# Exiled Ally of Late Russian Opposition Leader Survives Attack, Vows to Continue Fight Against Putin



Leonid Volkov, an exiled ally of the late Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, has vowed to continue fighting against Russian President Vladimir Putin. Volkov made his pledge after surviving a hammer and tear gas attack outside his home in Vilnius, Lithuania, on March 12. According to Navalny's spokeswoman Kira Yarmysh, the assailant broke a window of Volkov's car, sprayed tear gas into his eyes, and began hitting him with a hammer. Volkov sustained injuries, including a black eye, a forehead mark, and leg bleeding.

Alexei Navalny, a prominent critic of Putin, died in an Arctic prison camp in February at age 47. Navalny had been jailed since January 2021 after returning to Moscow from Germany, where he was recovering from a nerve agent poisoning he blamed on the Kremlin. Russian authorities attribute Navalny's death to natural causes, a claim his wife, Yulia Navalnaya, disputes, accusing Putin of orchestrating his murder. U.S. intelligence has reportedly found that Putin did not directly order Navalny’s death, though they acknowledge the Kremlin's history of targeting him.

Volkov, who was Navalny’s chief of staff and chaired his Anti-Corruption Foundation until 2023, expressed steadfast resolve in a BBC interview, urging Western allies to provide more weapons to Ukraine and avoid negotiating with Putin. He also highlighted Yulia Navalnaya as the new charismatic leader of the opposition movement.