

Kremlin Orders State Media to Stop Calling Zelensky 'President' – Holod

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Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. [president.gov.ua](https://www.president.gov.ua)

The Kremlin has instructed Russian state-run media outlets to stop referring to Volodymyr Zelensky as “president” of Ukraine, the independent news website Holod [reported](#) Monday, citing the recipients of the presidential administration’s directive.

Television broadcasters and online publications are instead advised to use the phrase “the Zelensky regime” or call the Ukrainian president by name only, according to the instructions circulated last Friday.

The instructions are currently limited to news headlines in order for Zelensky’s name to appear without his official status on Russian online news aggregators.

Holod analyzed Russian news stories published since Friday and found partial compliance with the Kremlin’s directive.

The state-run RIA Novosti news agency stopped calling Zelensky “president” in all but one

publication, according to Holod. The news agency Regnum has started referring to Zelensky as “head of the Kyiv regime,” “Kyiv’s leader” and “Ukrainian leader.”

Other recipients of the Kremlin’s directive range from the state-run TASS news agency to Readovka, a propaganda channel on the Telegram messaging app.

Anonymous state media employees who spoke with Holod said the Kremlin’s demands sparked a “wave of indignation” and “threats of resignations” inside their newsrooms.

Virtually all of Russia’s remaining independent media outlets were either been blocked or ordered to shut down after Russian forces invaded Ukraine nearly 19 months ago.

Shortly after the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia criminalized coverage of the war that deviated from the Kremlin’s narrative with jail terms of up to 15 years.

Russian President Vladimir Putin justified sending troops into Ukraine with the false claim that “neo-Nazis” in Kyiv's leadership were committing “genocide” against ethnic Russians.

Zelensky was elected to the Ukrainian presidency by a landslide in 2019 on a platform of fighting corruption and ending the conflict with pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine.

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