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Prosecutors Request Nearly 6-Year Jail Sentences for Journalists Accused of Navalny-Linked 'Extremism'

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Antonina Favorskaya, Konstantin Gabov, Sergei Karelin and Artyom Kriger in court. **zona.media**

Russian prosecutors are seeking to sentence four journalists to five years and 11 months in prison each on charges of "extremism" over alleged ties to the late opposition figure Alexei Navalny, the independent news website Mediazona reported Thursday.

Antonina Favorskaya, Konstantin Gabov, Sergei Karelin and Artyom Kriger, who have all reported on Navalny as journalists, were detained last spring and summer on charges of "participating in an extremist community."

The journalists are accused of "collecting material, preparing and editing videos" for Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) and the NavalnyLIVE YouTube channel.

Their trial, which opened in October, is being held behind closed doors at the request of prosecutors.

Favorskaya and Kriger's employer, the independent news outlet SOTAvision, has repeatedly denied the accusations against them, saying neither journalist had ever worked for Navalny's organizations.

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Gabov reportedly worked for Reuters and the Russian television channels Moskva 24 and MIR, as well as the Belarusian news agency Belsat. Karelin has done work for the Associated Press.

Favorskaya had covered Navalny's court hearings and filmed the last known video of the Kremlin critic before his Feb. 16, 2024, death in an Arctic penal colony. He was serving a 19-year prison sentence for "extremism" when he died under unclear circumstances.

Russian authorities banned Navalny's activist and political groups including FBK as "extremist" in 2021, placing employees, volunteers and supporters at risk of criminal prosecution.

In January, three former Navalny lawyers were sentenced to prison for up to five and a half years on the same charges of "participating in extremist activity."

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