The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ex-Navalny Activist Jailed for Mock 'Putin Aides Execution' Video

July 29, 2022

Ron Lach / Pegels

A former regional activist for jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny has been imprisoned for 6.5 years for sharing a video of a mock execution of top Putin lieutenants.

Opposition blogger Sergei Komandirov, 26, was detained in October 2021 on criminal charges of justifying terrorism for sharing a controversial video depicting a mock trial of "Vladimir Putin" and the execution of "Dmitry Peskov," the president's spokesman, and "Igor Sechin," Putin's old friend and CEO of the Rosneft oil giant.

Related article: Activist Arrested Over Putin Spokesman 'Execution' Video

Komandirov has since been formally charged with justifying Nazism, inciting hatred and insulting a government official.

Authorities placed him on a registry of "terrorists and extremists" in December, three months

before they designated the controversial mock trial video as an extremist material. The video's author was fined half a million rubles ($8,000) for publishing it.

The Smolensk Military Court on Thursday found Komandirov guilty on all counts and sentenced him to 6.5 years in a penal colony.

"I'll cut myself," Komandirov shouted after the judge read the verdict, according to the Verstka Media news outlet.

Prosecutors had requested a seven-year prison sentence for Komandirov.

He was reported to have been an activist with Navalny's regional campaign office before Russian authorities shut it down as an "extremist" organization last year.

Though Komandirov was detained months before Russia invaded Ukraine, his sentencing came amid Russia's wider crackdown on anti-war protests and opposition activism, with tens of thousands of arrests and several thousand criminal cases.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/07/29/ex-navalny-activist-jailed-for-mock-putin-aides-execution-video-a78438