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**KAZAKHSTAN: RULING PARTY EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ON APRIL 23**

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The Times of Cenral Asia (11 April 2019)

Kazakhstan's ruling Nur Otan party will nominate its candidate for a snap presidential election in less than two weeks, RFE/RL reported.

Ex-President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who resigned last month after nearly 30 years leading the Central Asian state but remains the leader of Nur Otan, issued a statement on April 10 saying that the party will hold an extraordinary congress on April 23.

Nazarbayev said earlier in the day that the party will nominate its presidential candidate at its next congress.

Nazarbayev's statement comes a day after interim President Qasym-Zhomart Toqaev announced a snap presidential election on June 9.

Toqaev, who is also a member of Nur Otan, became interim president on March 20, a day after Nazarbayev announced his resignation. Toqaev did not say whether he will run in the elections.

Nazarbayev, who is 78, is chairman for life of Kazakhstan's Security Council and has been granted the title of "elbasy," or leader of the nation, which gives him and his family lifelong immunity from any civic or criminal prosecution.

Nazarbayev's eldest daughter, Darigha Nazarbayeva, succeeded Toqaev as speaker of the parliament's upper chamber, the Senate, after he took over the presidential duties on March 20.

The announcement of a snap presidential vote in two months leaves potential opponents of a ruling-party candidate with little time to mount campaigns, reducing their chances in a country where opposition has been marginalized and politics is still dominated by Nazarbayev, RFE/RL reported.

<https://www.timesca.com/index.php/news/21044-kazakhstan-ruling-party-expected-to-announce-presidential-candidate-on-april-23>