

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Vladimir Putin **Kremlin Press Service**

Landslide elections

Russian President Vladimir Putin won a landslide re-election victory on Sunday, securing 76.66 percent of the votes with nearly all the ballots [counted](#) as of early Monday.

In a rally marking the four-year anniversary of the annexation of Crimea in central Moscow that coincided with Election Day, Putin [appealed](#) for supporters to “make a breakthrough” in the “very difficult, complex tasks ahead.”

Sobchak cash

Opposition candidate Ksenia Sobchak, who gained an estimated 1.67 percent of votes in the elections, made a surprise appearance at opposition leader Alexei Navalny’s headquarters, offering for the opposition politician to [align](#) with her newly-formed political party.

“You’ve become the champion of hypocrisy,” Navalny [charged](#) during their conversation, accusing Sobchak of being offered “tons of cash” to enter the presidential race as a candidate.

Car poisoning

Russia’s former double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter may have been exposed to a deadly nerve agent through their car's ventilation system, affecting up to 38 people in the English city of Salisbury, intelligence sources [told](#) the U.S. television channel ABC news.

Officials from the world's chemical weapons watchdog will arrive in Britain on Monday to investigate the samples used in the attack, Britain's foreign ministry [said](#). _

MH17 suicide

A Ukrainian fighter pilot who was temporarily [blamed](#) by Russia for the 2014 downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine has committed suicide in southern Ukraine.

Ukrainian media [cited](#) family members as saying that Vladislav Voloshin, 29, was depressed and had expressed “ominous intentions” before shooting himself at his home.

Lifetime presidency

Putin joked “am I going to sit here for 100 years?” when [asked](#) about whether he planned to seek another presidential term in 2030 at a post-election press conference.

His perennial challenger Vladimir Zhirinovsky [suggested](#) that Russia had held its last presidential elections in 2018 and would emulate China’s latest move to scrap presidential term limits, effectively introducing lifetime tenure. _

Cabinet reshuffle

Putin hinted at a shakeup in his cabinet at the start of his fourth term in office, saying “all the changes will be announced after the inauguration.”

“For now, I will think about what to do and how to do it,” he [told](#) reporters late Sunday.

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