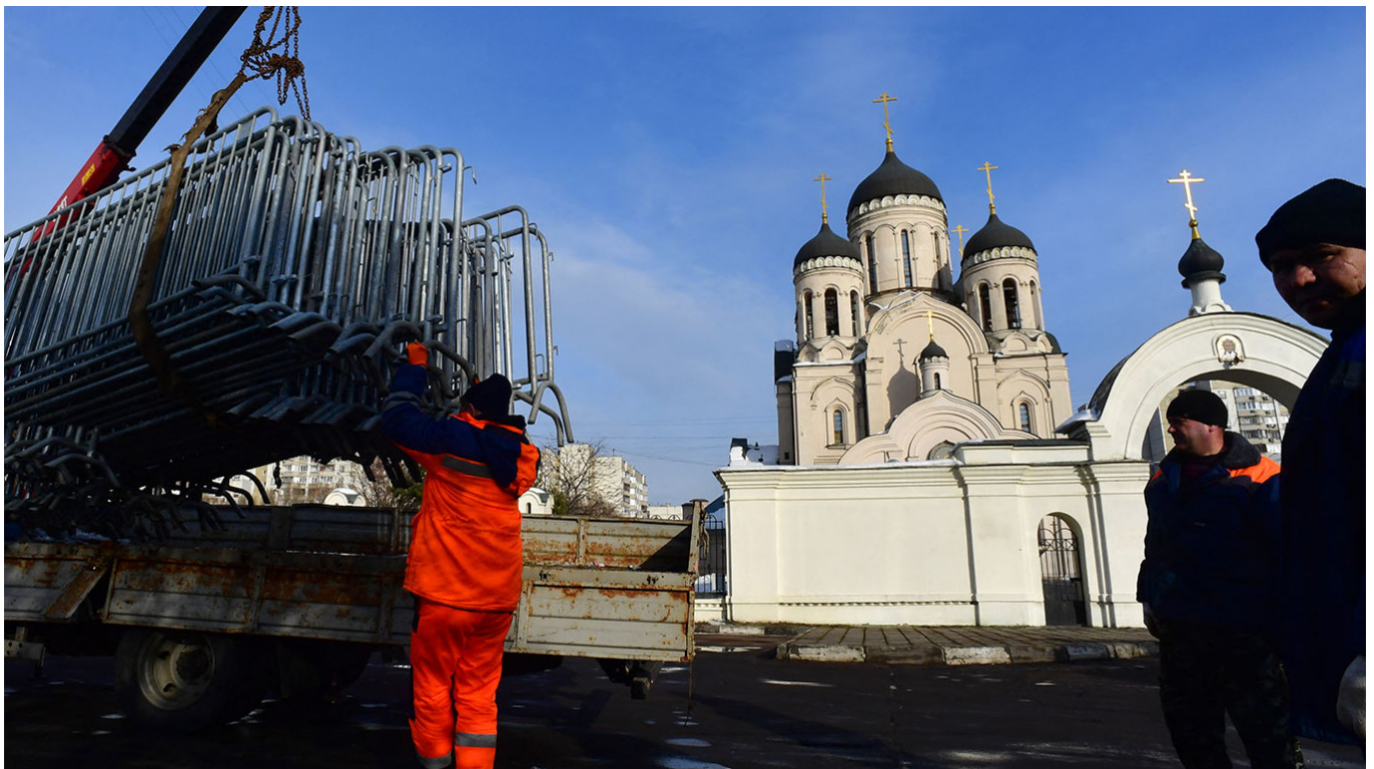


Heavy Police Presence Ahead of Navalny's Funeral

March 01, 2024



Workers unload metal fencing outside of the Moscow church where Navalny's funeral service is supposed to take place. **Olga Maltseva / AFP**

Mourners of late opposition activist Alexei Navalny gathered under [heavy police presence](#) as they waited outside the Russian Orthodox church in southeastern Moscow where his memorial service will take place later Friday.

Authorities have installed metal detectors, [security cameras](#) and [metal fencing](#) around the perimeter of the church, as well as the nearby cemetery where Navalny will be buried.

By noon local time, scores of mourners could be seen [standing in line](#) outside as they waited for the start of the funeral service, which is scheduled for 2:00 p.m.

Police officers could be seen [patrolling the area](#) on horseback, according to the Ostorozhno Novosti news channel, while two Moscow Times reporters on the ground said there were disruptions to mobile internet service near the church.

Embed:

Crowds of mourners have started to arrive for Navalny's public memorial service.

Video via [@Sota_Vision pic.twitter.com/usndJZ9If](https://twitter.com/Sota_Vision/pic.twitter.com/usndJZ9If)

— The Moscow Times (@MoscowTimes) [March 1, 2024](#)

Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's most vocal critic, died two weeks ago at the Arctic penal colony where he was being held on charges widely seen as retribution for his political activism.

Russian authorities said he died of “natural causes” after he lost consciousness following a walk, but his allies accuse the Kremlin of killing him.

Russian investigators handed over Navalny's body to his mother after a more than a week-long fight over his release.

His allies said previously the Kremlin was trying to block a public funeral, which could turn into a show of support for his movement and his opposition to Putin.

Navalny's team said Thursday that funeral homes in Moscow were [refusing](#) to transport his body to the church where Friday's memorial service is scheduled.

And on Friday, the late activist's spokeswoman [had said](#) there may be “delays” with the memorial service as his relatives were not able to immediately receive his body from the morgue.

However, around 12:30 Moscow time, allies said Navalny's body had been loaded into a hearse, which they [said](#) would take around 40 minutes to reach the church in southeastern Moscow.

Navalny's team has [urged](#) supporters who cannot attend the funeral service in Moscow to honor his memory at makeshift memorials Friday evening.

The Kremlin [told](#) reporters later on Friday that it had “nothing to say” to the relatives of Navalny on the day of his funeral, while also warning that anyone who participated in unsanctioned protests following the activist's memorial service would “be held legally responsible.”

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