

News From Russia: What you Missed Over the Weekend

February 19, 2018



Artyom Geodakyan / TASS

More sanctions?

U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and former CEO of the oil and gas company Exxon [said](#) in an interview on Sunday that he had a friendship with Vladimir Putin for 18 years. Tillerson said the relationship was based on: "What could I do to be successful on behalf of my shareholders, how Russia could succeed."

On sanctions, the secretary of state told the popular television program, 60 Minutes: "We've taken steps that have already prevented a number of Russian military sales" and that "we are evaluating additional individuals for possible sanctioning."

Doping violations

A Russian athlete suspected of doping has reportedly left the Olympic Games in Pyeongchang.

The Reuters news agency [reported](#) that Alexander Krushelnitsky, who won a bronze medal in curling, is suspected of testing positive for meldonium, a banned substance.

Earlier, the press secretary for the Russian delegation at the Olympic Games in Pyeongchang [said](#) he had received a notice from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) over possible violations of anti-doping rules.

Church shooting

Five people were [killed](#) near a church on Saturday in Dagestan, a predominantly Muslim region of Russia that has been plagued by terrorist attacks.

An unidentified assailant opened fire as the victims were returning from a service at a cathedral in Kizlyar. Police reportedly arrived at the scene and shot dead the gunman.

Bronze medal

Russian Olympic athlete Ilya Burov [won](#) a bronze medal in freestyle skiing on Sunday at the Winter Games in South Korea.

Environmental action

Some 3,000 people [turned](#) out to a protest on Sunday against a metals factory near a residential area in the eastern Russian Urals city of Chelyabinsk.

Burning cathedral

Russians in the provincial town of Nikola-Lenivets southwest of Moscow, [celebrated](#) Maslenitsa Friday to mark the beginning of Lent.

As part of the celebrations, a 30-meter effigy of a cathedral was set on fire. The artist Nikolai Polissky [described](#) the structure as “not a gothic cathedral but a great pyre.”

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