

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

September 28, 2020



Belarusians took to the streets in support of opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya days after the country's strongman president staged a secret inauguration. **Tut.by / AFP**

Karabakh flare-up

Arch foes Armenia and Azerbaijan were on the brink of all-out conflict Sunday after deadly clashes that claimed at least 24 lives sparked international calls for a halt to fighting.

Related article: [Clashes Between Azerbaijan and Armenia Separatists Leave at Least 23 Dead](#)

France, Germany, Italy and the EU swiftly urged an "immediate ceasefire" to the worst clashes since 2016 in the Armenia-backed breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh, while Russian President Vladimir Putin called for "an end to hostilities."

Muslim Azerbaijan's ally Turkey blamed majority Christian Armenia for the flare-up and promised Baku its "full support."

‘People’s inauguration’

Belarusian police detained around 200 people Sunday as tens of thousands took to the streets in support of opposition leader Svetlana Tikhanovskaya days after the country's strongman president staged a secret inauguration.

Embed:

[#Belarus](#) The best video that shows the scale of the rally in [#Minsk](#) and people's inauguration of [#Tsikhanouskaya](#). Despite brutal detentions, people have gathered yet again. Day 50 and the 8th consecutive Sunday of the protests – the largest and longest ever in Belarus pic.twitter.com/T9HQ4Z4DNS

— Hanna Liubakova (@HannaLiubakova) [September 27, 2020](#)

The opposition movement calling for an end to President Alexander Lukashenko's regime has kept up a wave of large-scale demonstrations since his disputed Aug. 9 election win, with around 100,000 or more people taking to the streets every weekend.

F1 run

Some 30,000 fans attended the Russian Formula One Grand Prix in Sochi, the [highest number](#) of this year’s coronavirus-hit season, as organizers confirmed seven infections in the sport’s [biggest Covid-19 spike](#) so far.

Finnish racer Valtteri Bottas took full advantage of a troubled day for his Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton to claim the ninth win of his career Sunday.

Doping deadline

Athletics' global governing body said Saturday it had given the Russian federation an additional five months to produce a comprehensive plan to fight doping and be reinstated to the sport or face expulsion.

World Athletics had originally given the Russian federation (RUSAF) until the end of this month to come up with the plan but it has now set a new deadline of March 1, 2021.

Longest wildfires

Yakutsk, one of Russia’s coldest cities, has been choking for the past week under [heavy smog](#) brought by dozens of wildfires raging around the city.

The Far East republic of Sakha is experiencing one of its longest wildfire seasons following a record-setting Arctic summer, according to The Siberian Times.

AFP contributed reporting to this article.

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