

Russia Raids Opposition Politician

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Dmitry Gudkov faces up to 5 years in prison amid a widening crackdown on Russia's opposition. **Evgenij Razumnyj / Vedomosti / TASS**

Updated at 12:06 p.m. on June 3.

Russian authorities stepped up its crackdown on opposition figures Tuesday morning, raiding apartments, offices and a summer house connected to a vocal anti-Kremlin politician and his relatives.

Former parliamentarian and opposition politician Dmitry Gudkov [said](#) Russian security officers raided his family dacha early Tuesday, while security services also searched the apartments of his former assistant Alexander Solovyov and his chief of staff Vitaly Venidiktov.

Prosecutors have named Gudkov as a suspect in a criminal case into “infliction of property damage through deception” by his alleged failure to [pay rent](#) to municipal authorities in 2015-17, according to human rights lawyer Pavel Chikov.

The charges, which observers called another sign of the authorities’ widening crackdown against dissent, carry a punishment of up to 5 years in prison.

Gudkov's father Gennady, a former politician and longtime critic of President Vladimir Putin who now lives in Bulgaria, wrote on Twitter that Russia's OMON riot police "have broken into our dacha. It's allegedly a search. All the phones have been disconnected. The reason for the search is unknown. There were children, grandchildren and relatives inside."

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Russia's security services also conducted a search at Gudkov's Kolomna office, some 100 kilometers outside Moscow, as well as the apartments of other family members.

On Thursday, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#) that authorities opened a criminal case against an unknown individual after officers seized 50 Makarov pistol cartridges and a permit to own the gun from Gennady Gudkov's apartment.

The Kremlin has intensified its crackdown against opposition parties and politicians following the imprisonment of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny and subsequent disbandment of his regional campaign operation and ahead of this fall's parliamentary elections.

The latest searches came after a former leader of Open Russia, the opposition movement founded by exiled Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky, said he was pulled off a plane Monday evening and [detained](#) by authorities at St. Petersburg's Pulkovo Airport as he was planning to fly to Warsaw.

Both Dmitry and his father Gennady were parliamentarians in Russia's lower State Duma chamber. Gennady was expelled in 2012 by a vote of lawmakers on corruption allegations, while Dmitry was ousted from the A Just Russia party in 2013 and lost his seat in the State Duma in Russia's September 2016 parliamentary elections, when he ran in a highly contested Moscow district. Dmitry subsequently joined the liberal democratic Yabloko party.

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