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Russian 'Troll Factory' Owner Added to U.S. Sanctions List

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Evgeny Prigozhin **Mikhail Metzel / TASS**

The owner of Russia's infamous pro-Kremlin "troll factory" has been sanctioned by the U.S. government, the U.S. Treasury Department announced Wednesday.

Billionaire Evgeny Prigozhin was added to the list of sanctioned individuals due to his company's contracts with the Russian Armed Forces. They include the construction of a military base near the Ukrainian border, similar to those which have been used as staging areas for the deployment of Russian soldiers in Ukraine.

In addition to Prigozhin, six other names were added to the list, along with 34 different companies and two ships.

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Prigozhin owns the holding company behind Internet Research, a St. Petersburg-based firm

which allegedly hires Russians to leave pro-government comments and memes on social media and internet forums in 12-hour shifts.

The businessman is also known as “Putin’s chef” for providing catering services to the Kremlin.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told TASS that Russia would find a way to retaliate.

"We will be expanding our own lists, as well as retaliating in some other way," he said.

Leaders from the U.S. and Europe agreed to prolong their sanctions against Russia on Nov. 18. Responding to the news, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said: “The subject of sanctions is not our problem.”

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