

The UCCA does not take responsibility for the accuracy of the articles posted below. However, to obtain a better understanding of the current situation, we thought you might be interested in the latest new stories filed from Ukraine.

RPU Decides To Merge Into Party of Regions, August 3, 2007

The Republican Party has decided to merge into the Party of Regions. Ukrainian News learned this from the press service of the Republican Party. The party endorsed such a decision at the fourth party congress in Kyiv.

"The congress has instructed the presidium of the political council of the Republican Party to start the process of merger with the Party of Regions," the statement reads. In the opinion of RPU former chairman Yuri Boiko, the merger is quite for the needs of the nation.

"The consolidation of efforts with our closest political associates from the Party of Regions corresponds to the strategic need the Ukrainian society is feeling," the press service of the party quoted Boiko as saying.

As Ukrainian News earlier reported, the Republican Party has decided to support the Party of Regions at early elections to the Verkhovna Rada on September 30. Boiko admitted the merger of the RPU into the Party of Regions.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

Progressive Socialist Party Decides To Contest 2007 Rada Elections On Its Own, August 3, 2007

The Progressive Socialist Party has decided to contest the 2007 parliamentary elections on its own. Delegates to the party's 20th extraordinary congress that is presently taking place in Kyiv adopted this decision unanimously.

According to Volodymyr Marchenko, one of the leaders of the Progressive Socialist Party, the party initially intended to form a bloc for the parliamentary elections. "We held exhaustive consultations with a huge number of parties, but, unfortunately, we cannot offer you (delegates to the congress) a worthy bloc," Marchenko said. Delegates to the congress also adopted the party's election program. According to the party's leader Natalia Vitrenko, the program is based on the party's program for the 2006 parliamentary elections.

According to her, the election slogans of the party are "National Wealth - for the Benefit of the People and not into the Pockets of Oligarchs," "Ukraine-Belarus-Russia International Union," and "Do not Allow NATO Occupation." Delegates to the congress also approved a list of 450 parliamentary candidates. The first five names on the party's list of parliamentary candidates are Vitrenko, Marchenko, Pavlo Baulin, Liudmyla Koyotkina, and Valerii Ivanov.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

Nine Parties Make Our Ukraine - People's Self-Defense Bloc For 2007 Rada Elections, August 2, 2007

The Our Ukraine People's Union party, Forward Ukraine, Narodnyi Rukh of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Republican Party Sobor, the Ukrainian People's Party, the Christian Democratic Union, Pora, the Party of Fatherland Defenders, and the European Party have joined into the Our Ukraine - People's Self-Defense bloc to run in the early parliamentary elections. Party leaders signed the agreement in the OUPU office.

OUPU leader Viacheslav Kyrylenko said the congresses of the nine parties approved the decision on entering a bloc and making a single party. He noted that the agreement on the creation of the bloc will be passed over to the Central Election Commission on Thursday.

As Ukrainian News earlier reported, the Our Ukraine People's Union, Forward Ukraine, Narodnyi Rukh of Ukraine, Ukrainian People's Party, Ukrainian Republican Party Sobor, Christian Democratic Union, European People's Party, Pora, Party of Defenders of the Fatherland, and the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists parties agreed on July 5 to set up a union of democratic forces for this year's early parliament elections and then merge into one party. The Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists later declined the idea of making one party of the Our Ukraine - People's Self-Defense bloc.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

Lytvyn Bloc To Name Lytvyn, Hrynevetskyi, Derkach, Harkusha, And Pylypyshyn As Its Top Five Parliamentary Candidates, August 2, 2007

The Lytvyn Bloc intends to name former parliament speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn, the head of the Odesa regional chapter of the People's Party, Serhii Hrynevetskyi, the head of the party's Dnipropetrovsk regional chapter, Mykola Derkach, the head of its Mykolaiv regional chapter Oleksii Harkusha, and the head of its Kyiv municipal chapter, Viktor Pylypyshyn, as its top five candidates for the 2007 early parliamentary elections.

Lytvyn announced this at a press conference in Zhytomyr.

Lytvyn also said that members of the party were preliminarily proposing to remove 17 candidates and add about 50. "I do not oppose this. I am only proposing the first five candidates. We plan to leave the other candidates as proposed by people in the regions," Lytvyn said.

He added that the Lytvyn Bloc had 170 candidates during the 2006 parliamentary elections. As Ukrainian News earlier reported, the People's Party intends to contest the early parliamentary elections together with the Labor Party of Mykhailo Syrota.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

Narodnyi Rukh Holds Congress Behind Closed Doors To Hide Discontent Of Some Delegates, Says Tarasiuk, August 2, 2007

Leader of the Narodnyi Rukh of Ukraine party Borys Tarasiuk says that the party is holding its congress behind closed doors to hide discontent of some delegates. Tarasiuk told this at a briefing.

«There were some delegates who wanted to make a show out of the congress,» Tarasiuk said. According to him, these people have lost the dispute conducted by the party over the last month regarding the format of its participation in the election and prospects of unification into a new party.

Tarasiuk said that Narodnyi Rukh's congresses never went absolutely smooth, but this time the majority of the delegates upheld the party leadership's position regarding the election and creation of a new party. «Today the majority of the congress delegates have approved such actions,» Tarasiuk said. He noted that there are always discontented people and assumed that the Ukrainian People's Party, which also held its congress on Thursday, has more of such dissatisfied people. «In general I'm satisfied with the congress outcome, and now leaving for the signing with a clear conscience,» Tarasiuk said.

He apologized to journalists for holding the congress behind closed doors. «First of all, I want to make my apology to you,» he said. Before the congress started, the delegates received alternative agendas of the congress, as well as its draft decisions.

Ukrainian News obtained such decision «On Crisis in the Party and Preservation of Rukh.» The document condemns actions by Narodnyi Rukh's leadership and calls for dismissing

Tarasiuk from the party leader post. «We condemn treacherous actions by Narodnyi Rukh's leaders aimed at destroying the party as an independent political force. We call for withdrawing Borys Tarasiuk from the post of Narodnyi Rukh's head,» the document reads.

It also states that any demands to liquidate Narodnyi Rukh may not be subject of discussions with the party's participation. Alternative agendas proposed electing a new party leader and new members of the management organs.

As Ukrainian News earlier reported, the closed congress of Narodnyi Rukh decided to contest the 2007 early parliamentary elections as part of the Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc and backed the idea of creating a single political party by the country's democratic forces, putting Tarasiuk on the first place of its part in election ticket.

The Ukrainian People's Party decided to join the Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc for the 2007 Rada election. The 10 political parties that recently agreed to create the Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc for contesting the 2007 early parliamentary election are holding their congresses on August 2.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

CEC Endorses UAH 372.2 Million As Budget Estimate For Preparations And Holding Of Early Elections To Rada, August 2, 2007

The Central Election Commission has endorsed the budget estimate for the preparations and holding of early elections to the Verkhovna Rada on September 30.

Thirteen members of the Central Election Commission supported a relevant resolution with one abstainer. Under the budget estimate the State Treasury is to transfer to the CEC UAH 91 million in August, UAH 184.2 million in September, UAH 88 million in October, and UAH 9 million in November.

Thus, the Central Election Commission assessed the spending for early elections to the Verkhovna Rada at UAH 372.2 million. As Ukrainian News earlier reported, President Viktor Yushenko endorsed amendments to the national budget for 2007 submitted by the Verkhovna Rada that foresee UAH 365 million for early elections to the Verkhovna Rada.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency

Party Of Regions Accuses Lutsenko Of Using Military Men In Election Campaign, August 3, 2007

The Party of Regions is accusing Defense Minister Anatolii Hrytsenko of using military men in the election campaign conducted in Kirovohrad region. Ukrainian News learned this from the party's press service.

According to the message, on July 31, at 16:00, servicemen of military unit A-0680 were gluing posters depicting Viktor Yushenko on Ordzhonikidze and Medvedeva streets.

The Party of Regions recalls that in line with article 8 of the law on social and legal protection of military men and members of their families, it is prohibited to exploit servicemen for purposes not related to military service. Apart from this, use of servicemen in political events is banned by article 71 of the law on parliamentary elections, as well as the army duty statute.

As the party noted, involvement of military men in the election campaign may be regarded as use of administrative resources by the Defense Ministry in support of one political force, and Hrytsenko's presence in the election list of the Our Ukraine-People's Self Defense Bloc is aimed at making the army vote for the bloc.

The party believes that the Prosecutor General's Office should conduct an investigation and launch proceedings against the guilty parties.

The Party of Regions is urging soldiers, ensigns, officers and generals of the Armed Forces not to carry out the criminal orders given by the highest command.

As Ukrainian News earlier reported, the leader of the Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc, Yuriy Lutsenko, is not ruling out the possibility of nomination of Presidential Secretariat's head Viktor Baloha, Defense Minister Anatolii Hrytsenko, Our Ukraine People's Union party leader Viacheslav Kyrylenko, and Foreign Affairs Minister Arsenii Yatseniuk for the post of prime minister if the bloc wins the largest number of votes in this year's early parliamentary elections.

In early July, Defense Minister Anatolii Hrytsenko signed an order for conducting the early parliamentary election in the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Source: Ukrainian News Agency