The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 02, 2017



Susana Vera / Reuters

Syria death

A colonel in the Russian army, Valery Fedyanin, has died of wounds sustained in Syria, the Russian Defense Ministry announced Sunday.

Since Russia began its campaign in Syria in 2015, the military says 38 personnel have been killed. Unofficial estimates put the figure higher.

Fedyanin was reportedly wounded by mortar fire which killed Russian general Valery Asapov a week earlier.

Zapad aftermath

The Defense Ministry denied Ukrainian allegations this weekend that Russian troops staging the major Zapad 2017 war games last month on NATO's eastern border remained in Belarus.

Ukrainian Chief of General Staff Viktor Muzhenko told Reuters Sept. 29 that Moscow had "lied about how many of its soldiers" were in Belarus and had withdrawn only a few units.

"Russian troops which took part in the joint strategic exercises, Zapad 2017, they all returned to their permanent bases," the Defense Ministry said.

Catalonia 'hypocrisy'

A senior Russian official on Sunday slammed Western governments for failing to condemn Spain's violent suppression of an independence vote in Catalonia Sunday.

"They called on [former Ukrainian president Viktor] Yanukovych with all their might to refrain from using force...we see here [in Catalonia] it's exactly the opposite," Andrei Klimov, deputy chairman of the international affairs committee in the Federation Council, was cited as saying in Russian media.

"Not for the first time I see how the West is cynical and hypocritical."

Border skirmish

A Russian border guard was reportedly killed Sunday during a battle with suspected militants in Kursk in western Russia. The Federal Security Service (FSB) did not comment on the incident.

A source told the state-run TASS news agency that a group of border guards were inspecting a shed when armed men hiding inside opened fire, killing a dog handler. Three gunmen, alleged to be North Caucasus militants returning from battle in Syria, were killed.

Censorship rally

Twenty-two demonstrators, including four journalists, were detained at Google's offices in Moscow, during a rally against the internet giant's collision with Russian authorities.

Alexander Rastorguyev, coordinator of the Artpodgotovka channel hosted by opposition figure Vyacheslav Maltsev, said the demonstrators did not have signs and were not chanting.

OVD-info, the police-monitoring group, said most of the protesters were being released following the rally against YouTube censorship.

RT under U.S. pressure

Margarita Simonyan, editor-in-chief of the state-run RT news channel said it may have to leave the United States over demands to register the outlet as a foreign agent.

The U.S. Justice Department asked a company that supplies services to the American affiliation of RT last month to register as a foreign agent.

"They are virtually forcing us out of the country, they are putting us under such conditions now that we can't work," she said. "That's their much-praised freedom of speech for you," Simonyan said.

Double agent honored

A Russian art gallery has unveiled a portrait of British double-agent Kim Philby while the state history society has opened an exhibit named after the spy.

Honoring Philby is reportedly part of a Kremlin campaign to rebrand the image of the KGB, the Soviet-era intelligence agency where President Vladimir Putin worked.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/10/02/news-from-russia-what-you-missed-over-the-weekend-sep-29-30-a59129