

# News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Moskva News Agency

## Siege of Leningrad

St. Petersburg staged a military parade to mark the 75th anniversary of one of the longest and deadliest sieges in the history of warfare, the 872-day blockade of Leningrad by Nazi troops.

Over 100 contemporary and Soviet military vehicles as well as 2,500 troops marched through the square in front of the National Hermitage. Later in the day, President Vladimir Putin laid flowers at a memorial cemetery.

## Art heist

Russian landscape painter Arkhip Kuindzhi's 1908 oil painting "Ai-Petri. Crimea" was [stolen](#) from Moscow's Tretyakov Gallery, where it was [displayed](#) as part of his exhibition.

A 31-year-old suspect was later [detained](#) and the painting itself found in the Moscow region,

state media reported early Monday.

## **Clean aluminum**

U.S. President Donald Trump's administration lifted sanctions on aluminum giant Rusal and other Russian firms linked to oligarch Oleg Deripaska, after they had reduced his direct and indirect shareholding stake and severed his control.

Democratic Party-led advocates for keeping the sanctions had argued that Deripaska, an ally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, retained too much control over Rusal, its parent, En+ Group Plc, and power firm JSC EuroSibEnergo to lift sanctions imposed in April.

## **Diplomatic battles**

Russia, China, South Africa and Equatorial Guinea blocked a U.S. push for a UN Security Council statement expressing full support for Venezuela's National Assembly as the country's "only democratically elected institution."

However, Russia failed to stop a UN Security Council meeting on Venezuela that was requested by the U.S. after Washington recognized opposition leader Juan Guaido as the South American country's head of state and urged President Nicolas Maduro to step down.

## **No to intervention**

Russia's ambassador to the United Nations has criticized the U.S. for saying that all options are on the table for Venezuela.

"The U.S. has now stated all options are on the table which is ... dangerous," Vasily Nebenzya told reporters on the sidelines of a UN Security Council meeting. "If it evolves into something more military that is even more regretful. We think it should be avoided at any cost," he said.

## **Deadly blast**

At least one patron [celebrating](#) an anniversary has died and 22 people were [injured](#) in a Saratov region cafe explosion 800 kilometers southeast of Moscow.

Authorities said the blast was caused by a gas leak, and the owner of the Rendezvous Cafe was [detained](#) on suspicion of violating safety procedures.

## **Idlib concerns**

An agreement with Turkey on Syria's Idlib province has not been fully implemented, raising concerns in Moscow and Damascus, Interfax quoted a Kremlin spokesman as saying.

Russia said last week that the situation there was rapidly deteriorating and that it was almost under the full control of Nusra militants as Moscow and Ankara tried to create a de-escalation zone in the region.

## **Stormy weather**

The heaviest snowfall in nearly 70 years has slowed traffic and pedestrians on the streets of Moscow, piling up on pavements as snowplows and workers with shovels cleared the way.

Snowy weather is expected to last through the weekend and until Wednesday.

*Includes reporting from Reuters.*

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