The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Navalny's Party of Progress Ready for Fight to Take Part in Duma Elections

February 02, 2015



Opposition leader Alexei Navalny arrives at the office of a local broadcast radio station to attend an interview in Moscow.

Opposition activist Alexei Navalny has announced his political party intends to compete in Russia's 2016 parliamentary elections and called for protests and rallies if the government tries to stop his plans.

Navalny told a meeting of political allies on Sunday that there was a "very high" chance that the government will try to block his Party of Progress from making it to the ballots in 2016, Russian media reported.

"There is no other way to achieve participation in them [elections], aside from taking to the streets in protest," Navalny was quoted as saying by the Noviye Izvestia newspaper.

"We don't want to freeze on the streets, in a snowbank, in a fountain, and then travel somewhere in a cold police van," he was quoted as saying. "But it must be done."

While the Party of Progress headed by Navalny is registered with the Justice Ministry, it has failed to make the list of political movements allowed to run in elections because of an insufficient number of regional branches, Ekho Moskvy reported.

Navalny ran for the position of Moscow mayor in 2013, coming in second with 27 percent of the vote and nearly forcing the Kremlin-backed incumbent, Sergei Sobyanin, into a run-off.

Original url:
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