

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Sergei Bobylev / TASS

Kurdish deal

The Syrian government and the Kurdish-led forces have been holding negotiations with Russian participation, a Syrian Kurdish politician said hours before Syria's army struck a deal with Kurdish forces to redeploy along its border with Turkey.

Syrian state media later reported that the Syrian army has begun deploying its troops to northern battlefronts to confront "Turkish aggression" on Syrian territory. The United States said it will withdraw its remaining 1,000 troops from northern Syria in the face of an expanding Turkish offensive, illustrating Washington's waning influence over events in Syria.

The events represent wins for Russia and Iran, which have backed Assad since 2011 when his violent effort to crush what began as peaceful protests against his family's decades-long rule of Syria exploded into a full-blown civil war.

Gulf mediation

Russia can play a positive role in easing tensions in the Gulf following a spate of attacks in the region, President Vladimir Putin said in comments published Sunday before his first visit to Saudi Arabia in over a decade.

Putin cited good Russian ties with Gulf Arab states and Iran in an interview with Arab broadcasters, but said he had no reliable information about who was behind attacks on Saudi oil facilities on Sept. 14 which stoked tension and rattled oil markets.

Syrian hospital bombings

Russian jets have bombed at least four Syrian hospitals on May 5-6, The New York Times reported, [citing](#) intercepted Russian Aerospace Forces radio recordings, witness accounts and data gathered by plane spotters.

The NYT has distilled months' worth of data into a 12-hour period to paint a "[damning](#)" picture for Russia, a permanent UN Security Council member. The UN's human rights office says more than 50 healthcare facilities have been attacked since the Russian-backed offensive to reclaim one of the last rebel-held areas launched in April.

Grams on hold

The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission [said](#) it has halted a \$1.7 billion unregistered digital token offering by the messaging service Telegram Group Inc and its TON Issuer subsidiary.

Telegram, founded by Russian entrepreneur Pavel Durov, promised to give the coins to buyers when it launched its blockchain by Oct. 31, when the purchasers and the company would be able to sell them into U.S. markets, the SEC said.

UEFA spot

Russia won a place in next year's European Championship finals with a comprehensive 5-0 win over 10-man Cyprus in Nicosia on Sunday.

Russia is the third team to qualify for the 24-team tournament, following Group I rivals Belgium and Italy from Group J.

Includes reporting from Reuters.

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