

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

April 16, 2018



Journalist Maxim Borodin [Facebook](#)

Suspicious death

A Russian journalist who wrote about private military contractor deaths in Syria has died in suspicious circumstances in the city of Yekaterinburg.

Maxim Borodin went into a coma after falling out of the fifth floor of a building last week, his colleagues at the Yekaterinburg-based Ria Novy Den news agency [said](#).

Angry response

Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova criticized U.S., British and French airstrikes against Syria last week as "abnormal" and coming "just at the moment when it had a chance for a peaceful future."

Russian senator Konstantin Kosachev [said](#) the Western strikes intended to "completely

derail” an international chemical watchdog fact-finding mission into a suspected chemical attack from earlier this month.

New sanctions

The U.S. ambassador to the UN has said that Washington is preparing to announce new sanctions against Russia on Monday for its support of Syria.

The Kremlin released a statement over the weekend saying that further Western strikes against Syria “will inevitably lead to chaos in international relations.”

Foreign poison

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Saturday that the nerve agent used to poison former Russian spy Sergei Skripal in Britain could have been the BZ substance, which had allegedly never been produced in the Soviet Union or Russia.

Citing a report from a laboratory based in Switzerland that had analyzed a sample of the poison, Lavrov said the evidence suggested that the nerve agent that was used could have come from the U.S. or British arsenal.

Kremlin earnings

President Vladimir Putin earned 18.73 million rubles (\$302,000) in 2017, twice as much as in 2016, when he earned 8.6 million rubles (\$140,000), according to the latest income declaration [published](#) by the Kremlin.

The modest earnings of the Kremlin administration and cabinet of ministers members have been supplanted by their wives, including the 200.4 million rubles earned by the wife of Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov against his 14.3 million rubles, according to analysis [published](#) by the MBKh news website.

Trash protests

Residents of nine towns around Moscow took to the streets against local landfills that they argue emit poisonous gases, the Novaya Gazeta investigative newspaper [reported](#).

Approximately 10 demonstrators were [detained](#) in Volokolamsk for blocking the entrance into the Yadrovo landfill, which local residents blame for poisoning scores of children last month.

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