

Trial Opens for Navalny Ally Facing 'Extremism' Charges

By [AFP](#)

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Ksenia Fadeyeva in court. **Dmitry Kandinsky / vtomske.ru**

An ally of jailed Russian opposition activist Alexei Navalny went on trial in Siberia Monday on charges of creating an "extremist organization," a court spokesperson told AFP, as authorities continue to crack down on dissent.

Ksenia Fadeyeva, 31, is a former municipal deputy in the Siberian city of Tomsk and was added to Russia's "terrorist" list in January 2022.

She also headed Navalny's political office in the city, where Navalny was poisoned with the nerve agent Novichok when he visited in August 2020 to support local activists ahead of elections.

The following month, Fadeyeva was elected to the Tomsk city legislature, along with other independent activists in Siberia, a move hailed as a victory for the Russian opposition against

the ruling party United Russia.

The local elections came a year ahead of nationwide parliamentary elections and were seen as a blow to the Kremlin, as United Russia faced sinking popularity and simmering public anger over worsening economic conditions in the country.

But in 2021, Navalny's political network was designated "extremist," putting employees, volunteers and supporters at risk of criminal prosecution.

Many of his allies left Russia following the move, but Fadeyeva refused to flee and was detained in December 2021 on charges of organizing "an extremist" group.

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