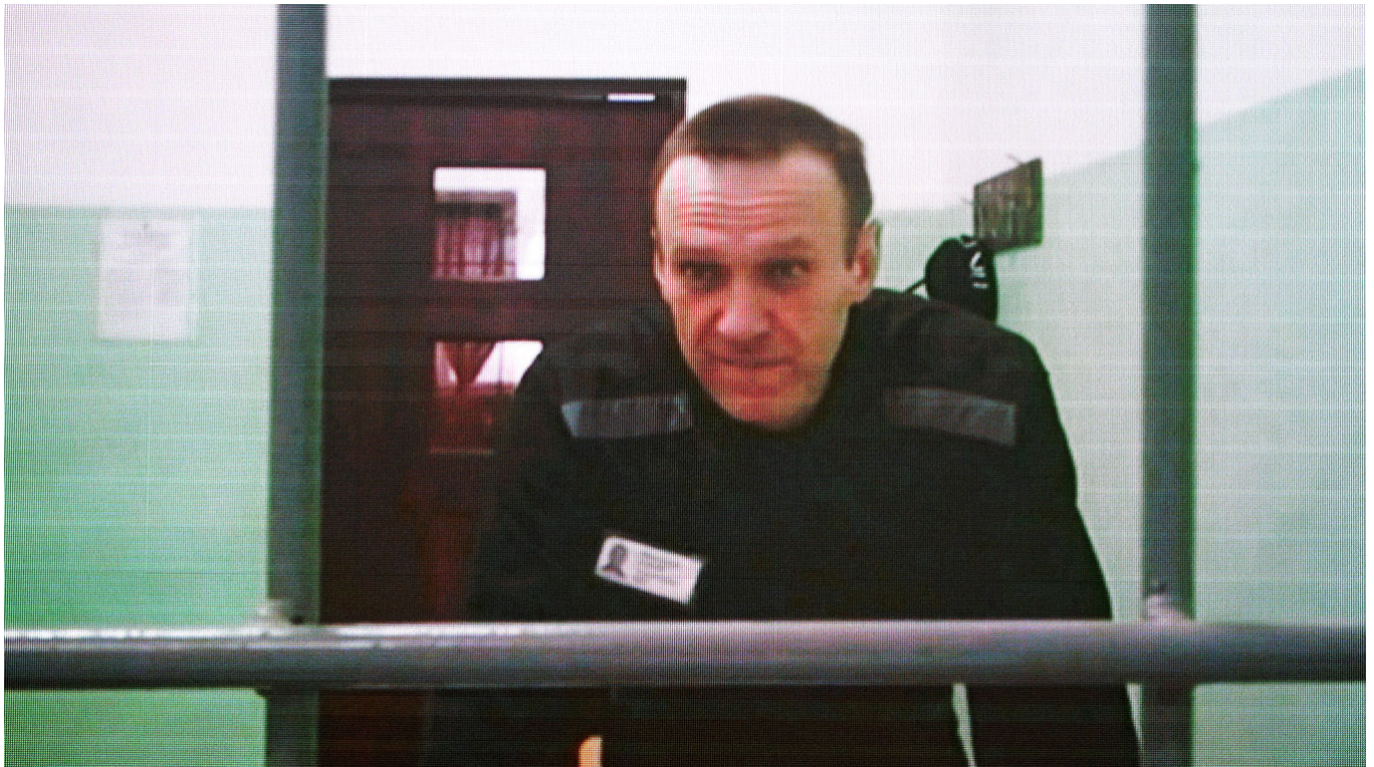


Navalny Found in Arctic Prison After 3-Week Disappearance

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Natalia Kolesnikova / AFP

Jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny has been located in a prison colony in northern Russia after going missing for nearly three weeks, his spokeswoman [said](#) Monday.

The disappearance of Russia's most prominent opposition figure, who mobilized huge protests before being jailed in 2021, had spurred concerns from allies, rights groups and Western governments.

“We have found Alexei Navalny. He is now in IK-3 in the settlement of Kharp in the Yamal-Nenets autonomous district,” Kira Yarmysh wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

She said Navalny’s lawyer visited him earlier in the day, adding that the anti-corruption crusader is “doing well.”

The district of Kharp, home to about 5,000 people, is located above the Arctic Circle.

Exiled Navalny aide Ivan Zhdanov [called](#) IK-3 “one of the most northern and remote” prison

colonies in Russia.

“Conditions there are harsh, with a special regime in the permafrost zone. It’s very difficult to reach and there are no systems to deliver letters or [make calls],” Zhdanov wrote.

“The situation with Alexei is a vivid example of how the system treats political prisoners, trying to isolate and suppress them,” he said, linking Navalny’s isolation to Russia’s 2024 presidential elections in which President Vladimir Putin is expected to win a fifth term.

IK-3 is famous for at one point in the 2000s holding [Platon Lebedev](#), a one-time business partner of exiled former oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky who was convicted of tax evasion, money laundering and fraud in what he and his supporters maintained was a politically motivated case.

Navalny’s location and condition had been unknown since his lawyers last met with him on Dec. 5, sparking [worries](#) that the 47-year-old’s life may be in danger.

He was expected to be transferred to a new prison colony as part of his new 19-year [jail term](#) for “extremism.”

He was previously held at the IK-2 prison colony in central Russia’s Vladimir region, where he was serving a sentence on fraud charges.

Related article: [Timeline: Missing Kremlin Critic Navalny's Arrests and Prison Sentences Over the Years](#)

His allies linked the timing of his disappearance to Putin’s Dec. 8 announcement to seek re-election in the 2024 presidential race.

Navalny has [urged](#) Russians to “vote for any other candidate” besides Putin in the March 15-17 election.

Navalny was jailed in 2021 after returning to Moscow from Germany, where he recovered from a nearly fatal poisoning attack with the Soviet-designed nerve agent Novichok. He claims the poisoning was orchestrated by Putin, an assertion the Kremlin denies.

His activist and political groups were banned as “extremist” organizations in summer 2021, forcing his closest associates into exile.

AFP contributed reporting.

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