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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Danil Aikin / TASS

Deadly fire

At least 55 people were killed and more dozens injured on Sunday when a fire tore through a shopping mall in the Siberian city of Kemerovo.

World Cup demolition

Authorities in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg on Saturday blew up a Soviet-era television tower that was never fully completed ahead of the World Cup this summer.

Protest spreads

Protests continued in Volokolamsk outside Moscow where several hundred people gathered on Saturday to demonstrate against the "Yadrovo" landfill.

Trouble is also brewing in Kolomna in the Moscow region, where residents blocked entry to the "Volovichi" landfill complaining of pungent fumes.

'Idle gossip'

The Russian Embassy in Kabul dismissed a NATO general's claims that it was providing the Taliban with weapons as "idle gossip."

U.S. commanders have said on several occasions over the past year that Russia may be supplying arms to the Taliban although no confirmed evidence has so far been made public.

Flying Skripal accusations

The U.K.'s accusations that Moscow is behind the poisoning of former Russian double agent Sergei Skripal "border on banditry," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with pro-Kremlin television on Sunday.

Trump weighs in

U.S. President Donald Trump is preparing to expel dozens of Russians over Skripal's poisoning, Bloomberg reports.

Party fine

Two footballers on Russia's national team have been fined by the Football Union after being spotted in a bar following a friendly match against Brazil.

In a statement titled "The image of Russia's national team is important," the union said the players had been given time off to see their relatives and that their behavior had "tarnished the reputation" of the team.

Falling ice

A man died in central Voronezh on Sunday after a block of ice fell on him from a roof.

The incident came on the same day that a three-year old in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky was killed by a block of ice that fell from a garage roof. In Podolsk outside Moscow, the body of a 36-year old woman was found with head injuries, with regional authorities saying she was likely killed by falling ice.

Putin makeover

In an interview with the pro-Kremlin NTV channel on Sunday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that Russians would see a "new Putin" during his fourth term.

"The new Putin is a symbiosis of the Putin that we know, and rally around, and the Putin who understands what we need in the future."

Putin is also planning staff changes in government and the presidential administration, Peskov added.

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