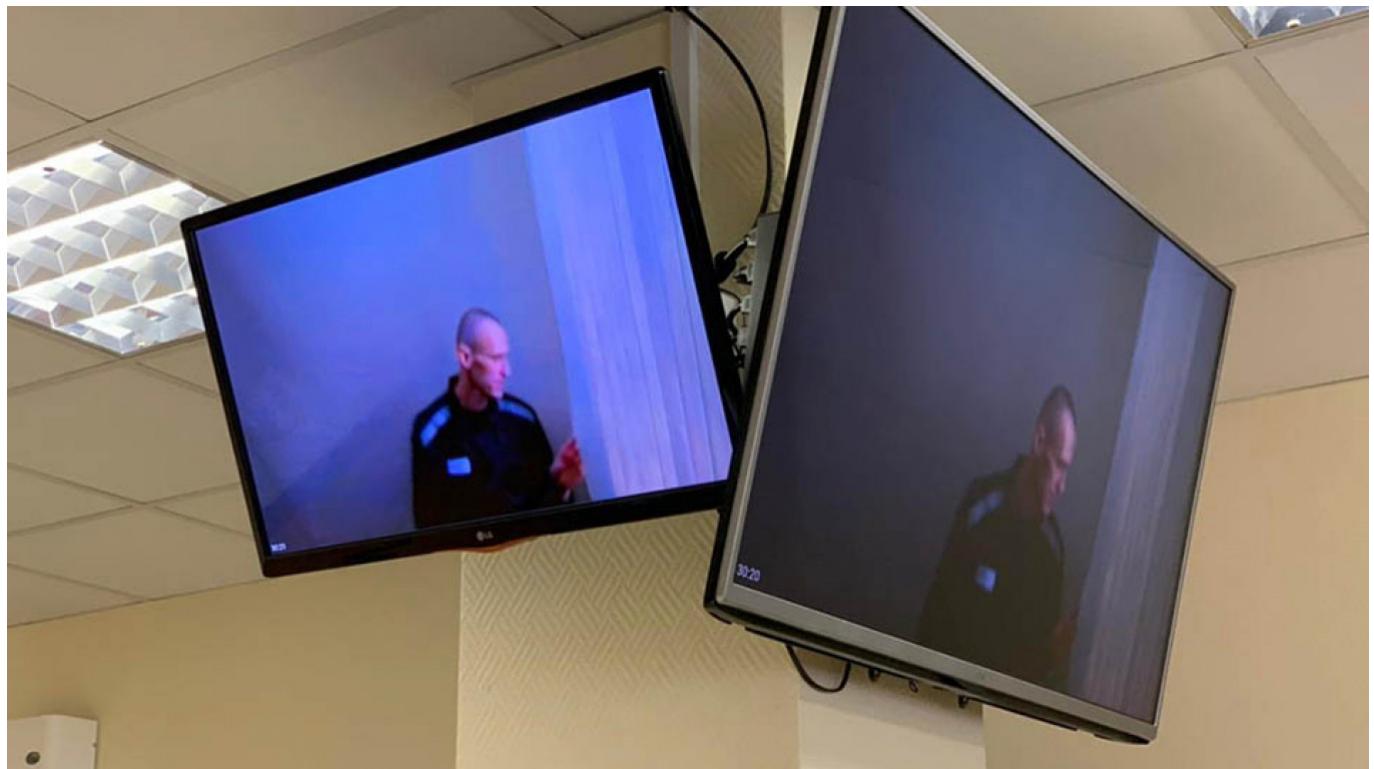


# Gaunt Navalny Makes First Public Appearance Since Jailing

April 29, 2021



Navalny's court hearing marked his first public appearance in two months. **Babushkinsky Court Press Service**

A visibly gaunt Alexei Navalny made his first public appearance Thursday since being imprisoned on old fraud charges and finishing a three-week hunger strike.

Joining a court hearing via videolink from the notoriously harsh prison colony outside Moscow where he is serving two and a half years, the 44-year-old Kremlin critic compared himself to a “creepy skeleton.”

**Embed:**

Navalny spoke like the usual self, with a fiery speech and jokes, albeit weakened by the hunger strike. But the overall situation is grim - him appearing on a blurred screen from prison while his organization is being disbanded under immense

pressure [pic.twitter.com/YWG2xooV30](https://pic.twitter.com/YWG2xooV30)

— Mary Ilyushina (@maryilyushina) [April 29, 2021](#)

“I last weighed 70 kilograms in seventh grade,” he [told](#) his wife Yulia when the judge retreated from the courtroom for deliberations, according to a transcript by the independent Mediazona news website.

“Seventy-two suits you better than 74,” Navalnaya said, referring to her husband’s current weight.

Navalny ended his three-week hunger strike to demand proper medical care Friday, ceding to doctors’ warnings that he could die “at any minute.” Tens of thousands across Russia took to the streets earlier that week for the 44-year-old Kremlin critic, with more than 2,000 people detained and police continuing detentions a week after the protests.

**Related article:** [Navalny Dissolves Political Network Ahead of Expected 'Extremist' Ruling](#)

Citing his lawyer, a CNN reporter attending Thursday’s appeal against his February defamation sentence for insulting a World War II veteran said that Navalny [lost 22 kilograms](#) since returning to Russia. Navalny was jailed immediately upon landing in Moscow after his recovery abroad from a near-fatal poisoning that he blames on the Kremlin.

Speaking via videolink at the hearing, Navalny told his wife that he had begun eating a few spoonfuls of porridge and lamented that prison authorities are refusing to provide him with fruits and vegetables.

The hearing was Navalny’s [first](#) public appearance since his February sentencing for violating parole in a 2014 fraud conviction. The fierce Putin foe’s previous sightings came via prison footage leaked by pro-Kremlin television in early April and a photo of his prison ID posted to his Instagram in late March.

The Moscow court on Thursday rejected Navalny’s appeal of the 850,000 ruble (\$11,500) fine in connection with the World War II defamation conviction.

The decision came ahead of a widely anticipated ruling to declare Navalny’s political and activist network as “extremist” organizations, banning their activity and putting members and supporters at risk of lengthy jail terms. Those hearings are set to resume on May 17.

This week, prosecutors ordered the network to suspend its activities ahead of the ruling and a court imposed sweeping bans on Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK).

Senior aide Leonid Volkov announced earlier Thursday that the network will be disbanded.

His allies said Thursday that while studying the extremism case files they discovered that Navalny, Volkov and FBK head Ivan Zhdanov are facing criminal charges that they were previously unaware of.

They are accused of creating an organization "infringing upon the liberties and rights of individuals," an offense punishable by up to four years in jail.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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