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# Russia to Debate Bill Banning Navalny Supporters from Polls – Lawmaker

By AFP

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A Russian court is expected to rule on prosecutors' request to brand Navalny's groups as "extremist" organizations Monday. **navalny.com**

Russia's parliament will next week debate a bill to ban members of "extremist" organizations from being elected as lawmakers, a deputy said Tuesday, in a move targeting supporters of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

The legislation can affect not only senior members and activists of Navalny's political network but tens of thousands of Russians who supported its work with donations.

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In late April, Russian authorities added Navalny's network of regional offices to the country's database of terrorist and extremist organizations, as Moscow seeks to outlaw the opposition

movement led by President Vladimir Putin's most outspoken critic.

Prosecutors have also requested that Navalny's network and his Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) be designated "extremist" organizations and the main hearing in the case is set for Monday.

Vasily Piskaryov, the head of the Russian parliamentary commission on investigating foreign interference, said on Tuesday that the legislature should move quickly to approve the draft law banning members of "extremist" organizations from running for parliament.

"The first reading is on May 18. It's important not to delay it," Piskaryov said in a statement on Telegram.

He expressed hope that the legislation would come into force before September's parliamentary elections.

Piskaryov insisted that the legislation was not aimed at any particular organization and its main purpose was to protect Russian sovereignty.

"Let's answer a simple question: do you want your interests to be represented in parliament by someone who speaks the language of hatred, who wants to destroy the country, who is against people of another nationality or faith?" Piskaryov said.

"No one wants that, I am sure."

The Russian parliament's lower house, the State Duma, said that the bill targets leaders, sponsors and rank-and-file members of "extremist" organizations.

Leaders of such groups will not be able to run in parliament elections for five years while members and other people involved in their work, including those who helped finance them, will be banned from running for three years, the State Duma said.

Organizations on the list include the Islamic State group and Al-Qaeda.

Being listed outlaws them in Russia, with members and supporters facing lengthy jail terms.

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