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Timeline: Alexei Navalny's Final Hours

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Team Navalny

Veteran Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was declared dead by Russian prison authorities on Friday, an announcement that his team was able to confirm only a day later.

His death in a remote Arctic prison remains shrouded in mystery. Russian authorities have not yet announced the official cause of the opposition politician's passing or granted his family access to the body.

To help shed light on the circumstances of Navalny's death, The Moscow Times has recreated the timeline of the Kremlin critic's final days and hours.

Here is what we know based on available media reports and statements made by Russian authorities.

All times are in Moscow Standard Time (MSK).

Feb. 14

As Navalny was placed in solitary confinement for the 27th time, his team published an Instagram post dedicated to his wife Yulia Navalnaya on Valentine's Day. It would be his last statement on social media.

"Babe, everything we have is like in that song: cities, airport runway lights, blue blizzards and thousands of kilometers between us. But every second I feel that you are near me, and I love you more and more," Navalny wrote, referencing the hit song "Nadezhda" (Hope) by Soviet-Polish pop star Anna German.

Meanwhile, a group of employees from the Federal Security Service (FSB) and the Federal Penitentiary Service's FSB-linked Directorate L arrived at the IK-3 penal colony where Navalny was serving his prison term, according to information obtained by prominent prisoners' rights NGO Gulagu.net.

The FSB employees reconfigured the facility's covert surveillance equipment and video surveillance systems, according to the NGO.

"There is a reason to believe that 'bugs' and hidden cameras, which could have recorded what happened to Alexei Navalny on Feb. 15-16, were turned off and dismantled," Gulagu.net said.

Feb. 15

10:00 a.m.: Navalny appeared via video link at a hearing held at a regional court in the central Russian city of Vladimir.

"He felt fine, did not express any complaints about his health, actively participated [in the hearing], presented arguments in defense of his position," the court's press service told RBC news outlet.

In videos from the hearing that circulated online, Navalny appeared to be in good spirits.

"Your Honor, I will send you my personal account number so that you can use your huge salary as a federal judge to 'warm up' my personal account because I am running out of money," Navalny joked after the hearing had ended.

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6:00 p.m.: The routine evening check of inmates was sped up, according to an inmate who spoke to Novaya Gazeta Europe on condition of anonymity.

"Then we were locked in the barracks, warned that there would be no movement between the barracks, and security was strengthened — so you couldn't even stick your nose outside," Novaya Gazeta cited the inmate as saying.

"Late in the evening and at night, one could hear some cars driving into the colony's grounds three times, but it wasn't possible to see which ones they were through the window," the inmate added.

Feb. 16

Before 8:00 a.m.: Prison guards carried out a thorough search of all inmates from the early hours of the day and confiscated cellphones, playing cards and portable water boilers, according to Novaya Gazeta's source.

8:00 a.m.: An inmate interviewed by Novaya Gazeta claims that everyone at the prison learned of Navalny's death at this time.

"I think that Navalny died much earlier than the time that was announced. Most likely, last night," the inmate said. "Otherwise, why did they need to lock us tightly in the barracks and organize a search in the morning?"

Around 10:30 a.m.: According to claims made by prison authorities, Navalny would have gone on an hourlong walk at this time. He collapsed immediately after returning from the walk.

Navalny, however, wrote in a prior letter from the prison that inmates placed in solitary confinement at IK-3 were allowed to take a walk at 6:30 in the morning.

Around 11:45 a.m.: After Navalny collapsed, an ambulance arrived at IK-3 to "carry through with resuscitation measures that the colony's doctors had already provided" to Navalny, according to the state-run Interfax news agency.

Related article: IK-3: What We Know About Navalny's New Prison Facility in the Arctic

12:17 p.m.: The exact time of Navalny's death as listed on the prison's official death notice given to his mother.

2:19 p.m.: The Yamal-Nenets autonomous district's prison service published a press release announcing Navalny's death.

2:20 p.m.: State-run news agencies reported Navalny's death.

2:21 p.m.: Kremlin-funded broadcaster RT, citing an anonymous source, reported that Navalny died of a blood clot.

2:30 p.m.: Kremlin pundits and state media published a video of Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov saying he knew nothing of the causes of Navalny's death and had himself heard the news "from Moscow."

Peskov confirms that President Vladimir Putin was informed of Navalny's death.

Related article: Navalny's Body Not in Morgue Where Authorities Said It Was, Aides Say

Evening (exact time unknown): Navalny's body is taken to Labytnangi, the closest town to the IK-3 penal colony, before being transferred onward to a hospital in the region's capital Salekhard, according to a report by Novaya Gazeta Europe published Sunday.

An unidentified paramedic in Salekhard told the outlet that bruises resulting from seizures

could be seen on Navalny's body.

Traffic cam footage obtained by the independent Mediazona news website showed a four-vehicle convoy — including Federal Penitentiary Service vehicles — driving along the only land crossing between Labytnangi and Salekhard at 9:54 p.m. MSK.

"This timing leads us to believe that Navalny’s body was being transported to Salekhard in this convoy," Mediazona wrote.

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