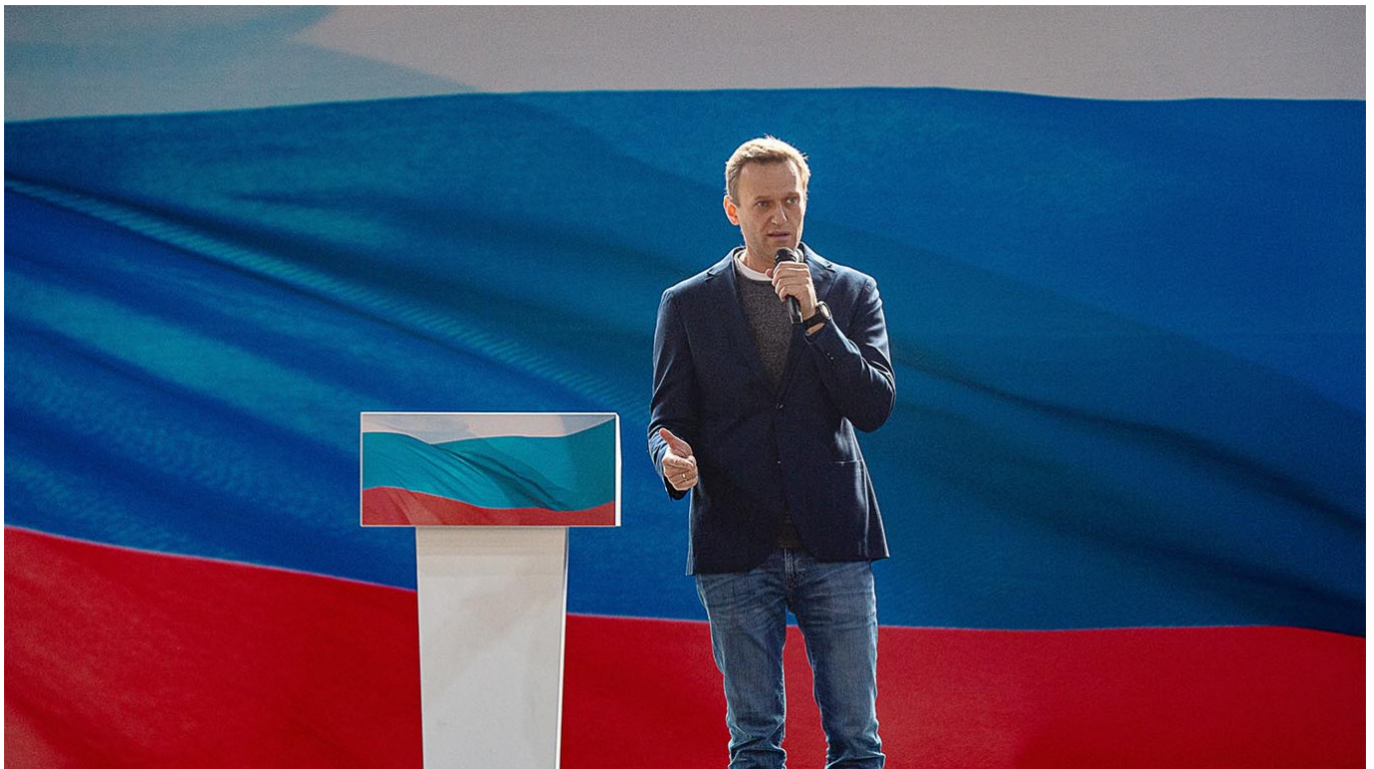


Kremlin Critic Navalny Dissolves Anti-Corruption Foundation After 'Putin's Chef' Lawsuit

July 20, 2020



Alexei Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) has investigated corruption among high-ranking Russian officials since 2011. **Dmitry Serebryakov / TASS**

Prominent Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny is closing his foundation that has produced several high-profile investigations into alleged corruption among top government officials, he [announced](#) Monday.

The Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) has faced a number of lawsuits over its video investigations targeting figures ranging from former Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev to billionaires Alisher Usmanov and Oleg Deripaska. The Russian courts have sided with the plaintiffs and ordered the FBK to pay large fines for what they ruled to be false or defamatory information.

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One of the lawsuits, filed by a school-lunch provider believed to be owned by Kremlin-linked catering magnate Yevgeny Prigozhin, is seeking 88 million rubles (\$1.2 million) from the FBK, Navalny and his ally Lyubov Sobol.

“It’s a giant sum and I don’t even see the point in collecting it,” Navalny wrote in a statement on his website announcing FBK’s closure.

Prigozhin is widely known as “Putin’s chef” for organizing President Vladimir Putin’s dinners with foreign dignitaries. He has also been linked to a private Russian military contractor widely reported to have sent fighters to Syria, Libya and eastern Ukraine, as well as to "troll farms" accused of stoking online division during the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign.

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Sobol has previously [pursued](#) legal action against Prigozhin over school meals linked to his catering business that she alleges caused a dysentery outbreak among dozens of children in Moscow in late 2018.

The FBK will continue its anti-corruption investigations under a different legal name, Navalny said.

“Let Putin and Prigozhin choke on that,” he said.

The Justice Ministry blacklisted the FBK in October under Russia’s “foreign agent” law that imposes crippling auditing and reporting requirements on the listed groups.

The authorities, riled by the group's embarrassing video investigations, also froze bank accounts linked to Navalny and raided his nationwide political network as part of a money laundering investigation that he says is trumped up.

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