

## Opposition leaders demand Putin withdraws

*by UPI*

MOSCOW - Members of Russia's opposition party have demanded that Russian President Vladimir Putin be barred from running for State Duma elections next month. "The party appealed to the Supreme Court on Wednesday to demand that Vladimir Putin be removed from United Russia's list of candidates for the State Duma for repeated violations of the law," the leader of the Union of Right Forces, Nikita Belykh, said in a RIA Novosti report. Putin faced criticism for his decision to top the United Russia ticket for the Dec. 2 elections to the lower house, charging with him with exploiting his popularity to maintain his hold on authority. The latest polls show United Russia leading with 57-59 percent approval, with the Communist Party and Liberal Democratic Party gaining 9 percent and 7 percent approval, respectively.

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