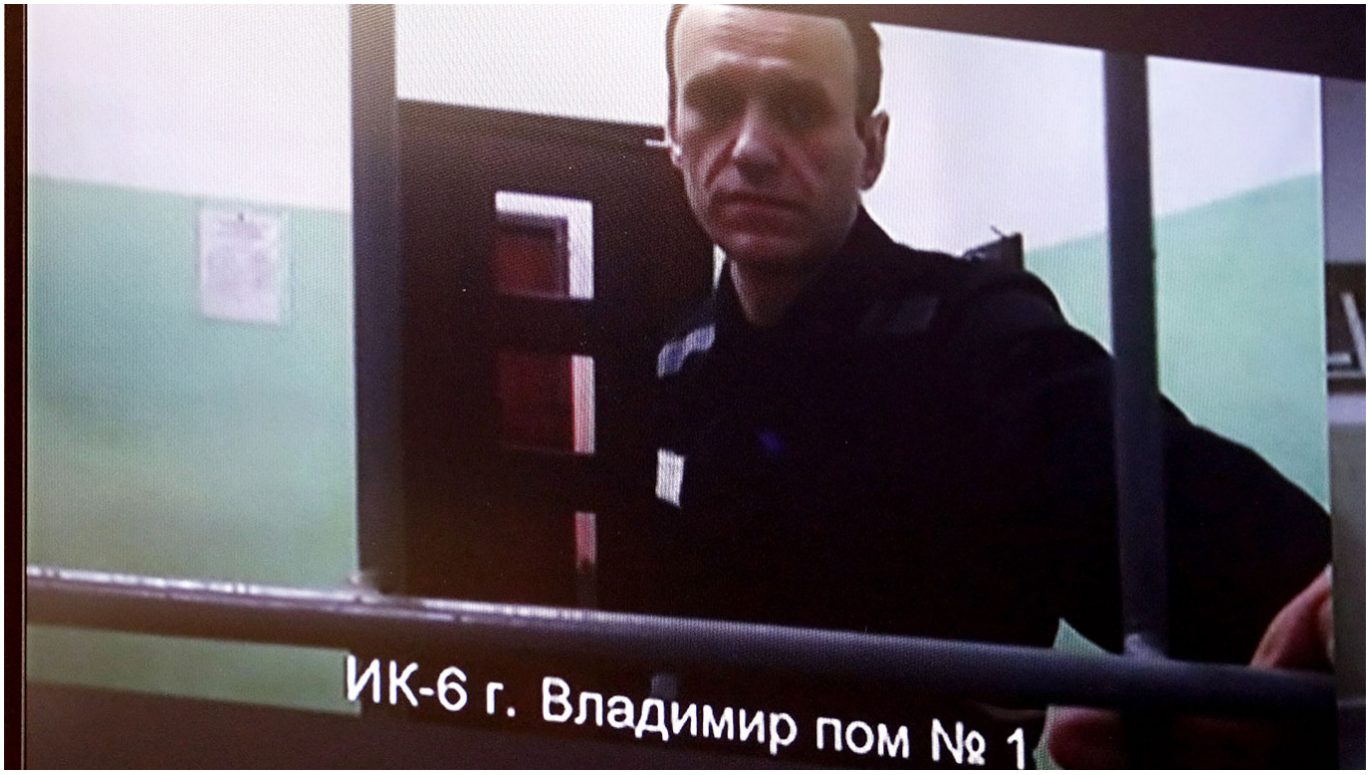
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Jailed Russian Opposition Leaders Call for One-Day Hunger Strike

By AFP

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Alexei Navalny. **Maxim Shipenkov / EPA / TASS**

Russia's jailed opposition politicians — including Alexei Navalny, Vladimir Kara-Murza and Ilya Yashin — on Thursday called on political prisoners and supporters to stage a one-day hunger strike.

The Kremlin critics said the protest will be held on Oct. 30, which used to be known as the Day of Political Prisoners in the Soviet Union.

Already decimated by years of repression, Russia's civil society has been under an intensified crackdown since President Vladimir Putin launched his assault on Ukraine last year.

"We call on all political prisoners and those who want to express their support to join the action and refuse to eat on that day," the jailed opposition politicians said in a statement on social media.

The statement was also signed by three of Navalny's jailed associates: Vadim Ostanin and Lilia Chanysheva, who headed his local political offices, as well as Daniel Kholodny, the technical director of his YouTube channel.

"Russia's authorities are returning to their roots: arrests, repression, closed trials," the jailed activists said.

"We think it is right for us to turn to our roots and traditions," they said, urging "political prisoners all of countries" to show solidarity with the Russian initiative.

Related article: Putin Critic Kara-Murza Brought To Siberian Penal Colony

Thousands of Russians have been detained, jailed or fined for opposing Moscow's assault on Ukraine.

Navalny, 47, is serving a 19-year prison sentence.

He has suffered significant weight loss in prison, where he was sent in 2021 after surviving a poisoning attack with Novichok, a Soviet-designed nerve agent, that he blames on the Kremlin.

Supporters are also worried about the health of 42-year-old Kara-Murza, who survived two poisoning attacks and suffers from polyneuropathy, a condition that affects nerves.

He was jailed in April for 25 years. His sentence was the longest prison term delivered yet to a Kremlin critic since the start of Moscow's assault on Ukraine last year.

He was recently transferred to a maximum-security prison in Siberia and immediately put in an isolation cell.

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