

News From Russia: What you Missed Over the Weekend

November 20, 2017



Brendan McDermid / Reuters

Syria Veto

Russia vetoed the extension of an investigation into the use of chemical weapons in Syria for a third time at a UN Security Council meeting on Saturday. The move was met with criticism from the US Ambassador to the UN.

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By using the veto to kill a mechanism in Syria that holds users of chemical weapons accountable, Russia proves they cannot be trusted or credible as we work towards a political solution in Syria.

— Nikki Haley (@nikkihaley) [November 16, 2017](#)

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in turn [accused](#) Haley of “lying” and “fake diplomacy” during the negotiations.

Backdoor Meeting

Deputy chair of the Bank of Russia Alexander Torshin [reportedly attempted](#) to set up a meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and then-presidential candidate Donald Trump in May 2016. Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law, at that time a campaign aide, rejected the proposal.

Selling Out

Nearly 160,000 tickets for the World Cup next year — 98 percent of the quota for that phase — [sold out](#) by Friday, 24 hours after going on sale. Fifty-one percent were [purchased](#) by Russians and 49 percent by fans from other countries, according to FIFA. The remaining tickets in the phase will be [available](#) only for disabled persons.

Flight Demand

A surge in demand for flights to Russian cities hosting the World Cup has reportedly [forced](#) the cost of tickets to rise between 5 and 40 percent for some destinations. Earlier this year, Russian state airline Aeroflot [hiked](#) prices to host cities by as much as six times the normal price, but doubled down following an outcry.

Lost Dividends

Rosneftgaz, the government holding for energy giants Rosneft and Gazprom posted [losses](#) on the [privatization](#) of 19.5 percent of its shares in September and may not pay out dividends this year.

The 167–170 billion ruble (\$2.82–2.87 bln) loss after the 692.4 bln sale was attributed to sale costs and overvaluation of the stock.

Moscow Shootout

Six bodyguards were [injured](#) in a shoot-out between a private security company and Russian National Guardsmen at the star-studded birthday celebration of alleged underworld boss Dmitry "Pavlik" Pavlov.

The dispute [began](#) over an improperly parked black Mercedes belonging to Russian billionaire Gavriil Yusvayev, police told the RBC business daily.

Journalist Attacked

Journalist Maria Semenyachenko working for the pro-Kremlin REN TV network said she was [attacked](#) by a guard at a firing range when she went to report a fire there.

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Semenyachenko filed a police complaint alleging a guard hit her in the face and broke her cell phone.

Tree-Chopping Rally

The coordinator of opposition leader Alexei Navalny's campaign in Izhevsk was [charged](#) this weekend with illegally chopping down a tree to prepare a site for a Nov. 10 rally.

Sergei Urban denied the charges, saying the tree had already been downed before the rally, and activists just moved it out of the way.

Navalny Campaign

A businessman in the Siberian town of Irkutsk businessman, Dmitry Tomachyov, was [jailed](#) Saturday for 5 days for renting space in his shopping center to opposition leader Alexei Navalny.

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