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Russian Media Accuse Communist Candidate of Lying About Real Estate Abroad

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Pavel Grudinin **Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency**

With less than a month to go until Election Day, Russian state-run news outlets have accused the communist presidential candidate of lying about his family's real estate holdings.

Grudinin, 57, was unexpectedly nominated late last year by the Communist Party to challenge President Vladimir Putin in the March 18 vote. Amid a surge in approval ratings, the successful communist businessman has attracted rising criticism from Russian state media, including for taking a German skiing holiday and failing to disclose foreign bank accounts.

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The Life.ru tabloid news website, which made Grudinin the subject of a running investigation over the past two months, claimed Tuesday that Grudinin's son Artyom owns a

property worth 200,000 euros outside the Latvian capital Riga.

Earlier this month, the tabloid reported that Grudinin's other son Anton owns a two-story house in the Spanish resort of Salou valued at 800,000 euros.

"Every presidential candidate has children, everyone has some property," Grudinin told the pro-Kremlin Ren-TV channel at the time.

"They are adults, they do business, they have good incomes, but I have nothing to do with that," he added.

A senior Russian Interior Ministry official overseeing migration issues vowed to investigate the legality of Artyom Grudinin's Latvian residence permit, Life.ru reported.

Earlier this month, the Central Election Commission called on Grudinin to provide information about two previously undisclosed Swiss bank accounts.

Another tabloid, Moskovsky Komsomolets, acknowledged that Grudinin did not formally violate the law but noted that the candidate's initial non-disclosures undermined his trustworthiness.

"So far, we still can't trust Grudinin," the tabloid wrote in a commentary piece on Tuesday.

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