

Kremlin Vows to Investigate Moscow Lawmaker Accused of Fraud Ahead of Elections

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Andrei Metelsky duma.mos.ru

The Kremlin has agreed to probe a senior member of Moscow's city legislature over two investigations into his dealings by opposition leader Alexei Navalny's anti-corruption team, the Vedomosti business daily reported.

Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) has [claimed](#) that municipal lawmaker Andrei Metelsky's family [owns](#) a motorcycle dealership in Moscow and a hotel franchise in Austria — allegations that Metelsky [dismisses](#). Authorities have either ignored or [ordered](#) Navalny's allies to take down videos from the series of investigations into alleged large-scale corruption among Russia's ruling elite.

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The Kremlin will “review” Metelsky’s compliance with anti-corruption law, according to a letter by the head of President Vladimir Putin’s anti-corruption office which was seen by Vedomosti.

Kremlin anti-corruption chief Andrei Chobotov told a State Duma lawmaker that copies of the letter had also been sent to other relevant authorities, Vedomosti [reported](#) Wednesday.

The quick response took the lawmaker, Communist Party member Valery Rashkin, by surprise, with his representative telling Vedomosti that “they usually ignore [requests] or it’s a janitor who responds.”

Metelsky, 41, has reportedly [filed](#) a lawsuit against Navalny following the two FBK investigations.

A member of the 45-seat Moscow City Duma since 2001, Metelsky is among the Kremlin-backed incumbents vying for re-election this Sunday. Metelsky heads the Moscow branch of the Kremlin-aligned United Russia party.

Election officials disqualified opposition candidates, including some of Navalny's allies, from the Sept. 8 ballot for the Russian capital’s largely toothless legislature, galvanizing mass protests that have [swept](#) Moscow this summer.

Authorities [opened](#) a criminal investigation into the FBK during one of the election protests last month for allegedly laundering 1 billion rubles (\$15.3 million).

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