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Russian Prosecutors Seek 25-Year Prison Term for Kremlin Critic Kara-Murza

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Russian opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza. **Dmitry Lebedev / Kommersant**

Russian prosecutors have requested a prison sentence of 25 years for opposition politician Vladimir Kara-Marza, one of his lawyers said Thursday.

"Unexpectedly for Vladimir and I, the court heard the arguments today. The process is moving quite fast and the prosecutor has asked for 25 years in prison," lawyer Mariya Eysmont told journalists in a video published by the SOTA Telegram news channel.

Kara-Murza, 41, was detained in April last year on charges of spreading "fake news" about the Russian army after he criticized the invasion of Ukraine.

Related article: Kremlin Critic Kara-Murza Unable to Attend Trial Due to Ill Health

The list of charges against the veteran Kremlin critic was soon expanded, and he is now also

accused of high treason and of affiliation with an “undesirable” organization.

The prosecutor's requested 25-year sentence is the maximum possible sentence for his charges.

Kara-Murza’s trial is being held behind closed doors in a Moscow court.

Educated in the West, Kara-Murza was a close associate of assassinated opposition leader Boris Nemtsov and exiled oligarch-turned-Kremlin critic Mikhail Khodorkovsky.

Kara-Murza claims to have survived two poisoning attempts — in 2015 and 2017 — which he says were ordered by the Kremlin in retaliation to his political activities.

His lawyers have raised concerns over his health in detention over the past year, saying last month that he was too unwell to attend a court hearing.

Russia escalated its clampdown on opposition figures, independent journalists and activists following its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Most Russian opposition figures are now either in jail or in exile.

AFP contributed reporting.

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