

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

November 27, 2017



Ramzan Kadyrov (Mikhail Metzel / TASS)

Kadyrov Departure

Chechen strongman Ramzan Kadyrov [said](#) on state television on Sunday that it was “his dream” to leave his post but that it was up to the Kremlin whether he stands down.

The leader of the north Caucasus republic also said that the Chechens convicted of killing opposition leader Boris Nemtsov in 2015 were innocent.

Sanctions Factor

Russian state economist Tatyana Golikova [said](#) on state television Sunday that the 2018 budget would take into account possible new Western sanctions.

Finance Minister Anton Siluanov said on the same program that freezing gold reserves would amount to “financial terrorism” and that lowering the deficit [was](#) a “deterrence” against

sanctions.

'Fake' Gays

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov [said](#) on state television on Sunday that human rights groups had "fabricated" allegations that gay men in Chechnya were being persecuted to "earn money." Rights groups this year have accused Chechen authorities of detaining gay men in the republic in special prisons.

Rights Appeal

At a human rights conference on Sunday, Lev Ponomarev who leads the For Human Rights group, [said](#) the Soviet-era dissident slogan "Respect the Constitution" was still valid today because Russian law-enforcement still violates the rule of law.

Rights advocates also [called](#) for the police Anti-Extremism Center to be shuttered, saying the anti-terror group targets opponents of the Kremlin.

Gamers Revealed

The Russian Security Council is [moving](#) to identify online gamers and social media users by their cell phones.

Officials have ordered that the same anti-terror law that will identify messenger apps users starting January 2018 should be used to identify gamers.

Apple Orthodoxy

Russian religious leader Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk [says](#) the American company Apple incorporated religious ideology into the design of their popular tech products.

Apple engineers use the term "icon" because "every icon is a kind of window to another world," he said.

Whistleblower Reveal

Former Russian lab head Grigory Rodchenkov [says](#) he has evidence that dozens of Russian footballers, including international players, took part in the state-sponsored doping system.

His lawyer said FIFA has yet to contact Rodchenkov and that his allegations will be revealed this week at the World Cup draw.

FBI Failure

The FBI [failed](#) to notify current and former U.S. officials that their personal Gmail accounts were targeted by the Fancy Bears hackers group, said to be aligned with the Russian government.

Foreign Agents

President Vladimir Putin on Saturday [signed](#) amendments into law that could see international media organizations branded “foreign agents.”

Growth Candidate

The pro-business Party of Growth [nominated](#) Boris Titov to run for president in the March 2018 elections.

Analysts say Titov may divide the already crowded opposition field even further, although he may remove his candidacy to support Putin at a later stage.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2017/11/27/what-you-missed-over-the-weekend-59696-a59696>