

A Month Later, Russia's Prime Minister Dismisses 'Politically Motivated' Corruption Claims

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AP Photo / Alexander Zemlianichenko

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has dismissed corruption allegations against him as “politically motivated.”

It’s the first time that the prime minister has publicly acknowledged the accusations, which were made by Russian politician Alexei Navalny in early March.

The claims sparked protests across the country, with thousands of Russians demanding a parliamentary investigation.

Medvedev — who refused to refer to Navalny by name — said that the opposition leader had “dragged people into the streets” for his own “selfish interests.”

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"The character you are talking about [Navalny] openly declares: 'Everything is awful, elect me as president,' practically dragging people to the streets. These people are usually minors, which in my opinion, is practically a crime," Medvedev told workers at a factory in the Russian city of Tambov. "This individual is already a convicted felon, so there should be no illusions in that regard."

He also suggested that Navalny's investigation into officials' property holdings had been funded to serve "private sponsors."

"They take all sorts of dregs: stuff about me, about my acquaintances, about people I've never heard of, collect some papers, photographs, clothes, then create a film [accusing me of corruption]," Medvedev said.

"These films cost a lot of money, and this money is collected, not from ordinary people but from private sponsors," he said. "They are aimed at achieving a very concrete political result."

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Navalny's NGO, the Anti-Corruption Foundation, [accused Medvedev on March 2](#) of channeling bribes through non-profit organizations and building a collection of yachts and lavish mansions.

In an online video, activists used Medvedev's Instagram account and confidential documents to link him to four mansions, two large plots of land in Russia's Krasnodar region, an Italian vineyard, a lavish residential building in the heart of St. Petersburg, and two luxury boats.

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