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Moscow Police Detain Yabloko Candidates Running in State Duma Elections

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Anna Shatunovskaya-Byurno and Grigory Grishin. **yabloko.ru**

Russia's liberal Yabloko party said Friday that law enforcement authorities in Moscow detained two of its members who are running for seats in the lower-house State Duma.

The press service for Yabloko said Anna Shatunovskaya-Byurno and Grigory Grishin were detained separately during the day and taken to local police stations.

Both politicians later said they were charged with publicly displaying "extremist" symbols, an administrative offense that has been used against other anti-Kremlin candidates this summer to disqualify them from upcoming elections.

Their detentions come after another Yabloko candidate, Artyom Snegovsky, was detained Tuesday and charged with "discrediting" the Russian military in social media posts. Snegovsky was later released from police custody.

While Russia's Supreme Court ruled last month to cancel the registration of Yabloko's federal slate of candidates for parliamentary races later in September, candidates running in single-member districts can still stand for election.

Under Russian election law, half of the State Duma's 450 seats are distributed among the list of political parties that receive more than 5% of the votes. The remaining 225 seats are given to the winners of elections in single-member constituencies.

At least 19 Yabloko candidates running in single-member districts have so far been disqualified from running due to various violations, according to the exiled news outlet Vyorstka.

Yabloko is Russia's oldest liberal party and is the only registered party campaigning on a pro-peace platform.

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