

News From Russia: What you Missed Over the Weekend

January 29, 2018



Alexei Navalny **Evgeny Feldman**

Passports Annulled

Two gay Russian men whose marriage was accidentally [recognized](#) in Moscow last week have had their passports annulled and the decision revoked.

Russian authorities first [pulled](#) the passports of Eugene Voitsekovsky and Paul Stotsko after they returned from their honeymoon in Copenhagen, then fined them with "intentional damage to their passports."

Navalny Detained

Police [detained](#) opposition leader and presidential hopeful Alexei Navalny at a demonstration on Sunday against the upcoming March 18 presidential elections from which Navalny himself

is barred.

Navalny was [released](#) later in the evening pending trial on charges of organizing an unauthorized rally.

Election Protests

Hundreds of protesters who answered Navalny's call for an election boycott were [detained](#) at rallies across Russia on Sunday.

Related article: [Hundreds Detained at Navalny's Boycott Rallies Across Russia — Live Blog](#)

While police grabbed fewer demonstrators in Moscow (16) and St. Petersburg (19), in Ufa, they detained 66; Volgograd, 65; Cheboksary, 51, Kemerovo, 31, and Murmansk, 23, the OVD-Info police-monitoring group [reported](#).

While most of the detained protesters were [released](#) by Sunday evening, many will have to appear in court to face charges of demonstrating without a permit.

Satire Cancelled

The Pioneer Cinema, which [screened](#) the "Death of Stalin" satire film last week after the government ruled to pull the film's screening license, was [forced](#) to announce Jan. 26 that the film would no longer be shown and that sold tickets would be returned.

"For additional questions, we request that you turn to the Russian Ministry of Culture," Pioneer said in reference to the ban.

Leningrad Blockade

A wave of events was held across Russia on Jan. 27 to commemorate the anniversary of the ending of the siege of Leningrad during World War II.

Embed:

В России в День снятия блокады Ленинграда проходит акция "Открытка памяти" <https://t.co/yerhA6Sa5Z> pic.twitter.com/X854VX7ev9

— РИА Новости (@rianru) [January 27, 2018](#)

The Siege of Leningrad, which started with the Nazi encirclement of the city in September 1941, lasted nearly 900 days and ended on Jan. 27, 1944, after an estimated 400,000 to 1.5

million people died of starvation, winter cold and shelling.

Sobchak in Chechnya

Presidential candidate Ksenia Sobchak [visited](#) Chechnya on Jan. 28 to appeal for the release of Memorial human rights center director Oyuba Titiyev, who was [detained](#) earlier this month on drug charges that civic groups say are fabricated.

Alvi Karimov, the press secretary of Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, said the Chechen government did not share Sobchak's view that Titiyev should be released and said that her demand contradicted previous statements that she made in support of the rule of law.

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Putin Poke

Randy Newman, America's best known musical satirist, [won](#) a Grammy Award on Sunday for arranging the vocals and lyrics in a humorous song about Putin.

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His catchy lyrics about the Russian leader include: "He can drive his giant tractor/Across the Trans-Siberian plain/He can power a nuclear reactor/With the left side of his brain."

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