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Peskov Says U.S. Running Putin Smear Campaign Before 2018 Elections

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Russian President Vladimir Putin

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov has suggested that recent comments made by U.S. government officials about the Russian president is part of a smear campaign in the run-up to the 2018 Russian presidential elections, Interfax reported Friday.

"The presidential elections are on the horizon and it seems that [U.S.] preparations have already started," Peskov said.

Journalists asked Peskov whether this signals that Putin will stand as a presidential candidate in the upcoming election.

"To talk about our elections, which will take place two years from now, is unheard of, we don't even know yet whether Putin has the intention to stand or not, but a smear campaign has already begun," Peskov replied.

Peskov also responded to journalists' questions about recent comments by U.S. officials which

described Putin as corrupt.

Peskov said that U.S. presidential election candidates use issues about Russia and Putin for their own gain.

He claimed that he would lose his job if he made similar statements about the U.S. president.

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