

# From Jail, Navalny Urges Russians to Vote Out Pro-Kremlin Candidates

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Alexei Navalny is serving a 2.5-year prison sentence for parole violations in an old fraud case he says is trumped up. [navalny / Instagram](#)

Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny has urged Russians to vote out ruling party candidates in the country's upcoming parliamentary elections in a social media [post](#) written from jail Monday.

With a number of independent and opposition candidates barred from running, Navalny's team has in recent years switched tactics to promote a "Smart Voting" strategy that seeks to rally support behind the most promising challengers to United Russia party incumbents.

He and his team have renewed their calls to "Smart Voting" since Navalny's own allies were forced off the Sept. 19 ballot for the lower-house State Duma after his networks were banned as "extremist" this summer. Russian authorities have since blocked dozens of Navalny-linked websites and attempted to block online tools that allow users to access Navalny's "Smart Voting" app.

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Ahead of the three-day vote starting this Friday, Navalny wrote on Instagram that he has been placed on “lockdown” and his meetings with lawyers are “completely illegally and very demonstrably” disrupted by prison guards.

Team Navalny lawyer Vadim Kobzev [confirmed](#) Monday that guards briefly escorted Navalny out, only to escort him back in immediately afterward and kick out the attorneys.

“They say that’s how it will be from now on,” Kobzev tweeted. “Perhaps the pre-election hysteria accelerated the process.”

Navalny, echoing Kobzev, expressed the opinion that “someone in the Kremlin decided that I would catch inspiration on the eve of the elections and write something convincing.”

“Alas, what a shame: No special inspiration came and I’m waiting for a guard any minute as I’m writing this,” he wrote. “[But] I’ve been campaigning all the time for you to go to the Sept. 19 elections and wipe out United Russia through ‘Smart Voting’.”

“The more people I can convince, the better the chances that we will throw out a couple of disgusting Putin thieves from the State Duma,” Navalny said.

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“Let them not think that by simply banning me from writing posts, they will make everyone fall in love with United Russia.”

Navalny is serving a 2.5-year prison sentence for parole violations in an old fraud case he says is trumped up. He was found guilty of breaking parole while recovering abroad from a near-fatal poisoning he says was orchestrated by President Vladimir Putin, a charge the Kremlin denies.

Though United Russia is reeling from low public approval ratings, members of the party founded by Putin are expected to maintain their supermajority and enact his policies virtually unhindered for the next five years.

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