The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Kremlin Calls Navalny's Viral Putin Palace Report 'Nonsense'

January 20, 2021



Navalny's video accusing Putin of building the opulent mansion with "the world's biggest bribe" racked up 22 million views so far. **palace.navalny.com**

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny's viral video investigation into President Vladimir Putin's alleged palace is "a bunch of nonsense," the Kremlin said Wednesday.

Navalny released an extensive exposé into a lavish $1.35 billion Black Sea estate Tuesday after Russian authorities jailed him upon his return from Germany, where he was hospitalized for what Western scientists determined to be Novichok poisoning in Siberia.

Related article: Navalny Targets 'Billion-Dollar Putin Palace' in New Investigation

Navalny and his investigative team accused Putin of building the opulent mansion with "the world's biggest bribe" that involves a complex web of offshore companies and transfers within his inner circle. An accompanying YouTube video showing aerial shots of the estate's exterior and rendered images of its interior based on detailed floor plans has gathered nearly

22 million views in less than 24 hours.

“These are all absolutely unfounded claims. This is pure nonsense,” Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters Wednesday, according to Interfax.

The palace, he added, “has nothing to do with either the president or the Kremlin so we haven’t the slightest desire to be interested.”

“The Russian president declares his entire property and publishes it in [tax] declarations every year.”

Peskov's latest comments expand on earlier comments provided Tuesday evening, where he called claims of Putin owning a palace “a badly broken record” that the Kremlin had previously debunked and noted that the Kremlin was not nervous about mass anti-government protests that Navalny has called for this Saturday.

Also on Tuesday, all three leaders of Russia’s Kremlin-loyal opposition parties took to the podium in the first legislative session of 2021 to deride Navalny as a “traitor” intent on mounting a coup.

Russian media reported that several popular social media personalities issued similarly scathing videos blaming Navalny for returning to Russia “knowing that he will attract new sanctions” against the country.” Subsequent reports said an advertising agency terminated their partnership agreements for discussing politics.

Peskov also urged Russians on Wednesday to reconsider donating to Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK), which regularly publishes investigative videos accusing high-ranking officials and executives of ill-gotten wealth.

“We warn all citizens, especially given such a large number of views [on YouTube]: think before you wire money to these crooks,” he said. “To me, that’s exactly the main purpose of these pseudo-studies. That’s the main scam.”

FBK director and close Navalny associate Ivan Zhdanov said the foundation, which Russia labeled a “foreign agent” in 2019, has collected almost 5 million rubles ($63,800) since the video investigation went up online.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/01/20/kremlin-calls-navalnys-viral-putin-palace-report-nonsense-a72669