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Skripal poisoning: No info in records about decorated colonel Chepiga, says Kremlin

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Russian records have neither information about a Colonel Anatoly Chepiga nor about such a person being awarded the highest national merit, said a Kremlin spokesman. A report by Bellingcat said the man is a Skripal case suspect.

Bellingcat is a controversial UK-based group which is connected to projects [financed](#) by NATO and known mostly for compiling various public data to back various accusations against Russia.

The group this week said they conclusively identified Ruslan Bosharov, one of the two men accused in Britain of poisoning former double agent Sergei Skripal in March, as Anatoly Chepiga, a commando colonel, who has the merit of 'Hero of Russia' among his decorations. According to the Kremlin, there are no records of a person with that name receiving the award.

*"We have checked. I have no information about a man with that name being awarded,"* Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

The merit is usually awarded during a ceremony by the President of Russia. Bellingcat argued that Vladimir Putin must know Chepiga personally and that implied that his vouching for Bosharov and his fellow suspect Aleksandr Petrov was done in bad faith. Putin made public assurances that the two men were civilians and had nothing to do with any criminal activity.

Read more [Bellingcat claims it 'conclusively' identified Skripal poisoning suspect as decorated commando](#)



Speaking about the case on Friday, Peskov said Russia was tired of the unending media speculations about the case and was calling on Britain to cooperate with Russia on the investigation through proper channels.

*“All those speculations about who resembles whom. You know, we have a dozen of Stalins and 15 Lenins running around the Red Square, and each of them looks a lot like the original,”* he said.

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Bellingcat’s identification relies on what it called a resemblance between an old photo of Chepiga and a younger Borshirov. The group used the strategy to pinpoint Chepiga by creating a profile of a would-be assassin and finding a person in Russia to fit it.

From the start of the investigation Britain insisted that the poisoning of Skripal and his daughter in March was a state-ordered chemical weapons attack by Russia. London claimed it had evidence which identified Boshirov and Petrov as agents of Russian military intelligence agency, the GRU, but would not disclose it to the public.