

The Year in Review: 2018 in Photos

December 25, 2018



JANUARY

– Russia’s Culture Ministry bans “The Death of Stalin” two days before it is scheduled to hit Russian cinemas.

– U.S. sanctions target 21 individuals and nine companies over Ukraine and the Treasury releases a “Kremlin list” of Vladimir Putin’s inner circle.

Human rights activist Oyub Titiyev is detained on drug charges in Chechnya.

FEBRUARY

A Russian passenger plane crashes outside Moscow, killing all 71 people on board. Investigators blame human error.

MARCH

- More than 20 countries order dozens of Russian diplomats expelled. Russia retaliates in a tit-for-tat response.

Putin is re-elected in an unsurprising landslide victory.

- Media outlets boycott the State Duma after sexual harassment allegations against lawmaker Leonid Slutsky.

Ex-spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter are poisoned with a nerve agent in Britain.

In Volokolamsk, locals protest a landfill.

Sixty-four people die in a mall fire in Kemerovo, sparking protests against state negligence and corruption.

APRIL

- Russia's state media regulator blocks Telegram after it refuses to give security services backdoor access, but ends up taking down scores of other sites too.

Telegram calls on its users to throw paper planes out their windows in protest (and install VPNs).

MAY

The 19-kilometer Kerch Bridge linking the Russian mainland to Crimea is completed.

Russian journalist Arkady Babchenko shocks friend and foe when he reappears at a press conference after faking his own murder.

Protests break out across Russia ahead of Putin's inauguration.

JUNE

Russia successfully hosts first World Cup and defies expectations by progressing into the knockout stages.

- In less well-received news, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announces a plan to raise the retirement age.

JULY

- Twelve Russian intelligence officers are indicted for interfering in the 2016 U.S. election.

- Maria Butina is charged with conspiring against the U.S.

Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin play nice at a long-anticipated summit in Helsinki.

AUGUST

- The U.S. imposes new sanctions on Russia over Skripal.

In a televised address, Putin softens the planned retirement age hike, but only for women.

SEPTEMBER

Russians vote in regional elections, while opposition leader Alexei Navalny stages protests.

Two suspects in the Skripal poisoning case appear on state television, saying they were just tourists.

Journalists uncover the men as being GRU military intelligence officers.

OCTOBER

- Dutch authorities accuse four GRU officers of attempting to hack the OPCW headquarters in The Hague.

Putin signs the pension proposal into law as his ratings fall to their lowest levels since 2013.

NOVEMBER

Tensions escalate between Russia and Ukraine after Russia seizes three navy ships and their crew near Crimea.

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