

Rancid Food,
Barbaric Cold,
Broken Psyches

Navalny Prison Is Said
to Be Arctic Hellhole

By EKATERINA BODYAGINA
and ANATOLY KURMANAEV
Locked in an Arctic prison, Aleksei A. Navalny most likely spent his final days in some of the most inhumane conditions within Russia’s extensive penitentiary system, according to five men who have served sentences in the same penal colony as the Russian opposition leader.

The men described in phone interviews unbearable cold, repulsive food, unsanitary conditions and beatings in Penal Colony No. 3 of the remote Yamalo-Nenets region, where Mr. Navalny arrived in December to serve out the remainder of his 19-year prison sentence. The former inmates said the conditions were especially brutal in the solitary cells where Mr. Navalny is believed to have been confined on the day he was pronounced dead.

But what made the prison, known as IK-3 or the Troika, dreaded even by Russia’s hardened inmates was the exceptional psychological pressure and loneliness, they said. It was a system devised to break the human spirit, by making survival depend on total and unconditional obedience to the will of guards.

“It was complete and utter annihilation,” said a former inmate named Konstantin, who spent time in the prison’s solitary confinement cells. “When I think about it, I still break into cold sweat,” he said, adding that he has struggled with mental illness since his release.

The New York Times interviewed four men who had finished sentences in the Troika in the past decade, some as recently as weeks before Mr. Navalny’s arrival. The Times also spoke to one person who was in the colony at the time of Mr. Navalny’s death, as well as a friend of a former recent inmate. Their full names and some personal details are being withheld to protect them from retribution.

Mr. Navalny, who was buried Friday in a Moscow cemetery, described his time in the Troika in occasional social media posts with the sarcasm, wit and understatement that had helped turn the former blogger into the face of opposition to President Vladimir V. Putin.

He managed to maintain an upbeat tone even as he appeared increasingly gaunt and pale in his rare court appearances, which recently were conducted mostly remotely, by video call. The government
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FINBARR O'REILLY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A War’s Less-Visible Wounds

Artem Guz, 25, was among thousands of Ukrainians treated for brain injuries at a Dnipro hospital, one of the busiest combat trauma centers in the world. Page 8.

Housing Plan Gets a Yes. Community Says No.

By JASON DePARLE

FLORENCE, S.C. — When developers set out to build 60 subsidized apartments in an affluent corner of Florence, S.C., the chairman of the County Council waxed enthusiastic. Affordable housing “would serve a great need,” he wrote, and its proximity to services and jobs fit county planning goals. He pledged a small grant.

Then the neighbors found out. Lawyers, executives and civic leaders, they gathered at the Flor-

Local Fight Underlines
a National Crisis

ence Country Club, a half-mile from the proposed development, and vowed to block it. Nine days later, the plan suffered a fatal blow when the Council, in a meeting that took three minutes and 14 seconds, began rezoning the site, led by the chairman who had praised it.

The Council’s sudden reversal is the subject of a fair-housing suit — most of the prospective tenants were Black in a neighborhood of mostly white residents — and a study of forces that keep low-income families from opportunity-rich neighborhoods.

In many if not most affluent communities, existing land-use rules would have barred low-income housing, with the regulations often operating so quietly that they hide how fully exclusion
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Trump Offers
No Clear View
On Gaza War

Hands-Off Style Differs
From G.O.P. of Past

This article is by Jonathan Swan,
Maggie Haberman and Michael Gold.

In the nearly five months since Hamas terrorists invaded Israel on Oct. 7, igniting the most divisive foreign policy crisis of the Biden presidency, Donald J. Trump has said noticeably little about the subject.

He criticized Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, before quickly retreating to more standard expressions of support for the country. And he has made blustery claims that the invasion never would have happened had he been president. But his overall approach has been laissez-faire.

“So you have a war that’s going on, and you’re probably going to have to let this play out. You’re probably going to have to let it play out, because a lot of people are dying,” Mr. Trump said in an interview with Univision a month after the attack. His main advice to Mr. Netanyahu and the Israelis, he said then, was to do a better job with “public relations,” because the Palestinians were “beating them at the public relations front.”

Mr. Trump’s hands-off approach to the bloody Middle East conflict reflects the profound anti-interventionist shift he has brought about in the Republican Party over the past eight years and has been colored by his feelings about Mr. Netanyahu, whom he may never forgive for congratulating President Biden for his 2020 victory.

Mr. Trump has offered no substantive criticisms of Mr. Biden’s response to the Hamas invasion and Israel’s retaliation in Gaza. Instead, he has pinned the blame for the entire crisis on Mr. Biden’s “weakness,” in the same way he often does when violence or tragedy occurs.

“You would have never had the problem that you just had, the horrible problem where Israel — Oct. 7, where Israel was so horribly attacked,” the former president told a crowd in Rock Hill, S.C., on Feb. 23, before switching to more practiced attack lines against Mr. Biden.

It is unimaginable that in a pre-Trump Republican Party, the standard-bearer would have had so little to say about a major terrorist attack against Israel and a broadening regional conflict in the middle of a presidential campaign.

“This is one of America’s closest allies under attack. And it’s stunning that in such circumstances
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WARNING LIGHTS
FLASH FOR BIDEN,
TIMES POLL FINDS

TRUMP IS UP, 48%-43%

Only One in Four Voters
Thinks U.S. Is Headed
in Right Direction

By SHANE GOLDMACHER

President Biden is struggling to overcome doubts about his leadership inside his own party and broad dissatisfaction over the nation’s direction, leaving him trailing behind Donald J. Trump just as their general-election contest is about to begin, a new poll by The New York Times and Siena College has found.

With eight months left until the November election, Mr. Biden’s 43 percent support lags behind Mr. Trump’s 48 percent in the national survey of registered voters.

Only one in four voters think the country is moving in the right direction. More than twice as many voters believe Mr. Biden’s policies have personally hurt them as believe his policies have helped them. A majority of voters think the economy is in poor condition. And the share of voters who strongly disapprove of Mr. Biden’s handling of his job has reached 47 percent, higher than in Times/Siena polls at any point in his presidency.

The poll offers an array of warning signs for the president about weaknesses within the Democratic coalition, including among women, Black and Latino voters. So far, it is Mr. Trump who has better unified his party, even amid a continuing primary contest.

Mr. Biden has marched through the early nominating states with only nominal opposition. But the poll showed that Democrats remain deeply divided about the prospect of Mr. Biden, the 81-year-old chief executive, leading the party again. About as many Democratic primary voters said Mr. Biden should not be the nominee in 2024 as said he should be — with opposition strongest among voters younger than 45 years old.

Mr. Trump’s ability to consolidate the Republican base better than Mr. Biden has unified the base of his own party shows up starkly in the current thinking of 2020 voters. Mr. Trump is winning 97 percent of those who say they voted for him four years ago, and virtually none of his past supporters said they are casting a ballot for Mr. Biden. In contrast, Mr. Biden is winning only 83 percent of his 2020 voters, with 10 percent saying they now back Mr. Trump.
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CHRISTOPHER PAYNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Steel Wheels Keep On Turning

See the shops that service every motor, brake and axle in New York’s subway system. Metropolitan.

Why Colombians May Greet You as ‘Your Mercy’

By JULIE TURKEWITZ

BOGOTÁ, Colombia — After Altair Jaspe moved from Venezuela to the Colombian capital, Bogotá, she was taken aback by the way she was addressed when she walked into any shop, cafe or doctor’s office.

In a city that was once part of the Spanish empire, she was no longer “señora,” as she would have been called in Caracas, or perhaps, in her younger years, “muchacha” or “chama” (the Venezuelan terms for “girl” or “young woman”).

Instead, all around her, she was awarded an honorific that felt more fitting for a woman in cape and crown: Your mercy.

Would your mercy like a coffee? Will your mercy be taking the appointment at 3 p.m.?

Excuse me, your mercy, people told her as they passed in a doorway or elevator.

“It brought me to the colonial era, automatically,” said Ms.



NATHALIA ANGARITA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

For many in Bogotá, the term “sumercé” has new meanings.

Jaspe, 63, a retired logistics manager, expressing her initial discomfort with the phrase. “To horses and carts,” she went on, “maybe even to slavery.”

“But after living it,” she went on, “I understood.”

In most of the Spanish-speak-

ing world, the principal ways to say “you” are the casual “tú,” and the formal “usted.” But in Colombia there is another “you” — “su merced,” meaning, “your mercy,” “your grace” or even “your worship,” and now con-
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An Island’s Horrific Past

Alderney, a remote windswept haven in the English Channel, is reckoning with the Nazi atrocities that happened there during World War II. PAGE 4

Foreign Labor in South Korea

Though imported workers are vital, migrants often face predatory employers and inhumane conditions. PAGE 12

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Courts Protect Groundwater

Judges in Idaho, Nevada and Montana have altered the landscape for conserving dwindling aquifers. PAGE 17

SPECIAL SECTION

Eat Better, Live Better

The Mediterranean diet is good for you, and incorporating it into your daily routine is easier than it may seem.



SUNDAY STYLES

Who Owns an Artist’s Story?

The performance artist Ana Mendieta fell to her death in 1985. Her family is now questioning depictions of her life in several new media projects. PAGE 9

Those Faces Look So Familiar

The children of celebrities have long walked the catwalk, but that fashion-house trend may be on the rise. PAGE 1

SPORTS 28-31

No Stranger to Long Gains

Ray Davis rose from homeless child to college graduate, star running back and now N.F.L. draft prospect. PAGE 28



ARTS & LEISURE

The Future Is Now

With public buildings, the architect Fernanda Canales is helping to revive underserved Mexican towns along the United States border. PAGE 10

SUNDAY OPINION

Maureen Dowd

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SUNDAY BUSINESS

Whither Traditional Media

Magazines and newspapers are rapidly diminishing in number, and many people rely on social media to stay informed. Can the concept of “news” survive in a digital world? PAGE 1

The Peak Millennials

Meet the 1990 and 1991 babies, a huge microgeneration engaged in a lifelong competition for the country’s economic resources. PAGE 6

