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Russian Police to Probe Siberia Street Party

By AFP

May 25, 2020



Authorities in Russia have opened an investigation into a street party that saw dozens gather in the center of Novosibirsk despite an anti-coronavirus lockdown in the Siberian city.

The local investigative committee said it was launching the probe after photos and videos were posted online of young Russians dancing as music played from loudspeakers in the city's central Lenin Square in the night of Saturday to Sunday.

The committee said more than 300 people may have joined the street party in the city of 1.5 million — Russia's third-largest — under lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

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Local police said separately that 50 to 60 people had taken part and that the crowd had

dispersed when officers arrived.

Russians can face up to seven years in prison for violating anti-virus lockdown rules, though in most cases face only a fine.

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Russia has recorded more than 353,000 coronavirus infections, the third-highest number in the world, and 3,633 deaths.

The number of new cases has been steadily dropping and authorities have begun easing lockdown measures in some parts of the country.

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