

Russia Selects Fearless Cliff-Jumping Governors for the Future

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Sergei Kiriyenko **Artur Lebedev** / TASS

A training program designed to test the daring of future Russian government leaders has reportedly chosen its final pool of candidates ahead of anticipated cabinet reshuffles.

Vladimir Putin hinted at a shakeup in his cabinet after his victory in the March 18 presidential elections that he won with nearly 77 percent of the vote. His inauguration is scheduled for May 7.

Video footage emerged last fall of government hopefuls jumping off a cliff near the Black Sea resort city of Sochi and ducking under moving armored personnel carriers.

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A total of 74 people have successfully completed the June 2017–April 2018 program authored by the Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA), the RBC business portal [reported](#) Tuesday.

Sergei Kiriyenko, first deputy head of the presidential administration, awarded diplomas to the finalists at the Kremlin’s Vladimirsky Hall last Friday, RBC reported, citing three participants.

Seven of the program’s graduates have been appointed governors, RBC reported, and an eighth graduate was named prime minister of Dagestan.

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Experts interviewed by RBC mostly expressed doubt that the program yielded desired results.

“Almost all of the course’s participants demonstrated complete unpreparedness for the political challenges of the regions in which they found themselves,” political consultant Dmitry Fetisov was quoted as saying. “The rest haven’t been helped by the extreme training.”

Enrollment for the next program will open in May, RBC reported, citing two unidentified sources.

Last October, Kiriyenko [announced](#) a separate nationwide hunt for prospective leaders under the age of 50, “regardless of who they’re related to and what lobbying opportunities or money they have.”

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