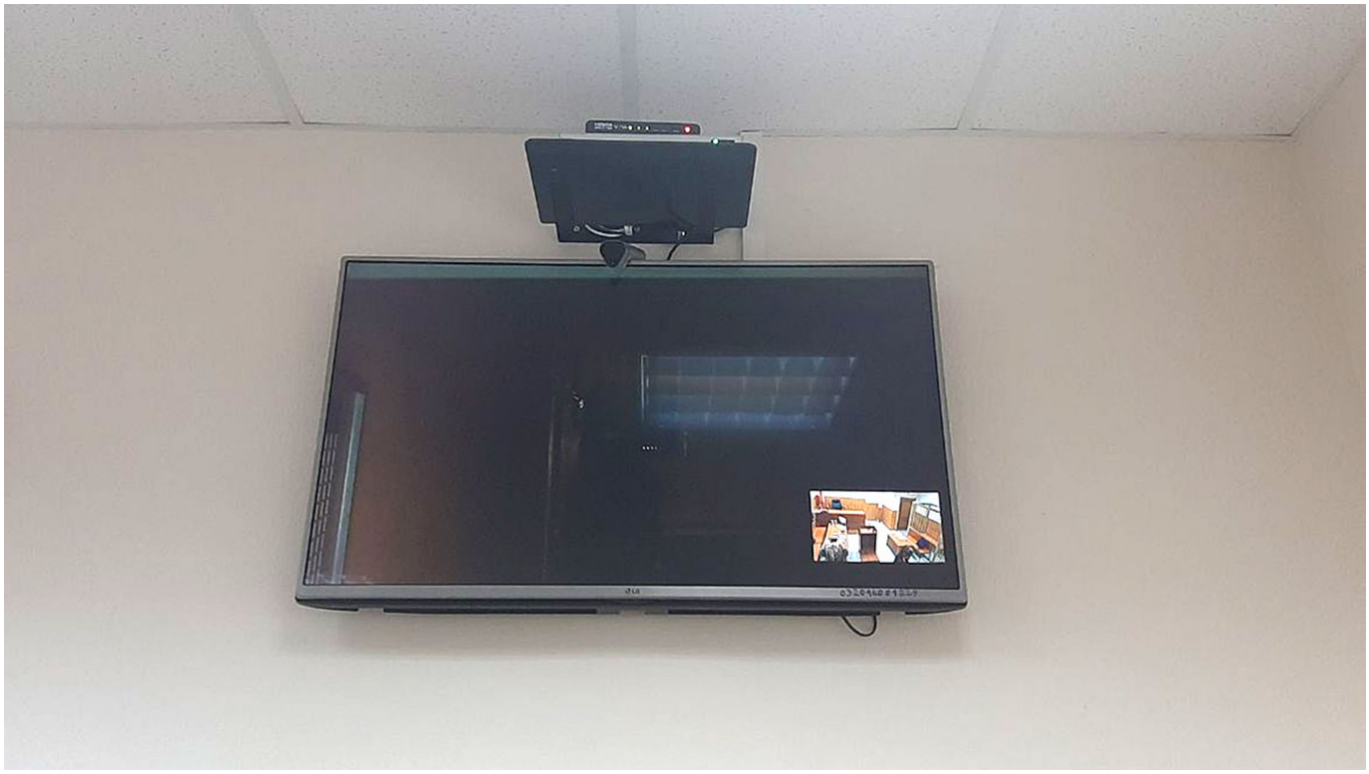
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Navalny Refuses to Attend Court Hearing Over Maltreatment, Aides Say

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The Anti-Corruption Foundation / X

Jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny has refused to attend his latest court hearing after prison authorities confiscated his writing tools, his aides said Monday.

"Alexei @navalny usually attends his court hearings via video link, but today he was not there," Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) said on X (formerly Twitter).

"We don't know the reason. The hearing has been postponed," FBK said.

Hours later, Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh said prison wardens had forbidden him from writing letters to the outside world, leading him to refuse to come out of his cell for the court hearing.

"After that, several individuals forcibly entered the cell and physically escorted him to the investigator's office," Yarmysh wrote.

The prominent opposition politician's act of disobedience comes less than a week after

authorities detained three of his former and current lawyers on extremism charges.

Navalny has regularly used letters passed through his lawyers and published to social media by his team to update the outside world on his experiences since being imprisoned in early 2021 upon returning to Russia from a near-fatal poisoning recovery.

A Moscow court this summer sentenced Navalny to 19 years in prison on new extremism charges. He and his allies dismiss the sentence, as well as his past verdicts, as politically motivated.

Navalny is set to be moved to a "special regime" colony, the harshest type of prison reserved for Russia's worst criminals.

Allies say this will severely limit Navalny's contact with lawyers and family.

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