

# Navalny Supporters Claim Beaten by Police

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Supporters of opposition leader Alexei Navalny said they were detained and beaten up by police Saturday.

The report comes after the Moscow City Court rejected Navalny's lawsuit seeking to annul the results of the Sept. 8 mayoral election, in which he was the runner-up. The politician's supporters say the authorities have started to reverse their lenient policy from the election campaign, when they allowed Navalny to run and organize a big network for distributing campaign materials.

Police instructed three volunteers to dismantle a Navalny campaign cube near the Novokuznetskaya metro station Saturday, but they refused and called Vitaly Serukanov, a lawyer for the Navalny team, the OVD-Info detention monitoring site reported. The cubes are currently being used to distribute newspapers outlining the opposition leader's views about the results of the election, which he believes to be rigged and unfair.

When Serukanov arrived, he saw unidentified people, presumably plainclothes police officers, cutting the cube with scissors, the lawyer told the Ekho Moskvyy radio network. He said when he told them to stop, they thrust the scissors at him.

According to Serukanov, some of the police officers then dislocated his arm and beat up the volunteers. Polina Belyakova, one of the volunteers, was hit in the head by a police officer, he added. Another volunteer was hit in the head and leg, Konstantin Singurov, a Navalny supporter, told The Moscow Times.

This is the second attack reported by Belyakova. On Friday, she tweeted that she had been attacked and hit by an unknown "psychopath" at a Navalny cube. Photos posted by Belyakova and Navalny's former campaign manager, Leonid Volkov, on Twitter show her with a neck brace after the first and second attack.

Singurov said the cube was unauthorized. The Navalny campaign has argued that, under Russian law, such cubes do not require authorization from City Hall.

Serukanov and the other Navalny supporters were detained and driven to a police station, and the three volunteers were subsequently taken to a hospital. The lawyer was charged with disobeying a police officer.

Doctors at a public hospital did not want to write a report on the injuries, Singurov said, citing pressure from authorities, and the volunteers had to go to a private clinic. There, another police officer tried to interfere with doctors' activities, Singurov said. Eventually, a report on Belyakova's head injury was filed, he added.

Meanwhile, police also attempted to dismantle a cube at the Oktyabrskaya police station on Saturday, Singurov said.

Police and hospital officials were not available for comment Sunday.

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