The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News from Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 30, 2017



novayagazeta / Youtube

Purges Remembered

Russian human rights organization Memorial on Sunday held its annual vigil for the victims of Stalinist purges on Lubyanka Square in front of the headquarters of Russia's security services, the FSB.

Activists read the names, professions, and birth and death dates of victims of Soviet leader Josef Stalin.

President Vladimir Putin said he would take part in a meeting on Monday of the Presidential Council on Human Rights to discuss ways of commemorating the victims of political repression.

Common Ground

U.S. Ambassador to Russia John Huntsman hosted his first reception at the embassy residence Spaso House on Saturday, featuring the American jazz quartet Arturo O'Farrill, whose bass player is a New York-based Russian emigre.

"For the whole world, it's better for security when Russia and the U.S. find common ground," Huntsman said.

Stalin Shirt

Seeing a Stalin t-shirt for sale, former reality television host and presidential candidate Ksenia Sobchak commented on her Instagram account with 5.3 million followers, that Stalin was "unambiguously a bloody executor and criminal."

Embed:

A post shared by Ксения Собчак (@xenia_sobchak) on Oct 29, 2017 at 2:33am PDT

"Stalin destroyed the Russian world, we have not managed to restore [it]" and "did everything to throw the country back 100 years," Sobchak wrote.

Navalny Campaign

Opposition leader and presidential hopeful Alexei Navalny's Moscow campaign manager Nikolai Lyaskin was detained alongside volunteers on Sunday for organizing an unauthorized campaign event. He was released three hours later.

Embed:

> Николая @nlyaskin отпустили из ОВД, без протокола.
> pic.twitter.com/4QLGqvetDl
>
> — Штаб Навального МСК (@teamnavalny_mos) October 29, 2017

Navalny has been barred from running in the 2018 Russian presidential elections due to a criminal conviction his supporters say is politically motivated.

Helicopter Crash

The wreckage of a Russian helicopter that crashed off the coast of Svalbard in Norway Oct. 26 was found on Sunday. All eight passengers and crew are presumed dead.

Justice Served

A federal grand jury in Washington, D.C. has approved the first charges in the investigation led by special counsel Robert Mueller into Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. elections.

Although the charges are still sealed, an indictment could be served as early as Monday, possibly against President Donald Trump's former campaign chair, Paul Manafort or other Trump associates.

Terrorism Blocked

Pavel Durov, creator of the popular encrypted messaging app Telegram, said this weekend on his Telegram channel his company had blocked 8,500 channels related to terrorism in October.

Earlier this month, Telegram was fined 800,000 rubles ($14,000) for refusing to provide the Federal Security Service with encryption keys.

Sobchak in 2024

Stanislav Belkovsky, director of the National Strategy Institute and a regular guest on the independent Ekho Moskvy radio station will join the presidential campaign of socialite and former reality television host Ksenia Sobchak as a chief political consultant.

Sobchak's bid for the presidency next March, he said, is a trial run for the 2024 ballot.

Energy Talks

President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Erdogan discussed joint energy projects and in the conflict Syria on Saturday. Earlier, Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said Turkey was prepared to drop its recently-imposed restrictions on grain imports from Russia.

Lessons Backfire

A teacher in Ivanovo east of Moscow has been fired for giving an "educational talk" warning students to "sit quietly at their desks" and avoid rallies in support of opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

Ivanovo city administrator Yelena Yuferova said the "talks" were a violation of the law on education and professional ethics.

Rain or Snow

Despite being barred from campaigning due to previous criminal charges, Navalny continued to meet with supporters outside Moscow this weekend.

Some 300 people came to hear him speak in Kursk, and 250 turned out in Tambov despite the lack of a permit.

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