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Court Extends Navalny Lawyers' Pre-Trial Detention for 'Extremism'

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Lawyer Vadim Kobzev. **Dmitry Serebryakov / AP / TASS**

A Russian court has extended the pre-trial detention of two lawyers who represented the late Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny, the independent news website Mediazona reported Tuesday.

Vadim Kobzev, Alexei Lipster, and Igor Sergunin were arrested last October on accusations of participating in "extremist" activities for passing Navalny's letters on to his associates.

Russia in 2021 outlawed Navalny's political network as "extremist," putting his associates at risk of criminal prosecution.

Moscow's Basmanny District Court ruled Tuesday to extend Kobzev and Liptser's pre-trial detention until Aug. 3, according to Mediazona. It did not indicate whether Sergunin's arrest was also extended.

Video from the courtroom shared by the news outlet Rusnews showed Kobzev and Liptser inside a defendant's cage without Sergunin.

Related article: Court Rejects Navalny Ally Fadeyeva's Appeal Against 9-Year 'Extremism' Sentence

The state-run news agency RIA Novosti reported Tuesday that all three lawyers have been indicted and had their pre-trial detention extended until Aug. 3.

Russia's financial watchdog in November added the lawyers to its list of "extremists and terrorists," allowing their bank accounts to be frozen without a court order.

Two other exiled lawyers who worked for Navalny — Alexander Fedulov and Olga Mikhailova — have been arrested in absentia on the same charges.

Navalny, the most prominent figure in Russia's opposition, died while serving a sentence for "extremism" in an Arctic penal colony in February, aged 47.

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