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1 in 2 Russians Say Navalny Rightly Jailed – Poll

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Eighty-two percent of Russians said they have followed Navalny's incarceration since his return to Russia following a near-fatal poisoning. **Moscow Court / Moskva News Agency**

Nearly half of Russians say that Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was rightly imprisoned for violating parole while recovering abroad from a poisoning attack, according to an independent survey published Monday.

The Levada Center polling agency said 48% of Russian respondents consider Navalny's sentence of two and a half years in one of the country's most notorious penal colonies to be fair.

Only 29% of respondents called Navalny's verdict unjust, according to the poll results.

The 44-year-old opposition figure was immediately jailed in January on returning from Germany, where he spent months recovering from a near-fatal poisoning he claims was carried out on President Vladimir Putin's orders. The United States and the European Union imposed sanctions on high-ranking Russian officials over Navalny's poisoning and

imprisonment.

Navalny, who has complained of severe back pain and loss of sensation in one of his legs along with deprivation of sleep by prison guards, last week declared a hunger strike to demand proper medical treatment.

His senior aides have launched a campaign to collect half a million signatures from supporters in order to set a date for new mass rallies in his support. Previous nationwide demonstrations this year led to more than 10,000 detentions, dozens of criminal cases against protesters and widespread claims of police violence.

Levada's survey also showed high awareness — as well as a clear generational divide — toward Navalny's imprisonment, with more younger respondents calling it unjust than their older counterparts.

Half of Levada's respondents aged 18 to 24 said Navalny was imprisoned unjustly, compared with 19% of those aged 55 and over.

Overall, 82% of those polled said they have closely followed or heard about the anti-corruption campaigner's incarceration.

Levada conducted the in-person survey in partnership with Russia's Open Media investigative news website among 1,623 respondents in 50 Russian regions between March 25-31.

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