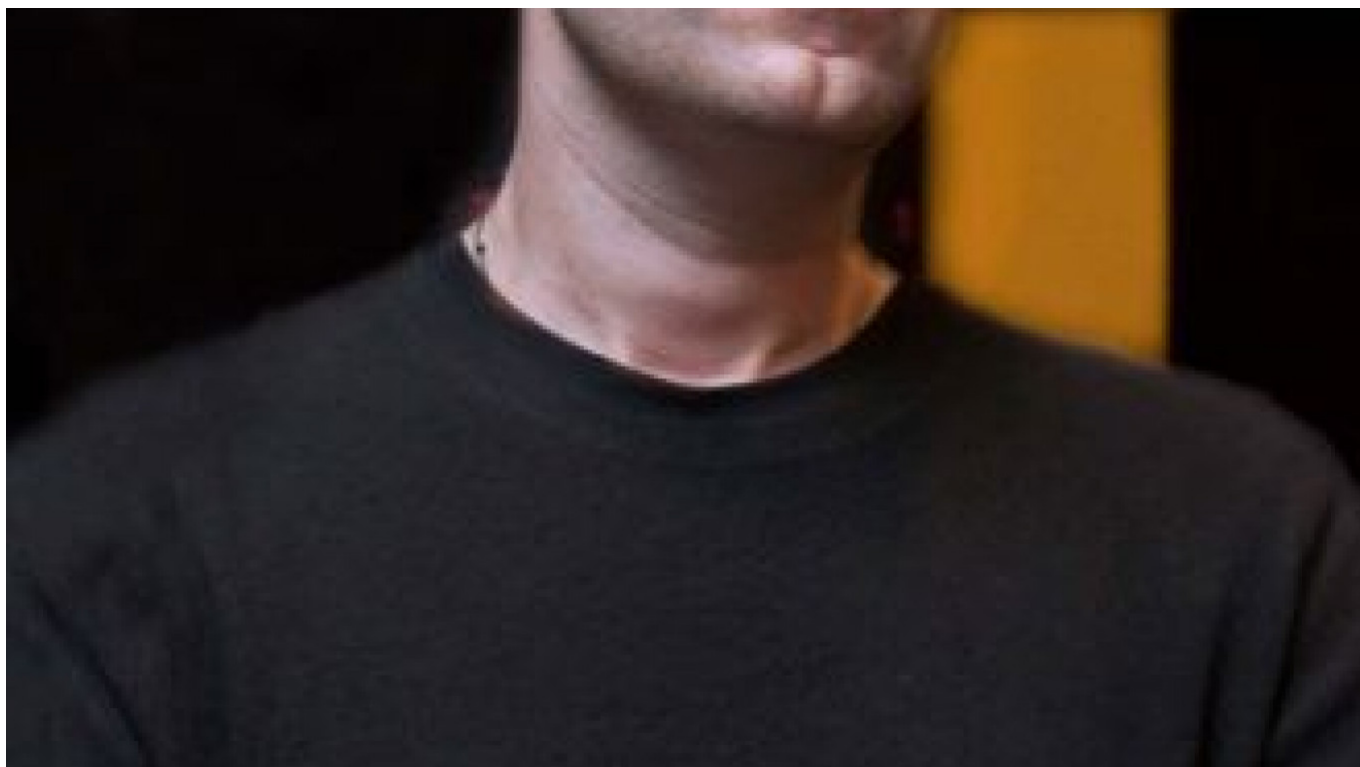


# Navalny and Sobyenin Campaigns Trade Accusations Ahead of Elections

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Opposition mayoral candidate Alexei Navalny **Vladimir Filonov**

In the latest bout of bickering ahead of Moscow's mayoral elections, acting Mayor Sergei Sobyenin and opposition candidate Alexei Navalny on Tuesday denied separate accusations of illegal campaigning.

A representative for Navalny's campaign said that pro-Kremlin candidate Sobyenin had illegally used voters' personal information in letters to canvass potential voters, Vedomosti reported.

The representative, Andrei Buzin, filed a complaint with the Moscow Elections Committee saying that Sobyenin had addressed Muscovites by their full names, including first name, last name and patronymic, in letters sent via ordinary mail last week.

By law, full names are private information and can be obtained only with the individual's

prior consent, the report said.

Buzin also accused Sobyenin of unlawfully using his current mayoral post to get access to Muscovites' private data. Election candidates are not allowed to use their government posts to promote themselves.

In total, about 2.5 million letters were sent out to voters.

An unidentified representative of Sobyenin's election headquarters denied breaking the law, however.

According to another representative, several organizations had asked Sobyenin's headquarters to send letters with full names and themselves provided the personal information.

Meanwhile, police were examining allegations Tuesday that Navalny's supporters had defaced several monuments in the city center with campaign stickers.

Leonid Volkov, head of Navalny's campaign headquarters, said his staff had "nothing to do" with the stickers, Interfax reported.

He labeled the actions "a provocation" by people who had "shown disrespect" to the people being honored by the monuments, as well as to Muscovites.

The mayoral election will see six candidates face off next Sunday, including Sobyenin, Navalny and members of the nationalist LDPR party, the social-democratic A Just Russia party, the Communist Party and the liberal opposition Yabloko party.

State and independent public opinion surveys show Sobyenin and Navalny as the two favorites in the vote, but Navalny lags behind Sobyenin. An independent poll has found that he could not win even in the runoff, which will be held if no single candidate gets more than 50 percent of the vote.

Polls conducted in late August by state-controlled VTsIOM, the private Public Opinion Foundation and independent Levada Center showed Sobyenin having the support of 43 to 74 percent of Muscovites, while 11 to 18 percent of the respondents said they would vote for Navalny.

Levada Center was the only pollster of the three to ask Muscovites about their preferred candidates for a second round, finding that 43 percent of citizens would cast their votes for Sobyenin and 16 percent for Navalny.

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