

Officials Deny Death of Firebrand Lawmaker Who Predicted Russian Invasion of Ukraine

Vladimir Zhirinovsky was admitted to the hospital with coronavirus almost two months ago.

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Vladimir Zhirinovsky. **Moskva News Agency**

High-ranking officials raced Friday to vehemently deny the reported death of a firebrand nationalist lawmaker who had predicted Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"Someone spread fake news today, it's indecent," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov [told](#) reporters, according to the state-run TASS news agency.

He was reacting to fast-spreading reports of veteran State Duma member Vladimir Zhirinovsky's death after a long bout with coronavirus at a Moscow hospital on Friday morning.

“Thank God Vladimir Volkovich [Zhirinovsky] is alive, he’s still in serious condition but being treated by doctors,” Peskov said.

Zhirinovsky, 75, founded and has led the far-right Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR) for the past three decades, symbolizing Russia’s systemic opposition that supports President Vladimir Putin’s key foreign and domestic policies.

An incendiary Duma speech by Zhirinovsky in December 2021 went viral last month for predicting the date and time of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine with near-perfect precision.

“You’ll feel it at 4 a.m. on Feb. 22,” 2022, Zhirinovsky [said](#) in a characteristically provocative rant against the NATO military alliance.

Related article: [After Six Presidential Bids, Zhirinovsky’s Cult of Personality Is All That Remains](#)

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered Russian troops to invade Ukraine on Feb. 24, three days after recognizing Ukraine’s two separatist statelets as independent republics.

The fallout from the reports of Zhirinovsky’s death, first broken by the Mash Telegram channel which is widely believed to have ties with Russian security services, was swift.

Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin [urged](#) Senator Alexander Pronyushkin to resign after he posted, then deleted, a social media message confirming Zhirinovsky’s death.

LDPR vowed to “punish the liars who ‘buried’ Zhirinovsky,” threatening lawsuits “against all the slanderers.”

“At a time when the country is under stress [...] these ‘fakes’ are not just ‘canards,’ but real anti-state provocations that can’t be let off the hook,” the party [said](#).

Russia’s Health Ministry also sought to put the rumors to rest, saying Zhirinovsky is in a “[stable](#)” condition and being assisted by medics.

However, no visual proof of Zhirinovsky’s condition has been provided since his hospitalization on Feb. 2.

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