The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow's News Media Helps Russians (Living in Russia) Report Vote Fraud to the Trump Campaign

By The Moscow Times

November 08, 2016



Pixabay

Americans head to the polls today to vote in what promises to be a historic presidential election. Thousands of miles away, on the other side of the globe, the Russian news media is paying close attention.

Russia has been an unusually hot topic in this year's race, following allegations by Hillary Clinton and U.S. cyber-security experts that Russian state-sponsored hackers are to blame for stealing troves of emails from top Democratic Party officials and staff members in Clinton's campaign, and then leaking the data to Wikileaks, which has published the information over the past several months.

Amid accusations of meddling in the U.S. democratic system, Russian officials and Russia's

state-controlled news have remained defiant, denying any part in the data thefts and insisting that Moscow has made no effort to interfere in America's presidential race.

Nevertheless, with more than seven hours before the first polls close in the U.S., Tuesday's live election coverage in Russia has already yielded several amusing moments.

Margarita Simonyan, the chief editor of "RT," Russia's largest propaganda outlet aimed at foreign audiences, tweeted ominously:

Embed:

> Democracy. R.I.P.
>
> — Ð¤Ð°Ñ¤Ð³Ð°Ñ¤Ð¸Ñ¤Ð° Ð¡Ð¼Ð¾Ð½ÑÑÑÐ½ (@M_Simonyan) November 8, 2016

The vagueness of Simonyan's message, however, backfired somewhat, if the responses on Twitter are any indication. For instance, dozens of Internet users asked if she was referring to democracy in Russia, or perhaps specifically to the state of things in Chechnya, where the same Putin-appointed dictator has ruled for the past decade.

Meanwhile, readers of the popular news website Gazeta.ru can follow an election-day live blog. As a service to its audience in the United States, Gazeta.ru shared the phone number for Donald Trump's hotline, set up to collect reports of voting violations. Strangely, the website thought the information might also be useful to people living in Russia, far removed from America's actual voting:

Embed:

> From @GazetaRu live feed. Trump's voting violation hotline. Dial 1 if you're calling from Russia. pic.twitter.com/P12NTVClOB
>
> — Sean Guillory (@seansrussiablog) November 8, 2016

The television news network Rossiya-24 has correspondents reporting throughout the day from polling stations across the United States. Whenever the station airs one of these segments, viewers are treated to a small graphic reporting the time remaining until the first polls close. This level of detail about an election process was absent just two months ago, when Russia held its own nationwide parliamentary elections.

Embed:

> Russian state-TV broadcasts timer indicating when the US elections wrap up today. It didn't even do this for Russia's own elections in Sept. pic.twitter.com/2gVvfFI01I
>
> — Mr. Rothrock (@KevinRothrock) November 8, 2016

For more on how the Russian media has focused on the U.S. presidential race, see: The World According to Russian State TV: America's 'Stinking' Democracy

The most amazing thing about the Russian media's U.S. election coverage is perhaps that Russians themselves don't seem to care very much about the race itself. According to one SMS-based survey by a state radio station, more than two-thirds of listeners said as much:

Embed:

> Russian state radio invites listeners to "Choose a US President" via text. 28% vote for Trump, 4% for Clinton. 68% don't care. #Election2016
>
> — Steve Rosenberg (@BBCSteveR) November 8, 2016

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/11/08/moscows-news-media-helps-russians-report-vote-fraud-to-the-trump-campaign-a56051