

S M I C E

#3

About *Swipe*

Swipe is a Zine series looking at news articles from a specific year, and how these news articles have been presented through both TikTok as well as traditional means, such as Newspapers. This series will cover a range of News articles spanning a variety of topics from Political conflicts to Celebrity controversy.

TikTok is an ever growing social media platform which is used for all kinds of things, ranging from dance videos and asmr, to current news. The platform has over 1.9 billion users, with over 30 million active users a day.

The TikTok articles focus more on 'fake news' as well as how important news is received by their users. The other traditional articles are taken from a range of newspapers, such as The Guardian or The Daily Mail to show the contrast between how different News outlets distribute news.

The series looks at the contrast between 'TikTok' news and 'Traditional' news, and how TikTok news can be dangerous in the world of spreading false and fake news.

This book interprets how news can be conveyed in a 30 second video rather than a 2-3 A3 page news article and how this can connect with how younger generations have shorter attention spans compared to older generations, and why this could be how and why short videos appeal to them more.

This edition looks at the time period of March 2023 - April 2024.

Scan below to see the *latest* news!



Rishi Sunak *bans* deodorant for under 25's



A Selection of deodorants set out amongst foliage.

'So, no vapes, going to war, and we're all gonna be stinky as fuck.'



Something insane is happening in this country Rishi Sunak is planning to restrict sales of deodorant to anyone under the age of 25. That is if you watch videos on TikTok and think, yeah, that's got to be true.

Reports of Sunak banning deodorant sales have soared across social media's gossip grapevines recently, from TikTok to X. So much so, it previously popped up as the suggested search term on TikTok. Look, just a tiny bit closer though, and there's literally no credible source or origin for the story, just TikTok.

This search bar spreading fake news effect keeps on happening. TikTok's search bar has described celebrities as transgender, put RIP next to the names of living people, and suggested controversial news stories that don't actually exist.

The apps say they removed search suggestions after review, and it looks like this has happened to Rishi's Deodorant story, as none of the deodorant banned videos now show up on search. Still, quite insane, I have to say this, but if something sounds too weird to be true on here, before taking it at face value, just Google it.

TORY *Eau de Toilette*

New fragrance for Men.
Release your inner Conservative.

Now available at local retailers!



'Rishi Sunak to bring in legislation to deport everyone from Britain.'



Rishi Sunak is allegedly bringing in legislation that would deport every single person from Britain leaving the country completely empty, but with the best immigration statistics of all time. The Prime Minister apparently came up with this brilliant solution over a late -night takeaway with his offshore financial advisor.

During the meeting he froze and then jumped up screaming, Eureka by Jove, I've got it! We'll deport everyone, every single person in this country, white, black, Asian, whatever Suella Braverman thinks she is, all gone.

Board them on boats, planes, trains, jet skis for all I care. That'll stop him all bloody moaning about immigration and refugees and targets and this and that. All right, then we'll all fuck off, right?

Every single one of us, me included, we're all going, have managed to organize a quick deal with Spain so we get all the Costa del Sol and they can have Gibraltar. The Prime Minister has been desperately trying to appeal to his base for many years and reach immigration targets.

This new move manages to tick both those boxes, as there'll be many people in the Conservative Party whose hearts will be lightened by this move. No more brown people in the UK! No more anyone, it's bloody fantastic!

The United Kingdom will now be designated a tourism country where minimum wage workers will take round groups of tourists and show them all of the UK, saying things like, Look, here once lived a load of twats who thought would never be happy until it turns out you stick them in the sun and 80% of their problems go away.

Who would have thought the rain would ruin so much, eh?



A look into what the streets of London look like empty.

Salary threshold to increase to £38,000

'Non-essential jobs could start to be processed for deportation.'



Rishi Sunak is set to increase the salary threshold for any worker in the UK up to £38,000 meaning if you're not earning that much from your job you could be kicked out of Britain.

The threshold which is already currently in place for any migrant workers coming here on a visa is set to be extended from £26,000 up to £38,000 and now will include anybody who works in the UK all in the bid to help curb legal migration figures.

The new rules are set to come into force from next April and gives people enough time to find a job that will pay them that much money according to work and pension secretary Mel Stride. Unfortunately, if you do not find a job that pays you this much by then you may be ineligible to remain in the UK and people with non-essential jobs could start to be processed for deportation.

Earning 38k currently in Britain would put you in the top 30% of all earners with the average being only 33,000 there will be some slight exceptions to the rule, if you are under 18, if you're studying or if you have a disability, you will only have to earn 25,000 pounds to remain in the UK as Rishi Sunak says he wants to be compassionate with the rules.



A graph showing an increase in money.

Are we going to get conscripted into the army? The question on everyone's minds.



A group of soldiers from the UK lined up.



The UK government has insisted that people will not be forced to fight if war breaks out with Russia. You might have seen it all over the news today that the head of the British army warned that Brits may have to be called up to fight if we go to war with Russia.

Number 10 has ruled out conscription after the head of the army warned ordinary Brits may have to be called up because the armed forces isn't big enough. This comes as the chair of the NATO military committee said last week civilians must be ready for an all-out war with Russia within the next 20 years.

Also last week UK defence secretary Grant Shapps said that the country was moving from a post-war to pre-war world. Following on from the head of the British army's comments the Prime Minister's spokesperson insisted that military service would remain voluntary.

According to reports the Prime Minister's spokesperson said the British military has a proud tradition of being a voluntary force and there are no plans to change that. So you can all breathe a sigh of relief, there is no UK conscription before GTA 6.



Soldiers on a flight after being deployed.

Ready to Fight?

Brand new Camouflage jacket and cargo trousers now available.

Fit for Conscript!



Only at ASOS.com

ASOS

Two Tiktokers have been slammed after filming an F1 driver peeing at a urinal



Two Tiktokers have been slammed after filming an F1 driver peeing at a urinal, good place to pee, and then posting some absolutely wild

commentary about his privates. We've got all the details for you here.

Faster than one of those F1 boats, cars, On Scroll Deep, the show that keeps up with the internet so you don't have to. They do have boats though. Is there F1 boats? Wow. George Russell is a British F1 driver for Mercedes.

F1 is of course the famous Fast Cars, F stands for Fast and One. Well that's where you want coming the race buddy. He was doing a pee, he at the Australian Grand Prix, he was at a public urinal, he did a pee, a number one, an F1 if you will, where he was filmed by the Shepmates, a pair of TikTok twins from Australia and the Shepmates went in, filmed him. They're basically known for this jokey style, they're known for their banter. Couple of bloody lyricans. And they make videos about F1 so they thought it'd be really funny to go in film this guy while he's peeing and then and upload that video to TikTok and Instagram with the caption POV when you meet George Russell at the urinals. and they went on to say quote,

'I know what you're thinking, how big is it? That stays between me and George. There's confidentiality in the men's urinal. What I can say is he looks really relaxed, confident stream, which I guess is probably F1 style commentary.'

I'm not the biggest fan. I am more of a NASCAR



A photograph of the Shepmates.

kind of guy as you can tell from my general demeanour. The video was then deleted after they had a huge amount of backlash. That backlash arrived faster than, oh I don't know, some kind of fast thing.

I dunno about you, but if I walk up to a toilet and it's got a big sign above it that says Grand Prix. And then I'd walk in. Anybody? Sorry, they'd cut my mic. They'd cup my mike. Broadcaster Shane McKinnis tweeted the behaviour of the Shepmates recording Mercedes driver George Russell, add a urinal at the hashtag AusGP, all the SEO phrases in this tweet, posting it on Instagram and TikTok and then boasting about it is disgusting and reprehensible.

Will they apologise? Even if they do, credentials for future races should be denied. And many other people chimed in, they said that this is a weird thing to do. People were pointing out it's pretty illegal to film someone peeing. It's also just gross, don't do that. And eventually the Shepmates responded, speaking on Instagram, quote,

'Our aim is to celebrate sporting heroes and commentators whilst bringing some light-hearted fun to sports fans. On this occasion, our content has unintentionally offended our audience and sporting fans from around the globe and is

'I don't feel comfortable enough to use a urinal anymore.'

unacceptable. We acknowledge our absolute lapse of judgement and apologise wholeheartedly. We have reached out to George personally to apologise.'

For George's part, he hasn't commented on it. I think he's just kind of leaving it, doesn't want to draw more attention to it and I highly doubt he'll be responding to their message. But George is actually not the first celeb to be avoiding public toilets in future. Ed Sheeran, Cole Sprouse, Robbie Williams and James Buckley. They've all complained about being bothered by fans while in the bathroom. David Beckham apparently avoids urinals entirely. James Buckley speaking to our

friends and family members Radio X. He said quote, 'I don't feel comfortable enough to use a urinal anymore. I haven't used one for years. I've always got to go to a cubicle because it's happened. I'm there with it out and people are trying to talk to me about the inbetweeners. I'm like, do you want to give me 30 seconds? I am there. It's out. Its f***ing huge.' That's what Jay would say and he's not Jay. He's a person. There's probably quite a few people watching this who are like why does he keep saying urinal instead of urinal? But that's just British talk, isn't it? I thought you'd call it the piss hole. Wait fellas. Let's let's confuse the the non -urinal users Yeah, so when you go in there's uh freaking dragon and he says, I'll be taking that piss, thank you very much. And that's what a urinal is. Prove me wrong. I mean this plays into a thing we've touched on many times on Scrolldeep, which is that you shouldn't really be filming people in public, especially when they're not aware that you're filming them, and especially not when there is piss coming out.

I'm sure we already have a rule which says don't film people public but I am going to add a new rule. I feel like Dua Lipa over here. But if it's a little pop culture reference scroll deep rule 93 Don't film people while they're actively on the toilet or engaging in the toilets.

What do you make of this? Do you think this was unacceptable? Do think it was great? Do they think they should be banned from races? Do you think they should be sent to prison?



F1 Portrait photograph of George Russell

'Government announces they're wanting to completely scrap A levels.'



If you live in the UK, I'd suggest you leave right now. Has World War III happened? No, of course not. In the past few weeks, the government's been implementing some new laws and I guarantee one of these laws will affect you.

Wait, what new law do you want about? Well, let's start off with school. And by the way, this one keeps getting worse and worse. So the governments announced they're wanting to completely scrap A levels, meaning that everyone is gonna have to stay in some form of education until 18.

So does that mean that I can't leave to go to college, get an apprenticeship, or even a job? Nope, you have stay in school! Also, on top of that, You have to study math so in English until 80 honestly the two worst subjects to continue and you have To do it this couldn't get worse I've only just died because they're also cracking down on school holidays the government basically wants to get rid of summer school Holidays all together, but basically the kids won't have time off screw that I just take my kids out of school what they gonna do find me I'm glad you mentioned that because they literally will find you so if you take your kid out a school for the day as a parent the school will send you a warning Letter also issue fines on top of that they could even kick you out the school and they're taking that seriously that's not it there's another thing that probably gonna affect you which is taxes yeah yeah we already know taxes are high nope it's no even that if you have anything to do with crypto or trading didn't used to be taxed because it was a gray area well that is not the case anymore fine I'll just give my crypto to my friends yeah that'll get taxed as well what also charitable donations are gonna get taxed on top of that you sell any of your personal goods online say for example an old Xbox so then you're gonna text on that especially if your selling it on eBay vintage depop.



A group of students sitting their A Level exams.

Spotify to *cancel* family plans if you don't live in the same house

'At this rate, I'm gonna be forced over to Apple Music.'



Spotify is officially over after they've done this. Let me guess, they've raised their prices again. Actually, no, it's all because of an email. An email, how is that earth shattering to Spotify? Well, basically, this email that they've sent out to loads of customers says that if you're on a Spotify family plan, then everybody using that family plan has to confirm that they live at the address the family plan is set on.

Wait, what? Yeah, and if you don't confirm within seven days of receiving this email, they'll not only be kicked off the Spotify premium family plan, but they'll also not be able to join any other Spotify family plan.

For one whole year, what is Spotify thinking with this? Exactly, and this has angered a lot of people that have started to leave Spotify, because Spotify's almost treating this like a punishment for those people that have actually paid money to get the Spotify family plan.

Simply just not reply to an email. It's just way too harsh. At this rate, I'm gonna be forced over to Apple Music. I don't wanna go to Apple Music. Well, don't worry, because if this does apply to you, you can reach out to Spotify's customer support, and they should be able to help with the situation.

Okay, well, I'll do that in a bit. You should probably do it as soon as possible, because as more and more people contact customer support, Spotify is gonna become less and less helpful.

Shake It Up

Brand new song by Taylor Swift about Donald Trump's presidency campaign.

Out now on all platforms!



How team Trump's fears that Taylor Swift could keep Biden in power have made the crazy American election even crazier still!

Donald's camp could declare a 'holy war' on her.

from Tom Leonard

When Americans once more break out the beers and crowd around their TVs for next weekend's Super Bowl, many of them will be more excited about what's going on in the stands than anything happening on the field.

For if the girlfriend of Kansas City Chiefs player Travis Kelce turns out to cheer him on against the San Francisco 49ers in American Football's annual championship, there may be some viewers who grind their teeth with fury.

The woman in question is Taylor Swift and there's a rumour going

round that she'll be there for a far more subtle purpose than to watch football.

According to feverish online speculation among pro-Trump conspiracy theorists, her appearance will be the crowning moment in a plot to drum up support for Joe Biden in this year's presidential election.

This has involved not only rigging the Super Bowl to ensure the Chiefs went all the way to the final but fabricating Swift's six-month romance with Kelce. All to ensure that, as a prelude to her endorsing



Taylor Swift pictured with her boyfriend Travis Kelce

Biden as she did in 2020, the couple can take centre stage next Sunday night during coverage of a game that was last year watched by a record 115 million viewers.

If that all sounds like the product of an alarmingly over-active imagination, it should be noted that even presidential candidates have been spreading it. Multi-millionaire entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy, who pulled out of the Republican nomination battle last month, tweeted knowingly this week about the Super Bowl: 'I wonder if there's a major presidential endorsement coming from an artificially culturally propped-up couple this fall [autumn]. Just some wild speculation over here, let's see how it ages over the next eight months'

'Satan wants to use her to re-elect Joe.'

Even Donald Trump is said to be complaining privately about the 34-year-old's potential influence, while his inner circle plans to declare what one called a holy war' on her.

This, in turn, has prompted claims that Trump risks stirring up a hornet's nest of outraged Swifties - as her devoted fans are known who in November will make sure they turn out en masse to vote Democrat.

It's tempting to dismiss the idea of the woman behind Shake It Off, Bad Blood and Look What You Made Me Do holding the key to the presidential election as definitive evidence that U.S. politics has lost the plot.

However, while the Super Bowl conspiracy theory certainly sounds

difficult to credit as does another outlandish claim recently raised on Fox News that she's a secret Pentagon agent engaging in psychological warfare Republicans have good reason to fret about the part that Swift may play.

They know that Democrat number crunchers believe gaining her support may be crucial to winning the election for an ageing incumbent president whose approval ratings are dismally low with young voters - the demographic most difficult to lure to the polling stations at the best of times. As a young woman, it's thought that Swift could prove particularly effective in rousing her mainly female fans over the threat they feel another Trump victory would pose to abortion rights. A new Quinnipiac University poll out this week revealed that Biden has been defying recent trends and taking the lead over Trump.

Aides to the 81-year-old president are drawing up a list of celebrities and ex-politicians who will throw their support behind Biden. Having Taylor Swift on board has been described as 'the endorsement of their wildest dreams'. She has a staggering 279 million followers on Instagram and when, last year, she posted a single message on the social media platform urging people to vote, it produced 35,000 new voters in a few hours. A survey conducted by UK pollsters Redfield & Wilton published two weeks ago shockingly revealed that 18 per cent of U.S. voters say they're 'more likely' or 'significantly more likely' to vote for a presidential candidate endorsed by Swift. Eight million new Generation Z voters (born between the mid-1990s and



Taylor Swift pictured on stage during her 'Eras' Tour.

mid-2010s) will be able to vote for the first time this year and many would have gone through their teens listening to Taylor Swift.

Some may find the poll's findings quite depressing but others weren't surprised. 'She's influenced popular culture, sports, the economics of entire regions of the U.S., said communications consultant James Haggerty. 'So why not politics and elections?'

The singer backed Biden in 2020 and his campaign is so focused on winning her support once again that, in an advert for a social media job on the team, applicants were urged not to outline their Taylor Swift strategy as they already had enough suggestions.

'I like Taylor's music about 25 percent less now.'

One idea that the team has reportedly been considering is for Mr Biden (who has proved he can be a bit wobbly on stage) to go to one of the stops on Swift's wildly successful Eras Tour, the first by any artist to rake in more than \$1 billion.

Most show-business stars cannot wait to show off their liberal credentials but Swift spent years resolutely refusing calls for her to make any overt political statement. In fact, her first intervention didn't come until the 2018 midterm elections when she endorsed two Democratic candidates in Tennessee.

In an emotional video, she was seen arguing with her father, Scott. He had urged her to stay out of politics fearing that it would imperil her safety by making her a target of extremists, but she told him she finally felt she had to speak up - citing incumbent Republican senator Marsha Blackburn's decision to vote against 'fair pay for women' and her support for homophobic positions

She told her father: I need to be on the right side of history, and if Democrat challenger Phil Bredesen] doesn't win, then at least I tried. He told her: I'm the guy that went out and bought armoured cars.' Whether bulletproof limos will protect her from the Trump campaign's 'holy war'

remains unclear. A campaign source told Rolling Stone magazine the war will probably take the form of stoking the 'culture-war fires and portraying Swift as just 'another Left wing celebrity who is part of the Democrat elite telling you what to think.'

Trump has already expressed his displeasure at her Democrat leanings, saying after her intervention in the midterms: 'I like Taylor's music about 25 per cent less now.' He must dislike it even more now given that she rounded on him in the 2020 election for meddling with the U.S. Postal Service's handling of voting by mail, thereby putting pressure on people to risk catching the coronavirus by leaving the house to vote.

Insiders say Trump has been claiming that he's 'more popular' than her and

'The influence Taylor has on our youth is witchcraft.'

has more loyal fans. Deftly borrowing the title of a Swift song, senior Trump campaign adviser Jason Miller said: 'Joe Biden might be counting on Taylor Swift to save him, but voters are looking at these sky-high inflation rates and saying, 'We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together.'

Meanwhile, some of the attacks on Swift have been off-the-scale barmy. Republican Georgia politician Kandiss Taylor wrote that she 'tried to warn y'all back in October that the influence of Taylor Swift on our youth with witchcraft was demonic, evil, and

Luciferian.'Of course, Satan wants to use her now to elect Joe back into the White House to destroy what's left of America.'

On conservative cable news station Newsmax, presenter Greg Kelly complained of 'idolatry' toward the performer from her fans, saying: 'If you look it up in the Bible, it's a sin. Many believe that those on the Right feel a sense of betrayal from Taylor. She grew up on a Christ-mas-tree farm in a white and mainly Republican part of Pennsylvania, and first became famous in country music, which has long had a conservative reputation.

Her squeaky clean 'America's Sweetheart' image and refusal for years to express political views encouraged many to believe her silence was because she was a closet Republican in the relentlessly pro-Democrat show-business world.

Indeed, swift was so determinedly uncontroversial that she struck many as just a little bit bland. As Democrats try to stir her to arms, will she seize the opportunity of proving her detractors wrong?



Donald Trump photographed at a presidential race debate.

TOYS "R" US



Queen Camilla Barbie

Get two free Crowns when purchasing
Camilla and Charles' together!

Use code **QUEENANDKING** at checkout.

Only available at participating retailers. Terms & Conditions may apply. Buy now while stocks last.

King Charles III and Queen Camilla crowned at Westminster Abbey

**Archbishop of
Canterbury places
crown on King
Charles's head.**

by **The Guardian**



Protesters in London before the coronation.

King Charles III and Queen Camilla have been crowned at Westminster Abbey, marking the symbolic beginning of a new royal era in Britain, and an extraordinary moment for a man who has spent more than seven decades in waiting.

In an elaborate and archaic ritual not seen in Britain since 1953, the king was anointed with holy oil and swore the oath of kings, before the archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, placed St Edward's crown on his head, to a cry of "God save the king".

In front of 2,300 guests including more than 100 heads of state, the king also vowed to maintain the Protestant religion in the UK, and to preserve the

rights of the Church of England, as set out in an act of parliament.

Tens of thousands of people crammed into the Mall and along a procession route from Buckingham Palace to the abbey, many camping overnight to secure a good view of the parade. It involved 4,000 armed forces personnel and 19 military bands, the most at any state occasion since the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

However, there were accusations of police heavy-handedness after a number of anti-royalist protesters, including the head of the UK's leading anti-monarchy campaign group, Republic, were arrested before the beginning of the procession. Graham Smith had been collecting drinks and placards for demonstrators at the main site of the protest when he was detained by police on the Strand at about 7.30am.

Up to 2,000 people gathered in Trafalgar Square beneath a statue of Charles I, who was executed in 1649, as they chanted and held yellow placards reading "not my king". One

‘Up to 2,000 people gathered in Trafalgar Square.’

sign read: “Don’t you think this is a bit silly?” Peter Tatchell, the human rights campaigner, tweeted a video showing a large barrier erected in front of the protesters to shield them from the royal couple during the procession. “This is not a free country when we do not have the right to freely protest,” he said.

In his oath, the king promised to govern the UK and the 15 Commonwealth countries where he is also head of state according to the law, and to “cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed”.

But in an acknowledgment the palace and Church of England had misjudged the public mood, there was a last-minute change to the wording of the controversial homage of the people, which had been included for the first time in the ceremony, but which the king’s friend Jonathan Dimbleby said he would find “abhorrent”.

Rather than calling on “all persons of goodwill” in the abbey and at home watching on television to swear to “pay true homage ... to their undoubted king”, Welby changed the wording to stress it was a voluntary and personal act.

“I now invite those who wish to offer their support to do so, with a moment of private reflection, by joining in saying ‘God save King Charles’ at the end or, for those with the words before them, to recite them in full,” he said. There was a small moment of

hesitancy as Welby placed the crown on the king’s head, the archbishop checking the crown, which weighs 2.25kg (5lb), was securely placed before letting go.

The Prince of Wales bowed and kissed his father after paying the “homage of royal blood”, in which he declared himself “your liege man of life and limb”. “Thank you, William,” the king appeared to say.

The king’s younger son, Prince Harry, attended the ceremony alone, without his wife, Meghan, and children, Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet. It is the first time the prince has been seen with the royal family since the publication of his autobiography *Spare* earlier this year, in which he was highly critical of his father, stepmother and brother.

He was seated two rows behind his brother, between Jack Brooksbank, the husband of his cousin Princess Eugenie, and Princess Alexandra, a first cousin of Elizabeth II.

‘Prince Harry attended the ceremony alone, without his wife’

The archbishop said in his sermon that the ceremony was to “crown a king to serve”, and paid tribute both to the king’s lifetime of service and that of many of those present at the ceremony, who included members of community organisations, the armed forces and the emergency services.

For the first time at a coronation ceremony, the newly crowned king was greeted as he left the abbey

‘She would be known as Queen Camilla.’

by representatives of Jewish, Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Buddhist communities, who said they “[united] ... in thanksgiving and in service with you for the common good”.

Though ancient, the coronation ceremony has no legal or constitutional significance, and Charles has been king since the death of his mother last September. Nonetheless, the symbolic ritual was highly significant for a man who, at 74, has been heir to the throne since the age of three.

It also cemented the extraordinary journey of the woman he married in 2005, after the first marriages of both ended in divorce. From youthful royal girlfriend to vilified mistress to Duchess of Cornwall to queen consort – after her coronation, she would be known as Queen Camilla, Buckingham Palace said.

After they returned to Buckingham Palace, Charles and Camilla – joined by family members including the Prince and Princess of Wales, Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, and Princess Anne – stepped out into the rain and greeted the crowds below before watching a scaled-back flypast.



Prince Harry talks with Princess Anne before the ceremony.



King Charles III arrives for the coronation ceremony.

Vladimir Putin claims landslide Russian election victory

‘War in Ukraine and strengthening military will be my main tasks.’

by The Guardian

Vladimir Putin has claimed a landslide victory in Russia's presidential vote, this was as thousands in the country and around the world protested against his deepening dictatorship, the war in Ukraine and a stage-managed election that could have only one winner.

In a vote denounced by the United States as "obviously not free nor fair", Putin won 87% of the vote, according to exit polling published by the state-run Russian Public Opinion Research Center and the Public Opinion Foundation.

In a speech at his campaign headquarters on Sunday evening, Putin brushed off western criticism of the elections, telling his supporters it was "expected".

"What did you want, for them to applaud us? They're fighting with us in an armed conflict ... their goal is to contain our development. Of course they're ready to say anything," he said.

The war was front and centre in his victory speech, as Putin claimed he was securing the border from recent raids by pro-Ukrainian military units and said that his main tasks as president would be the war in Ukraine

"strengthening defence capacity and the military".

Asked about the potential for a direct conflict with Nato, he said: "I think that everything is possible in the modern world ... everyone understands that this would be one step from a full-scale third world war. I don't think that anyone is interested in that."

He also responded for the first time to the death of Alexei Navalny, claiming he had given approval to exchange the Kremlin critic for Russian prisoners in the west shortly before his death. "Unfortunately, what happened happened," he said. "I agreed under one condition: we swap him, and he doesn't come back. But that's life."

After counting 75% of the votes, Russia's electoral commission said



President Biden photographed at a speech



Putin alongside his fellow election candidates.

‘The elections are obviously not free nor fair.’

Putin was leading with 87.14% of the vote. In second place was the Communist party candidate, Nikolai Kharitonov.

The government claimed turnout was the highest in history at 74% of the electorate. Putin's previous highest result came in 2018, when he purported to earn 76.7% of the vote with a 67.5% turnout.

As Putin sought a public mandate for his war in Ukraine and a fifth presidential term, the Kremlin's electoral machine sought to boost his share of the vote and turnout to near farcical levels, posting results that used to appear only in Russia's most despotic regions such as Chechnya.

In the face of Putin's predictable victory, Russia's embattled opposition sought to put together its own show of strength. Long queues formed at several polling stations in Moscow and other Russian cities as people took up a call from Navalny's widow to head to the polls at noon on Sunday.

At an appearance at the Russian embassy in Berlin, Yulia Navalnaya urged her supporters to appear en masse in the symbolic show of strength, labelled "noon against Putin". Her husband endorsed the plan before he died suddenly in an Arctic prison a month ago.

Navalnaya was greeted with huge applause and chants from voters and thanked people for turning up to honour her husband. "You give me hope that everything is not in vain, that we will still fight," she said in a

post on Sunday. She said she had written "Navalny" on her ballot paper.

The elections were quickly criticised by western countries. The US national security council spokesperson, John Kirby, said: "The elections are obviously not free nor fair given how Mr Putin has imprisoned political opponents and prevented others from running against him."

The Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, in an address on Sunday evening, said Putin had become "addicted to power".

"This imitation of 'elections' has no legitimacy and cannot have any," he said. "This person must end up in the dock in The Hague. This is what we must ensure, anyone in the world who values life and decency."

‘The elections are obviously not free nor fair.’

The German foreign ministry wrote in a post on X that the "pseudo-election in #Russia is neither free nor fair, the result will surprise nobody. Putin's rule is authoritarian, he relies on censorship, repression & violence. The 'election' in the occupied territories of #Ukraine is null and void & another breach of international law."

Navalny's team called on voters to spoil their ballot papers, write "Alexei Navalny" across the voting slip or vote for one of the three candidates standing against Putin, though the opposition regards them as Kremlin "puppets".

Reports from the ground suggested that queues suddenly formed at

numerous polling stations across Russia's big cities as the clock struck midday.

Leonid Volkov, a Navalny aide who was attacked by an unknown assailant with a hammer in Vilnius last week, said several thousand queues had formed at midday at polling stations across the country.

Ruslan Shaveddinov of Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation said: "We showed ourselves, all of Russia and the whole world that Putin is not Russia, that Putin has seized power in Russia."

En route to Putin's win, Russia disqualified anti-war candidates, launched an unparalleled get-out-the-vote campaign targeted at state workers, and spent more than £1bn on a propaganda drive. This was according to leaked documents shared with the Guardian.

Those who spoiled ballots were "bastards."

The Russian leader has faced no meaningful contest after the authorities barred two candidates who had voiced their opposition to the war in Ukraine. Three other politicians running in the election did not directly question Putin's authority and their participation was meant to add an air of legitimacy to the race.

Long queues also formed at noon in places popular among Russian émigrés such as Berlin, Yerevan in Armenia, London and the Thai island of Phuket. Hundreds of thousands of Russians are estimated to have left the country since the start of the

Protesters threatened with 5 years in prison.

invasion of Ukraine more than two years ago.

"This action was Navalny's last wish. We just had to come today at noon," said Dmitry, a Russian voter who moved to Phuket shortly after the start of the war in Ukraine. He asked for his last name to be withheld for fear of repercussions.

The German broadcaster Deutsche Welle estimated that more than 2,000 voters turned up for the midday protest outside the Russian embassy in Berlin.

On Friday Russian prosecutors threatened any voters who took part in the "noon against Putin" action with five years in prison. In the southern city of Kazan, police detained more than 20 voters who had joined the protest, according to the independent rights monitor OVD-Info. Arrests were also reported in Moscow and St Petersburg.

Russians had made individual acts of protest, including pouring dye into ballot boxes and arson attacks at polling stations, in the preceding days.

Ella Pamfilova, Russia's election commissioner, said those who spoiled ballots were "bastards", and the former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev said those responsible could face treason sentences of 20 years. Russia's interior ministry said it had filed 155 administrative charges and opened 61 criminal cases during the elections, including 21 cases of obstructing voters' rights.

'Putin has imprisoned political opponents.'

Stanislav Andreychuk, a co-chair of the Golos independent election watchdog, said the pressure on voters from law enforcement had reached absurd levels.

"It's the first time in my life that I've seen such absurdities and I've been observing elections for 20 years," Andreychuk wrote on Telegram, referring to the actions of police who he said were checking ballots before they were cast.

Under constitutional changes that he orchestrated in 2020, Putin is eligible to seek two more six-year terms after his latest expires next year, potentially allowing him to remain in power until 2036.

By 2029 his tenure will have surpassed Joseph Stalin, who ruled the Soviet Union for 29 years, making Putin the country's longest-serving leader since the Russian empire.



A photograph of Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy



A photograph of the Russian Flag

