

Kyiv Says Orthodox Cleric Gave Moscow Ukraine Army Positions

By [AFP](#)

April 24, 2024



The Holy Mountain Lavra of the Holy Dormition, a major Orthodox Christian monastery, is seen from a destroyed bridge across Siverskyi-Donets River in the recently liberated town of Sviatohirsk, Donetsk region. **Evgeniy Maloletka / AP Photo / TASS**

Kyiv's SBU security service said Wednesday it suspected a high-ranking cleric and head of east Ukraine's main monastery of having revealed army positions to Russian forces.

The SBU said it had "served a notice of suspicion to the Metropolitan of the Sviatohirsk Lavra who 'tipped off'" Ukrainian positions in the Donetsk region to Russian forces.

Metropolitan Arseniy is listed as the head of the medieval monastery.

Ukraine has for years accused the Moscow-linked branch of its Orthodox church of sowing separatist sentiment.

The SBU said Metropolitan Arseniy was suspected of "disseminating information about the

movement or location of armed forces" — a crime punishable by up to eight years in prison.

He had "handed over to the occupiers the location of defense forces checkpoints in the Kramatorsk district of the Donetsk region," it said in its statement.

It also said the cleric had promoted "pro-Kremlin narratives about the war in Ukraine even before the start of Russia's full-scale invasion."

The Sviatohirsk monastery lies on the Siverskyi Donets River.

It was damaged by shelling in March 2022, at the start of the invasion.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/04/24/kyiv-says-orthodox-cleric-gave-moscow-ukraine-army-positions-a84948>