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Russia Adds Detained Navalny Lawyers to 'Extremists and Terrorists' Registry

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Opposition leader Alexei Navalny's lawyer Alexei Liptser stands in a cage in a courtroom. **AP / TASS**

Three lawyers representing jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny have been added to state financial watchdog Rosfinmonitoring's list of "extremists and terrorists," the independent Mediazona news website reported Thursday.

Vadim Kobzev, Alexei Liptser and Igor Sergunin were arrested on Oct. 13 in Moscow on accusations of participating in "extremist" activities for passing on letters written by Navalny in prison to his associates.

Navalny and his allies have called the lawyers' arrests an attempt to further isolate him.

Those on the "extremists and terrorists" registry have their Russian bank accounts frozen.

Rosfinmonitoring's searchable database of groups and persons with links to terrorist activities includes al-Qaeda, the Taliban and the Islamic State.

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In August, a court increased Navalny's sentence to 19 years on charges of creating an "extremist" organization.

He has accused officials at the penal colony where he is held of withholding letters from his wife Yulia Navalnaya. Last month, he refused to attend a court hearing in protest over being deprived of writing instruments, which are his only way of communicating with the outside world.

Navalny will soon be moved to a "special regime" colony, which will further limit contact with his lawyers and family.

Navalny is Russia's most prominent opposition figure and mobilized huge anti-government rallies before he was jailed in 2021 on fraud charges that his allies say are politically motivated.

The anti-corruption campaigner's political and activist organizations were designated as "extremist" organizations in mid-2021.

The label forced the organizations to disband and prompted most of his leading associates to go into exile to avoid prosecution.

AFP contributed reporting.

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