The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Reports: Opposition Candidates Denied Spot in Moscow Mayoral Run

June 15, 2018

Andrei Lyubimov / Moskva News Agency

Moscow authorities have reportedly denied three opposition figures looking to challenge Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin in his re-election campaign this fall a chance to get on the ballot.

Opposition leader Alexei Navalny almost forced Sobyanin into the second round with an intensive grassroots campaign in 2013, in large part because he was able to clear a so-called "municipal filter," a law requiring candidates to gather signatures from majority Kremlin-approved Moscow council members.

Related article: Moscow Mayor Approves Memorial for Slain Opposition Politician Boris Nemtsov

This time, Sobyanin's challengers will not be allowed to clear the municipal filter on Election

Day, the opposition-leaning Dozhd television channel reported Friday, citing an unnamed Kremlin official and the mayor's campaign member.

The incumbent mayor "doesn't need" opponents that include city council members Ilya Yashin and Dmitry Gudkov, as well as gay journalist Anton Krasovsky, the anonymous sources reported.

Another source told Dozhd the Sept. 9 mayoral race needs "boring" challengers because a decision has been reached to avoid a "fun" campaign, while one more source was quoted saying the three challengers would "be useless" in Moscow City Hall's attempt to increase voter turnout.

Gudkov and Yashin have debated which of them who would pose a more serious challenge to Sobyanin.

Yashin declined to comment on what he called "rumors" in the Dozhd report, while Krasovsky said he was unaware of City Hall's plans. Gudkov wrote on Telegram that he will continue seeking registration, saying "it's not for City Hall to decide who to allow in the elections."

"And also, I have a Plan B," he wrote.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/06/15/moscow-opposition-candidates-denied-a61857