The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Anna Marchenko / TASS

People's servant

A comedian with no political experience raced ahead in Ukraine's presidential election, offering a fresh face to voters fed up with entrenched corruption in a country on the frontline of the West's standoff with Russia.

No candidate is expected to receive more than half the votes, meaning the election would go to a runoff on April 21. Out of a crowded field of 39 candidates, none of the likely winners wants to move Ukraine back into Russia's orbit.

Related article: Comedian Takes Early Lead in Ukraine Presidential Vote – Exit Polls

S7 death

Natalia Fileva, chairwoman and co-owner of Russia's second largest airline S7, died when a

private jet she was in crashed near Frankfurt, the company said.

Fileva, 55, was the major shareholder in S7, a member of global Oneworld airlines alliance, and one of the richest women in Russia, whose wealth was estimated by Forbes at $600 million.

Looming sanctions

The White House has received a package of new sanctions on Russia in retaliation for the 2018 nerve-agent attack on a former Russian spy in Britain, Bloomberg reported.

Officials at the U.S. Treasury and State departments have vetted the sanctions and are awaiting the White House's approval to issue them, Bloomberg cited people familiar with the matter as saying.

Closed Russia

The Open Russia pro-democracy movement has announced its own abolition after two of its members faced prosecution under Russia's law against "undesirable organizations."

Its replacement agency, the All-Russia Non-Governmental Organization "Open Russia," said it plans to pursue registration with the Russian Justice Ministry.

Jailed filmmaker

The Nika awards, the highest cinema prize in Russia, has named director Kirill Serebrennikov — who has been under house arrest for almost two years on embezzlement charges — the country's best director in 2019.

The World War II drama "Voina Anny," or Anna's War, won best film honors, its second major award this year.

Maiden replacement

An Ilyushin Il-112V military transport turboprop completed its maiden flight south of Moscow.

The aircraft, hit by several delays, is designed to replace the Antonov An-26 transport aircraft. The Russian military's An-26 crashed in Syria in March 2018, killing all on board.

Embed:

> Footage of the Ilyushin IL-112V aircraft first flight https://t.co/j33gNIckgB pic.twitter.com/j8WbKZlwHH
>
> — UAC Russia (@UAC_Russia_eng) March 30, 2019

Butina deportation

The U.S. Justice Department has formally asked a judge to deport Maria Butina, who has admitted to working as a Russian agent to infiltrate a gun rights group and make inroads with U.S. conservative activists and Republicans, after she is sentenced later in April.

Machine learning

Russian HR portal SuperJob has developed a neural network enabling headhunters to identify a job applicant's occupation by photographs on their CVs, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

Its creators claim a high accuracy rate — based on a database of 10 million clothing samples — and an ability to match an applicant with one of 500 basic professions.

Includes reporting from Reuters.

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