

# Russia Detains 3 Navalny Lawyers

By [AFP](#)

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Alexei Navalny during a prison court trial. **Sofya Sandurskaya / TASS**

Russia on Friday detained three lawyers of jailed opposition leader Alexei Navalny and raided their homes, aides said, the latest in a crackdown boosted after Moscow's Ukraine assault.

Navalny is Russia's most prominent opposition politician and mobilized huge anti-government rallies before he was jailed in 2021 on fraud charges that his allies at home and abroad say are punitive.

"All these steps are taken to completely isolate Navalny," said Ivan Zhdanov, an exiled ally.

Lawyers Vadim Kobzev, Igor Sergunin and Alexey Liptser, who have all defended Navalny in the past, have been remanded in pre-trial detention until at least Dec. 13.

Kobzev was due in court on Friday to represent Navalny in a lawsuit he has launched against his prison, but several aides said he was absent.

"This is why it's all being done: so that Alexei is left without legal protection, without a connection to the outside world," Navalny spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said.

"And to send a signal to other lawyers: it is dangerous to defend him and other political prisoners."

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In August, Navalny received a 19-year jail term in a maximum security prison on extremism charges.

Jailed near Moscow, Navalny communicates with the outside world through his lawyers.

He will soon be moved to a "special regime" colony — the harshest type of prison reserved for Russia's worst criminals that will severely limit his contact with lawyers and family.

Most of Russia's high-profile activists are in exile or behind bars but cases targeting their lawyers have been rare.

Friday's searches were conducted as part of a case for "participating in extremist activities," the head of the legal department at Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation Vyacheslav Gimadi said.

Navalny's political offices were designated "extremist organizations" in 2021, which put employees, volunteers and supporters at risk of prosecution.

"Lawyers do not engage in politics," Gimadi said.

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