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Prime Minister Medvedev's Supposed 'Secret Empire' Is Russia's Biggest Charity Group

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Alexander Astafyev / Sputnik, Government Pool Photo via AP

Four of the nonprofit foundations recently singled out as pieces in Dmitry Medvedev's "secret empire" suddenly disclosed their financial records this week. Alexei Navalny, whose anti-corruption researchers made the allegations against Medvedev, drew attention to the data, which appeared on the Justice Ministry's website.

According to the new accounting records, the charities "Gradislav," "Sotsgosproekt," "Dar," and the Foundation to Support Winter Olympic Sports collectively spent 3.7 billion rubles (almost $66 million) in 2016.

Last year, the Dar Foundation alone spent 1.5 billion rubles ($26.7 million), making it the second largest nonprofit organization in Russia, after the "Gift of Life" charity, according to Navalny. If you combine all four of the groups that supposedly make up Medvedev's "secret

empire," they form the biggest nonprofit organization in Russia, Navalny says.

The financial disclosure published on the Justice Ministry's website reveals no details about the nature of the charities' expenses, stating only that the money went to "current activities."

Earlier this month, Russia's Justice Ministry announced that the Dar Foundation did not violate regulations on noncommercial organizations by failing to disclose its financial records publicly.

All four organizations are tied to Prime Minister Medvedev through his old classmate Ilya Yeliseyev, who rejected any allegations of corruption, saying the foundations are charities without any connections to Russian officials.

Navalny claims the nonprofits were created solely to manage real estate and other property offered indirectly to Medvedev as bribes.

Dmitry Medvedev has called the allegations "rubbish," and one of the businessmen Navalny accused of bribing the prime minister has vowed to sue him for defamation.

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