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Navalny Wins Court Case Against Federal Media Watchdog

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Opposition activist Alexei Navalny announced his victory Tuesday in a lawsuit challenging the Russian federal media watchdog's refusal to register his news outlet as an official media outlet.

Navalny filed an application with the agency on June 2 to set up the "Alexei Navalny Information Agency," a news outlet that would focus on corruption in collaboration with his Foundation to Fight Corruption, according to his blog.

But the agency failed to register Navalny, instead demanding that he provide documentation to prove he could set up a news agency — a requirement that Navalny said is not stipulated in Russia's law on mass media institutions.

With the help of lawyer Vadim Kobzev, Navalny filed a suit with Moscow's Lyublinsky District Court challenging the media watchdog's decision in late September, and on Tuesday the court ruled in his favor.

"We just won the lawsuit against Roskomnadzor regarding the refusal to register my mass media outlet. ... The court ordered Roskomnadzor to re-examine my application for registration," Navalny wrote on his blog Tuesday.

Earlier, Navalny disregarded the media watchdog's refusal to register his agency as baseless.

In accordance with Russian law, he said, the only requirements for registration of a media outlet are that the applicant be at least 18 years old, not deemed mentally unfit by a court, not a citizen of another country and not currently serving out a prison sentence.

"Well, I've turned 18 already, I don't have foreign citizenship, and I'm not located in a prison [yet]," said Navalny, who is currently under house arrest on embezzlement charges, which he claims were politically motivated.

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