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Russia's Medvedev Says He Backs Criminalizing Observance of U.S. Sanctions

By Reuters

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Dmitry Medvedev **Kremlin Press Service**

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev backs the idea of making it a criminal offense for Russians to observe sanctions imposed by the United States, Medvedev said in an interview broadcast on Saturday on state TV channel Rossia 1.

Washington imposed sweeping sanctions on some of Russia's biggest companies and businessmen on April 6, striking at allies of President Vladimir Putin to punish Moscow for its alleged meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and other so-called malign activities.

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Asked about a proposal drafted by Russia's lower house of parliament to criminalize

observance of U.S. sanctions, Medvedev said the restrictions were aimed at destroying Russia's socio-political system and harming the economy and individuals.

"If this is so, then the implementation of these sanctions by citizens of our country should be an offense. No one should have the right to observe these American sanctions for fear of having to take administrative or criminal liability," he said.

Medvedev also said that the government should support sanctions-hit Russian companies to ensure that jobs are not lost.

Speaking on other issues, he said that Russia was on the brink of making a decision on raising the pension age.

Commenting on his own plans for the future, he said he wanted to continue working in a role that brought maximum benefit to his country.

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