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Putin Sued Over Helmet-Free Motorcycle Ride in Crimea

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Kremlin.ru

Russian President Vladimir Putin has been sued for riding a motorcycle without a helmet over the weekend.

Putin attended a biker show organized by the Night Wolves motorcycle club in annexed Crimea on Saturday as protests raged in Moscow and several Russian cities. State television showed Putin at the wheel of an Ural motorcycle with two leaders of Crimea's Russian-backed government in tow.

Embed:

> На «Урале»: Владимир Путин приехал на байк-шоу под Севастополем pic.twitter.com/w1CQKXiflv
>
> — Дмитрий Смирнов (@dimsmirnov175) August 10, 2019

At least two people have filed complaints with the authorities claiming that Putin had violated Russian law by not wearing a helmet.

A lawyer from Far East Russia on Monday asked the Sevastopol branch of Russia's traffic police to fine Putin $15 over the infraction.

Regional legislator Oleg Khomutinnikov sent a similar complaint to Russia's Prosecutor General's Office later that day.

"Putin is violating [the law] again. I think it's becoming a bad tradition," Khomutinnikov wrote on Facebook. "So what, the violations are minor. But does that make them non-violations?"

The Russian president stirred a similar controversy on the peninsula last year when he was filmed behind the wheel of a truck at the opening of the Crimean Bridge without a seat belt. Putin's Federal Guard Service had explained that the bridge was not yet officially opened when he crossed it.

On Saturday, Putin drew an implied contrast between Moscow's protesters and the Night Wolves, praising the club for showing "how one should treat Russia."

"I am very happy that such manly and cool lads set an example for the young people in our country," Putin told the club.

Reuters contributed reporting to this article.

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