

# Turkmenistan Plans Parties

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ASHGABAT, Turkmenistan — Turkmenistan plans to launch two political parties that would break the ruling party's monopoly but pose no challenge to President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov's absolute rule.

State television on Tuesday showed Deputy Prime Minister Sapardurdy Toylyev telling Berdymukhammedov that work was under way to create an agrarian party and an entrepreneurs' party in the gas-producing Central Asian state.

The TV report quoted the president as saying he was serious about developing democracy in a country where his own party, the Democratic Party, is the only legally registered political force and monopolizes political life.

"The creation of a multiparty system in Turkmenistan corresponds with our aims to democratize society and undertake major social reforms," he was quoted as saying.

*(Reuters)*

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