

Ukraine Investigates Presidential Frontrunner Zelenskiy's Alleged Russian Financing – Reports

April 17, 2019



Volodymyr Zelenskiy youtube.com / sluga95

Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) is reportedly investigating allegations that presidential front-runner Volodymyr Zelenskiy's campaign could be financed by Kremlin-linked figures.

Polls have forecast a heavy defeat for President Petro Poroshenko in the second round of Ukraine's presidential elections on Sunday. Zelenskiy, a comedian and actor with no political experience, won twice as many votes as Poroshenko in the first round on March 31.

Related article: Poroshenko's Politics Have 'Failed,' Russian Lawmakers Say After Ukraine Election Results

The SBU is verifying information as part of a criminal case that Russian secret services and eastern Ukrainian rebels are financing Zelenskiy's campaign, the Ukrainian News Agency

reported Tuesday.

Claims first <u>appeared</u> on a Ukrainian hacking group's website claiming that Zelenskiy's campaign is allegedly financed on behalf of longtime Kremlin aide Vladislav Surkov and billionaire Konstantin Malofeev, Russia's The Insider investigative news website <u>reported</u> on Wednesday.

Surkov is one of the most influential figures <u>determining</u> Russia's policy over Ukraine, including the undeclared war in the Donbass. Publicity-shy billionaire Malofeev <u>backs</u> the Russian nationalist right and was reportedly deeply — if unofficially — involved in the 2014 Russian campaign against Ukraine.

The Insider said it found no indication that the leaks were falsified.

Zelenskiy's press service called the leaks "100 percent fake from <u>Mirotvorets</u>" and said the front-runner's camp had asked the SBU to investigate the leaks, The Insider reported.

Despite his popular anti-corruption campaign message, Zelenskiy has been accused of being the puppet of a wealthy businessman who owns the television channel his show airs on.

Related article: Ukraine Says It Captured Russian Military Intelligence Hit Squad

Original url:

https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/04/17/ukraine-investigates-presidential-front-runner-zelenskiy s-alleged-russian-financing-a65279