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Wagner Leader Arriving in Belarus – Lukashenko

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Journalists have previously linked the Embraer Legacy 600 to Yevgeny Prigozhin. **SN7756 / Jetphotos**

Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin is arriving in Belarus, three days after his failed mutiny against Russia's military leadership, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko confirmed Tuesday.

"Yes, today he's in Belarus," Lukashenko said in comments carried by the state news agency Belta.

It was not clear if the Wagner leader had already arrived in Belarus or was still in the air.

"We'll help you if you want to stay with us for a while at [Wagner's] expense of course," he said.

"But I could use such a unit in the army," Lukashenko said, adding that he instructed the Belarusian defense minister to discuss Wagner's possible deployment in Belarus.

He also said he had urged his ally President Vladimir Putin not to kill Prigozhin during his

revolt.

"I said to Putin: we could waste (Prigozhin), no problem. If not on the first try, then on the second. I told him: don't do this," Lukashenko said.

The Belarusian monitoring group Belaruski Hayun had been the first to report the arrival of a Prigozhin-linked jet earlier Tuesday.

An Embraer Legacy 600 — which investigative journalists have previously linked to the Russian businessman — landed southwest of the Belarusian capital of Minsk on Tuesday at 07:37 a.m. local time, flight tracking data showed.

The jet had departed two hours earlier from an airfield in Russia's southern Rostov region, where Prigozhin staged a short-lived insurrection on Saturday that ended with an agreement brokered by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko.

While the agreement's details remain unclear, the Kremlin said criminal charges against Prigozhin for "organizing an armed mutiny" would be dropped if he agreed to go into exile in neighboring Belarus.

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Belaruski Hayun said a second business jet flying from St. Petersburg — where law enforcement authorities carried out raids on Prigozhin-linked properties over the weekend — landed at the same Belarusian airfield at 07:58 a.m. local time.

On Monday, Prigozhin said his dramatic rebellion was orchestrated in order to save the Wagner mercenary outfit from being disbanded and to bring "justice" to Russia's military leadership — which accuses of bungling the invasion of Ukraine.

"We went [toward Moscow] to demonstrate our protest, not to overthrow the government," Prigozhin said in a Telegram audio message late Monday without revealing his current location.

In the message, the businessman said Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko had offered Wagner to "work in a lawful jurisdiction."

Putin also addressed the nation late Monday, accusing rebelling Wagner fighters of treason and — without mentioning Prigozhin by name — offered them to either sign contracts with the army or leave for Belarus.

Putin then held a meeting with his top security officials over the mutiny. It included Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, the target of Prigozhin's Wagner fighters, in the first public sighting since the short-lived revolt.

AFP contributed reporting.

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