The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Yulia Navalnaya Turns Down Calls to Enter Politics in Rare Interview

February 17, 2021



Harper's Bazaar interviewed Yulia Navalnaya via Zoom on Jan. 11, six days before her husband was arrested on their return from Germany. **Mikhail Tereshchenko / TASS**

Yulia Navalnya does not yet plan to replace her jailed husband Alexei Navalny as Russia's main opposition politician, she said in an interview with the Harper's Bazaar fashion magazine.

Navalnaya's latest refusal to engage in politics comes amid calls from supporters for her to take up her husband's cause as he faces multiple criminal charges that block his path to elections and which he calls politically motivated.

Related article: Yulia Navalnaya, Kremlin Critic's Wife, In The Spotlight

"It's much more interesting to be the wife of a politician. Also, what I'm doing in my place is politics to some extent," Navalnaya, who rarely speaks to the press, said in the Russian-language edition's March issue.

“Secondly, I see my main task in making sure that, no matter what, nothing has changed in our family: that the children remain children and a home remains a home,” Navalnaya said.

Navalnaya, 44, was thrust into the spotlight after her husband’s August poisoning with what European scientists determined was the nerve agent Novichok. Supporters have drawn comparisons between Navalnaya and Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, the opposition leader in neighboring Belarus who challenged its longtime president after her husband’s imprisonment.

Harper’s Bazaar interviewed Navalnaya via Zoom on Jan. 11, six days before her husband was arrested on their return from Germany, where he had spent months recovering from the poisoning and where they celebrated their 20th anniversary while he was in a coma.

Navalny has since been sentenced to nearly three years in prison on charges of violating parole of his 2014 suspended sentence for fraud.

He is currently on trial for allegedly defaming a World War II veteran and faces another 10 years as part of a new criminal case alleging that he stole donations to his foundation.

Navalny’s jailing and his viral video investigation into President Vladimir Putin’s alleged Black Sea palace have triggered nationwide rallies that led to thousands of detentions and claims of widespread police violence.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/02/17/yulia-navalnaya-turns-down-calls-to-enter-politics-in-rare-interview-a72984