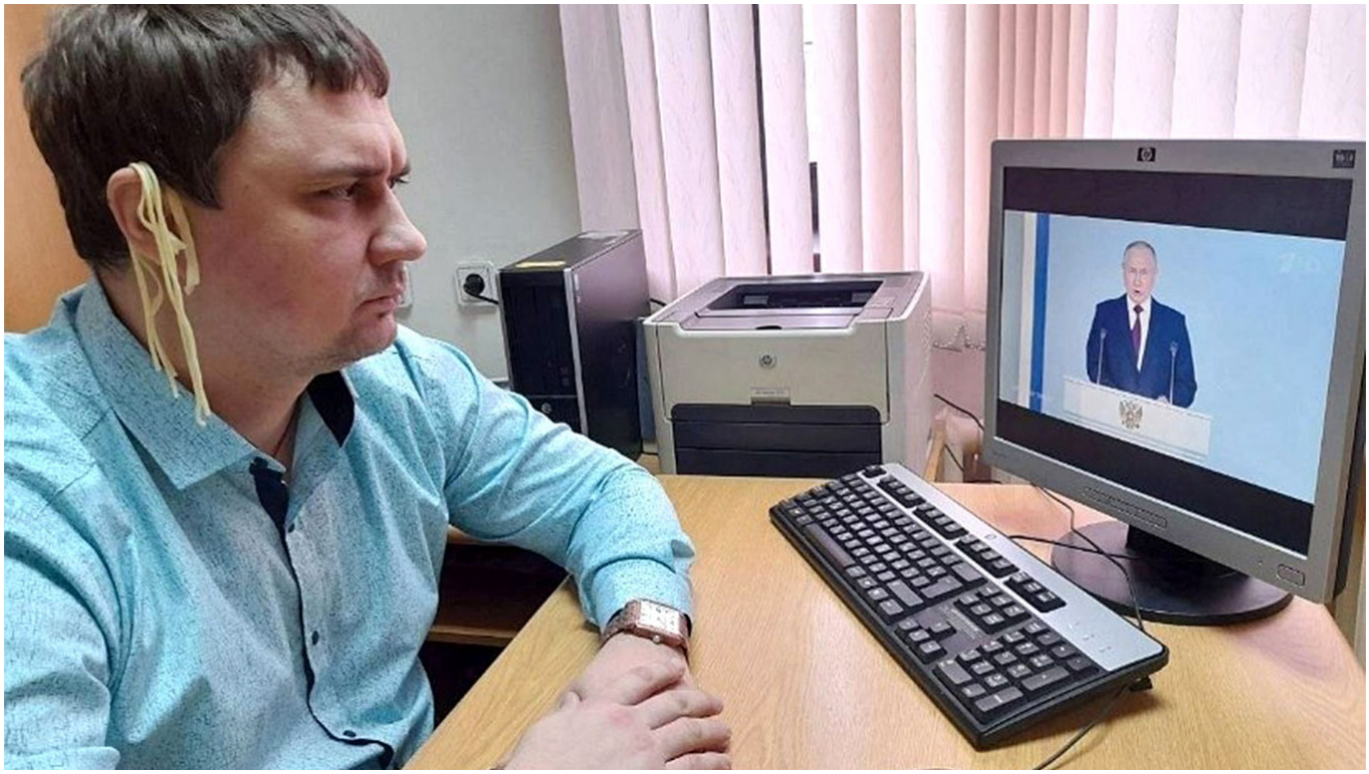
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Russian Politician Fined for Viral Noodle Stunt During Putin Speech

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vk.com/abdalkinmikhail

A court in the city of Novokuybyshevsk in Russia's Samara region has found regional deputy Mikhail Abdalkin guilty of "discrediting the Russian armed forces" for posting a video of himself watching Vladimir Putin's state-of-the-nation address with noodles hanging from his ears, TASS reported Thursday.

The noodles in the video, which was posted across Abdalkin's social media in February, reference a common Russian idiom "вешать лапшу на уши" (literally: to hang noodles on one's ears), which is used to describe an act of deception or when false information is being fed to the listener.

"I wanted to show my dissatisfaction and the dissatisfaction of people who come to me," Abdalkin, a member of Russia's Communist party, said, adding that he also hoped to express his "doubt that any changes in domestic policy or in the country's economy will occur in the near future or in the decades to come."

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Despite the video being criticized by his fellow party members and several senior Russian officials, Abdalkin refused to plead guilty to the charges.

"I believe there is nothing that discredits the armed forces [in the video]," Abdalkin said during the court hearing.

The Novokuybyshevsk City Court ordered Abdalkin to pay a fine of 150,000 rubles ($1,951) on Wednesday.

His lawyer said he would be appealing the ruling on the grounds that it violated the constitution, TASS reported.

"The party ... supports the armed forces [and] the soldiers conscripted during mobilization," the deputy said, adding that he had personally participated in a collection of humanitarian aid for the army, according to TASS.

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