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Russia Seeks Hefty Jail Terms For Activists in 'New Greatness' Case

By AFP

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The defendants attended a hearing in a Moscow court Tuesday. **Anton Novoderezhkin/TASS**

A Russian prosecutor Tuesday requested that three young men receive between six and seven and a half years in prison for allegedly plotting to overthrow Vladimir Putin's government, lawyers said.

In 2018, authorities detained 10 people accusing them of belonging to an anarchist cell that had plotted an uprising against the government in what has come to be known as the "New Greatness" case.

Critics say the case has been fabricated by the security service, and top rights group Memorial has pronounced the young men and women political prisoners.

On Tuesday, a prosecutor requested that Ruslan Kostylenkov, 27, be sentenced to seven and a half years in prison, Pyotr Karamzin, 34, to six and a half years and Vyacheslav Kryukov, 22,

to six years.

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All three have been under arrest since March 2018.

The prosecution requested that four other defendants including 20-year-old Anna Pavlikova should receive suspended sentences of between four and six and a half years, lawyer Maxim Pashkov, a member of the defence team, told AFP.

The New Greatness affair is one of several cases initiated by the FSB security service, the successor to the Soviet-era KGB.

In February, seven young anarchists and anti-fascists were sentenced to between six and 18 years in prison on terror and other charges.

Arrested in 2017 and 2018, most of the men said they had been tortured in custody with electrodes and beaten to extract a confession.

President Putin has been in power for 20 years and this month oversaw a controversial vote that allows him to stay in the Kremlin until 2036.

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