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$43M Jet Linked to Russian Church Leader, Kremlin Officials

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Earlier reports have suggested that Patriarch Kirill allegedly owns a yacht, a $30,000 luxury watch and elite property in central Moscow. **Alexander Avilov / Moskva news Agency**

The leader of the Russian Orthodox Church and several Kremlin officials fly on a $43 million jet linked to a major state lender, The Bell business website reported Friday.

The report follows prominent Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's claims that week that the state VTB bank CEO's alleged partner and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's wife fly on private jets operated by a VTB-linked offshore. In both cases, Navalny matched the jets' flight data with the dates and locations of their alleged passengers.

Patriarch Kirill had flown on a Gulfstream G450 jet once in 2017 and three current or former Kremlin officials each used it once in 2016-2017, according to The Bell.

The Gulfstream jet was registered with the same San Marino offshore that operated the jets flown by Svetlana Medvedeva and VTB CEO Andrei Kostin's alleged partner, journalist Nailya Asker-Zade, the outlet reported.

The Gulfstream was reported to have switched operators from the San Marino-based Skyline Aviation to a virtually unknown offshore, Otoba Assets Ltd.

Navalny, in his two video investigations into Medvedeva and Asker-Zade, accused Kostin of corruption. The Bell later said he was wrong to definitively link Kostin and the jets.

Earlier reports have suggested that Patriarch Kirill allegedly owns a yacht, a $30,000 luxury watch and elite property in central Moscow.

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