

Russian authorities are cleansing media space



Russia is preparing for parliamentary election that is to take place on September 18th 2016. Officials have already completed the last preparation: the most well-known and in fact the only independent organization Yurii Levada's Analytical Center has been added to the register of foreign agents by Russian Ministry of Justice. Two weeks before the State Duma election Levada Center was only one Russian survey organizations to publish deplorable results for the ruling party. Hence according to their poll the rating of United Russia party decreased from 39% to 31% within August.

Lev Gudkov, the Head of the organization, declared that such actions of the officials testify of the increasing repression rate in the country. He also added that in current status Levada-Center is stripped of opportunity to carry out sociological researches. Autonomous NGO Yurii Levada's Analytical Center is one of the largest and most competent organizations within its field and was the first (since 1988) to start making national-scope polls in Russia. Survey results provided by Levada-Center were regularly published by the leading media resources both in Russia and the whole world.

Therefore it is obvious that before the parliamentary election in Russia which has in fact turned into the "Hobson's choice election" for the Russians, authorities have dismantled the only organization that could impartially cover the course and the results of the election by providing actual picture of the Russians' relation towards current authorities. Apparently such a perspective couldn't suit the government in power.

Nowadays opposition in Russia has been virtually eliminated and candidates from the political forces capable of defying the ruling party have been compromised. At the same time state machinery is impudently using budget assets and management reserves to agitate for the candidates from the United Russia ruling party. In this situation the defamation and liquidation campaign aimed at non-governmental sociological organization Levada-Center has deprived the Russians discordant with current party's policy of their only chance to be heard.

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