The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# News From Russia: What you Missed Over the Weekend

September 25, 2017



**Minister of Foreign Affairs / Flickr (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)**

### Navalny campaign

Opposition politician Alexei Navalny took his campaign to Russia's Far East, with rallies in Khabarovsk and Vladivostok. His team said up to 3,000 people attended the Vladivostok rally, but the Mayor's Office put the count at 700, claiming most were "underage children."

**Embed:**

> в Хабаровске Навальному придётся выступать перед пустой площадью pic.twitter.com/U3fT52hFXf
>
> — Feldman (@EvgenyFeldman) September 24, 2017

The chief editor of the local Sib.fm website resigned, claiming he was forced to delete coverage of the Navalny rallies.

### Christian State

The head of the fundamentalist "Christian State - Holy Rus" the group believed to be behind the arson attacks opposing the controversial Tsar Nicholas II biopic, has been placed under arrest until Nov. 22.

The court suspected Kalinin may continue criminal activities, exert pressure on witnesses, or could pose a flight risk if he was on the loose.

### Tired of Merkel

After German Chancellor Angela Merkel won Sunday's election by the smallest share of the vote since the 1940s, Russian senator Alexei Pushkov attributed the result to "a syndrome of fatigue with Merkel."

"After four consecutive terms, some are feeling irritation and want to see a new face," he said.

### Nuclear Comments

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Sunday that North Korea's nuclear program is deterring the United States from launching a preemptive strike on the rogue Asian country because Washington D.C. knows Pyongyang may respond.

The United States, he added, invaded Iraq in 2003 "solely because they had 100 percent information that there were no weapons of mass destruction left there."

### Syria death

A senior Russian army general was killed by mortar fire alongside a translator in northeastern Syria on Saturday. The Defense Ministry confirmed Lieutenant General Valery Asapov's death near the city of Deir Ezzor after accusing the elite U.S. forces of "feeling absolutely safe" inside Islamic State territory in the area.

**Embed:**

> Killing such high-profile figure means #ISIS had precise Intel on where he was based @ the moment,#Moscow to investigate how it was possible
>
> — Maxim A. Suchkov (@MSuchkov_ALM) September 24, 2017

Asapov's death is the 38th officially confirmed military casualty two years since Moscow

joined the war in Syria. The general reportedly commanded an army corps unit in eastern Ukraine under the nom-de-guerre "Primakov."

### Change of guards

U.S. Ambassador to Russia, John Tefft, will leave Moscow in a week, he said in a video interview published Saturday. His successor, John Huntsman, is expected to arrive in early October.

### Gruesome find

Police discovered the body of Viktor Tolmachyov, a famous Soviet ice-hockey goalie, a month and a half months after his death. Tolmachyov was reportedly stabbed by his daughter.

### Ukraine chants

A few hundred people in St. Petersburg protested the war in Ukraine with same chants as demonstrations that toppled Yanukovych. Around 200 people carrying Ukrainian flags and blue-and-yellow balloons marched against the war on Sunday.

**Embed:**

> In #StPetersburg, #Russia, ~200 residents joined a #protest today in support of peace in #Ukraine & against #Putin's policies: pic.twitter.com/KxUn1mzN8L
>
> — Alex Kokcharov (@AlexKokcharov) September 24, 2017

### Say cheese

Residents of Stavropol lined up over the weekend to taste part of a giant cheesecake prepared in honor of City Day. The dessert was designed to feed up to 40,000 people and, at 4.2 tons, is the largest in the world, according to Russian media.

### Anti-capitalism rally

Forty-one people were detained for "disturbance of the peace" at an unauthorized demonstration titled "Anti-Capitalism" in Moscow on Saturday.

Most were released, but six members of the National Bolshevik Party will face trial, including leader Eduard Limonov, who served half a four-year prison term weapons possession, and Sergei Udaltsov, recently released after serving a sentence of 4 and a half years for his role in the opposition's May 6, 2012 demonstrations.

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