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Navalny Aide Placed on Russia's Wanted List

By AFP

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Lyubov Sobol. **Sergei Karpukhin / TASS**

Lyubov Sobol, a key aide to jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny, has been placed on a wanted list in Russia, as authorities press ahead with a crackdown on dissent.

Sobol, a 34-year-old lawyer, appeared on a list of wanted persons on the website of Russia's interior ministry on Wednesday night.

She is believed to have left Russia earlier this year after being slapped with a year-and-a-half of restricted movement for breaching coronavirus regulations.

Sobol rose to prominence in 2019 when she went on a hunger strike after being banned from running in local elections.

Ivan Zhdanov, the head of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation, and Leonid Volkov, the opposition politician's right-hand man, are also on a wanted list.

Most of the top Navalny allies have fled the country amid an unprecedented crackdown on the opposition in post-Soviet Russia.

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Ahead of parliamentary elections in September, Russian authorities have outlawed Navalny's organizations.

The opposition leader himself was arrested in January upon returning from Germany after recovering from a poisoning attack he says was orchestrated by the Kremlin. The Kremlin denies the allegation.

He is serving a 2.5-year prison sentence on embezzlement charges in a penal colony outside Moscow. The European Parliament on Wednesday gave its Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought – the EU's top human rights award – to the 45-year-old opposition politician.

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