

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 01, 2018



S-300 missile system. Sergey Bobylev / TASS.

Killed in action

Russia has lost 112 servicemen since embarking on its campaign in support of the Syrian regime on Sept. 30, 2015, the former head of the Aerospace Forces has said.

Current Federation Council defense committee chairman Viktor Bondarev [compared](#) the figures to the 4,800 servicemen who were killed in the first three years of the 1979–1989 Soviet–Afghan war and the 2,300 soldiers the United States lost in the first three years of the Iraq war.

Nobel peace

Russia's historical and civil rights society Memorial, which monitors human rights and publicizes lists of the victims of the Soviet Union, and the investigative newspaper Novaya

Gazeta are believed to have been nominated for the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Nobel Peace Prize will be announced in Oslo on Friday, Oct. 5, at noon Moscow time.

Missile advances

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Moscow had started delivering the S-300 surface-to-air missile system to Syria and accused Western powers of trying to undermine UN-led efforts to end the seven-year conflict.

Moscow had accused Israel earlier of indirectly causing the downing of a Russian military jet in Syria, prompting the military to promise to send the missile system to Syria in two weeks.

Sentsov update

Russia's Federal Prison Service has [released](#) a photograph of jailed Ukrainian filmmaker Oleg Sentsov in the run-up to the 140th day of his hunger strike, saying he had been transferred to a hospital and his treatment "corrected."

Novaya Gazeta later cited a source familiar with Russian-Ukrainian prisoner exchange negotiations as [saying](#) that Moscow is ready to trade Sentsov to the U.S. for drug trafficking convict Konstantin Yaroshenko, arms smuggling prisoner Viktor Bout and suspected foreign agent Maria Butina.

Prison torture

New bodycam footage of guards abusing prisoners by having them dance naked with each other has been [published](#) in the Urals region of Omsk, where the security inspector was jailed for abuse and the head of the prison service fired in late August.

Ex-prisoners of Penal Colony No. 7 depicted in the video dated to December 2015 told the Dozhd TV news channel that they were also electrocuted, suffocated and urinated on.

Haul aboard

Russia's road-and-rail bridge to the annexed Crimean peninsula has officially [opened](#) for truck transit, months after President Vladimir Putin drove one to inaugurate the \$3.6 billion 19-kilometer bridge.

Rail service from 11 cities, including Moscow, St. Petersburg, Novosibirsk and Yekaterinburg, is expected to launch in 2019.

Life coach-in-chief

Alongside the release of an annual calendar depicting him bare-chested and cuddling animals, Putin has been [rendered](#) as a life coach in a recently published satirical British book.

"Be the dictator you've always dreamed of being with this handy guide to life and everyday success inspired by everyone's favorite autocrat," Scottish publisher Canongate [tells](#) readers

of “Vladimir Putin: Life Coach,” authored by Rob Sears.

Landfill concert

St. Petersburg musician Pavel Andreyev staged an unusual performance to draw attention to pollution by playing his composition on a grand piano installed in the middle of a landfill in the Leningrad region.

Andreyev said the idea came after he played a grand piano on a platform drifting on a lake at a natural park, saying “I wanted to speak about the beauty of nature from the opposite side” this time.

Victory bound

Britain’s Lewis Hamilton, of team Mercedes, won the Russian Grand Prix and surged 50 points clear in the Formula One championship with five races remaining.

Mercedes remain unbeaten in Russia, Sunday being their fifth win in Sochi since the Olympic Park circuit first appeared on the calendar in 2014. Hamilton has now won eight races this season, his landmark 70th victory en route to a fifth title.

Includes reporting from Reuters.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2018/10/01/news-from-russia-what-you-missed-over-the-weekend-63033-a63033>