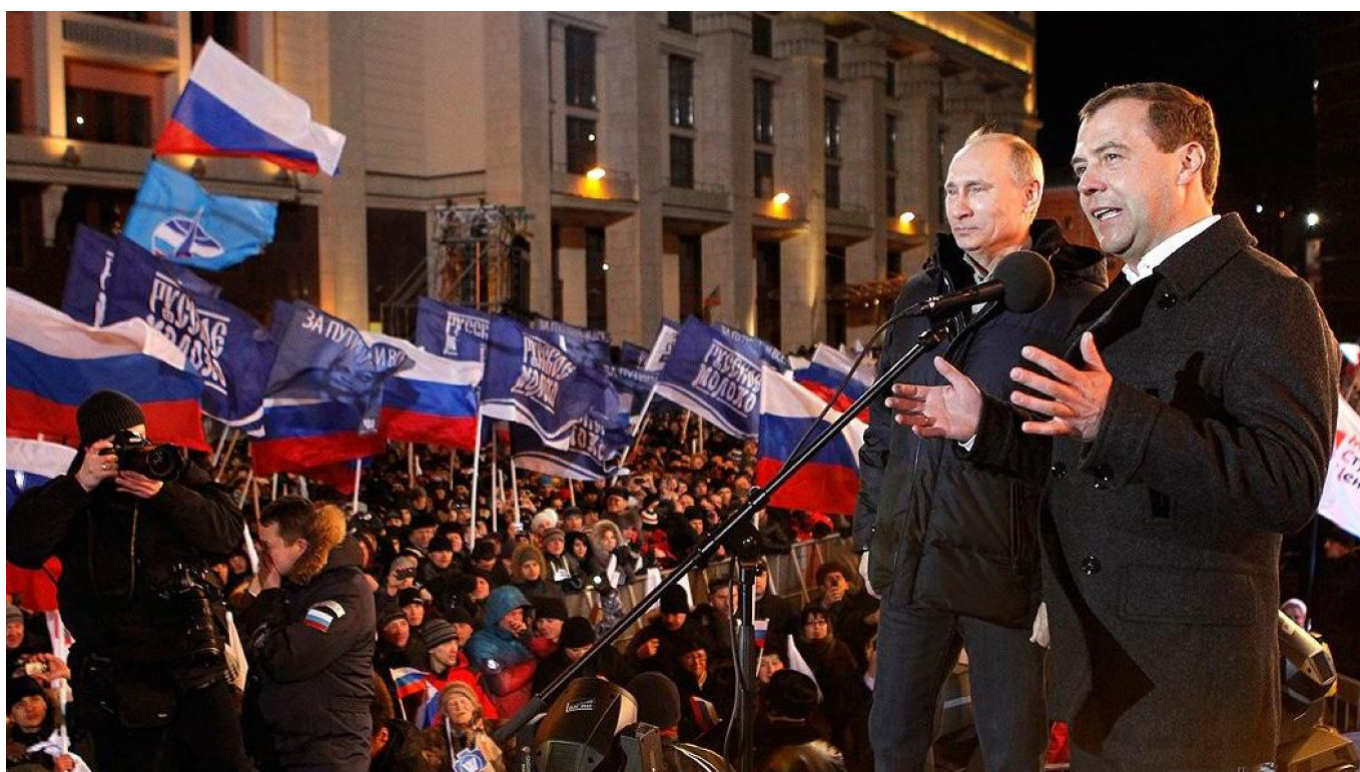


Kremlin Schedules Pro-Government Rallies Ahead of Presidential Vote

January 24, 2018



Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev / Kremlin Press Service

The Kremlin has reportedly scheduled pro-government rallies throughout the country next Saturday, Feb. 3, as policymakers seek to increase voter turnout in the upcoming presidential elections.

Officials are [aiming](#) to secure a 70-percent victory for President Vladimir Putin in the March 18 vote with a turnout of 70 percent. Meanwhile, opposition figure Alexei Navalny has called on his supporters to attend a rally on Jan. 28 to protest against the elections.

Related article: [Kremlin 'Aiming for 70% Victory' in 2018 Presidential Election](#)

The Feb. 3 pro-Kremlin action has been timed to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Battle of Stalingrad, the RBC business portal [cited](#) three sources close to the Kremlin as saying.

Putin's re-election campaign headquarters is reportedly taking part in organizing the pro-government rally, with three locations in Moscow under consideration, sources told RBC.

Experts interviewed by RBC said that pre-election mass rallies are standard practice. Political scientist Andrei Kolyadin says undecided voters could be motivated to vote by seeing celebrities supporting Putin as campaign surrogates.

"Seeing this, the person could decide 'I'll go [vote] myself'," Kolyadin was cited as saying.

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