

Anti-Graft Plea Sent to Doctors

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Medvedev at the Kaluga region's Optina Pustyn monastery on Wednesday. **Mikhail Klimentyev**

A test of President Dmitry Medvedev's determination to fight corruption appeared to fail Wednesday when the government inexplicably passed a Yabloko request to investigate the income declarations of State Duma Speaker Boris Gрызлов and two other Duma deputies to the Health and Social Development Ministry.

Yabloko leader Sergei Mitrokhin questioned the decision, suggesting sarcastically on his blog that perhaps his request was forwarded to the ministry "so that experienced doctors can decide whether I am out of my mind to have dared suspect Gрызлов of corruption."

"The campaign to fight graft, declared by Medvedev, has turned out to be no more than a PR stunt," Mitrokhin said in a separate [statement](#) posted on his party's web site.

A copy of the government administration's decision was also posted on the web site.

A government spokeswoman said the investigation request had been sent to the Health and

Social Development Ministry because the ministry was "responsible for state service" and such an inquiry was outside the government's powers to conduct. The spokeswoman, speaking by telephone on a customary condition of anonymity, added that the government would "tightly control" the ministry's handling of the matter.

Repeated calls to the ministry's department for state service and its press office went unanswered Wednesday.

"With this runaround reply, the government administration has shown that it doesn't care about violations of anti-corruption laws," Yelena Panfilova, head of the anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International's Russia office, said in a statement posted on Yabloko's web site.

Mitrokhin partly based his request on a June report by the watchdog.

Mitrokhin, who sent his Sept. 23 request to government chief of staff Sergei Sobyenin and the Kremlin, argued on his [blog](#) Wednesday that by refusing to open an investigation, the government was violating a Medvedev decree that authorized the government chief of staff to open reviews into income declarations at the request of political parties.

But the government spokeswoman said the decree had been understood incorrectly. She did not elaborate.

Sobyenin, who also holds the title of deputy prime minister, is expected to be confirmed by the Moscow City Duma as the city's next mayor on Thursday, filling a position vacated when Medvedev fired Yury Luzhkov last month.

Mitrokhin sought a review of the incomes of Gryzlov, who heads the United Russia's Duma faction; Liberal Democratic Party Deputy Ashot Yegiazaryan; and Communist Deputy Sergei Levchenko. Senior officials and their spouses are supposed to disclose their annual incomes and some assets under an anti-corruption order signed by Medvedev.

A Kremlin spokesman said earlier that, by law, Yabloko's request would be considered within a month.

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