

Suspect Was Pressured to Blame Navalny for Clashes, Lawyer Says

June 20, 2012



Alexei Navalny after being questioned at the Investigative Committee about the May 6 riots

Investigators pressured a suspect accused of taking part in a riot at an opposition protest into testifying against anti-corruption activist Alexei Navalny, the suspect's lawyer said Wednesday.

Detectives on two occasions threatened 33-year-old Artyom Savelov in a temporary detention cell in an effort to secure evidence that Navalny was behind the violent clashes with police on Bolotnaya Ploshchad on May 6, lawyer Farit Murtazin told the Agora human rights organization.

"The day before yesterday two Moscow Criminal Investigation Department investigators threatened Savelov, suggested he testify and admit he was carrying out the orders and instructions of Navalny in the riots," Murtazin said, according to an article posted on the organization's website.

The lawyer stressed that investigators' actions were unlawful and said he had sent

a complaint to the Investigative Committee and Prosecutor General's Office about the incident.

Investigators have accused Savelov of organizing and participating in a riot as well as using violence against authorities. The charges carry maximum prison sentences of 10 years and five years, respectively.

Meanwhile, the Federal Financial Monitoring Service opened an investigation Wednesday into the funding sources for Navalny's RosPil project, which seeks to expose corruption among officials.

The check comes after Ilya Kostunov, a State Duma deputy with the Kremlin-backed United Russia party, claimed that RosPil was using the Yandex.Money payment system to launder money.

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