The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Parnas Leader Kasyanov Bows Out of Russian Presidential Elections

September 19, 2016



Russian opposition figure Mikhail Kasyanov speaks in Moscow, Russia, Sept. 19, 2016. **Pavel Golovkin / AP**

Leader of the Parnas opposition party and former Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov announced Monday he will not run for president in 2018, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported. The statement comes on the heels of Parnas losing the parliamentary election on Sunday after getting less than 1 percent of the vote.

"The country has lost the constitutional opportunity to change its [political] course," Kasyanov told RIA Novosti and said that it no longer makes sense for him to participate in the upcoming presidential elections.

Grigory Yavlinsky, longtime leader of Yabloko — another opposition party that fared badly in the State Duma election on Sunday and garnered only 1.9 percent of the vote — said he still planned to run for president.

“Our party will actively participate in the presidential elections. Most likely with me as a candidate,” Yavlinsky said Monday, the TASS news agency reported. “This is my duty — to be the party's candidate.”

Sunday's elections saw an expected landslide victory for the ruling United Russia Party, who built on their majority in the country's State Duma. Turnout across the country stood at 47 percent.

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