort to those in the immediate vicinity, is similar to those ~~had~~ used during the 2014 Ferguson riots in the United States.

Police estimate that 8,000 people [met in central Moscow on Sunday](#) to protest against corruption within the Russian government. According to local authorities, more than 600 people were detained at the rally, which had not been granted a permit by the Moscow government. Russian human rights group OVD-Info estimates that over 1,000 people were detained in the capital alone, and approximately 1,400 detained across the country as a whole.

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