

Russia's Last Presidential Debate Marred by Fistfight Threats Between Communists

March 16, 2018



Communists of Russia Presidential Candidate Maxim Suraikin **Sergei Bobylev / TASS**

The last debates on the eve of Russia's presidential elections have once again descended into chaos after a Communist candidate threatened to "break the jaw" of another Communist candidate's stand-in.

President Vladimir Putin, who has chosen not to take part in the series of televised presidential debates, is expected to easily win the March 18 vote. The pre-election debates among his seven challengers have been marred by vulgar name-calling, driving one candidate to tears, swearing and [threats](#) of a walk-out.

Related article: [Zhirinovsky Promises 'Brutal Dictatorship' If He Wins Russian Election](#)

The last debate on Thursday nearly [ended](#) up in a fistfight when the presidential [candidate](#) from the Communists of Russia party, Maxim Suraikin, threatened to attack the representative of Pavel Grudinin, the candidate from the rivaling Communist Party of Russia, for questioning his loyalty.

"I'll break your jaw, [*****]. Hired scum," Suraikin shouted as he advanced towards Grudinin's stand-in, the prominent journalist Maxim Shevchenko, before being escorted out of the studio.

The altercation took place after a woman whom Suraikin introduced as his surrogate accused Grudinin of evicting her and her family from an apartment.

Suraikin [made](#) headlines earlier this year after leading his supporters to attack a local council meeting about the possible removal of a statue to Lenin.

Shevchenko was [involved](#) in a fist-fight last month during a live radio show over Stalin's legacy.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/03/16/russias-last-presidential-debate-marred-by-fistfight-threats-between-communists-a60835>