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Exiled Navalny Aide's Father Sentenced to Prison

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@vb_voronin / twitter

The elderly father of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's top aide was sentenced Thursday to three years in prison for actions his son linked to his own political activities.

Navalny's allies slammed the sentencing of former housing commission member Yury Zhdanov, 67, on charges of abuse of office as inhumane.

"It's absolutely cannibalistic," lawyer Vladimir Voronin told Russia's The Insider news website.

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"[Authorities] continue bullying the pensioner and holding him hostage because of his son's activities. This is low and vile even for our system," Voronin said.

A court in the northern Russian city of Arkhangelsk in December handed a three-year

suspended sentence to Zhdanov. He was arrested again days later for allegedly breaking the terms of his suspended sentence.

On Thursday, a court in northern Russia's Nenets autonomous district converted Zhdanov's suspended sentence to a real sentence in a penal colony, the Mediazona news website reported.

Zhdanov's son Ivan Zhdanov has linked the criminal investigation to his own political activity.

The younger Zhdanov headed Navalny's now-dismantled Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK), which had published explosive video investigations into high-level corruption before authorities banned it as "extremist" last summer.

He is among the several key Navalny allies who have fled Russia amid the authorities' widening crackdown on dissent.

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