

# News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Anatoly Malrtsev / TASS

## Mass rollout

Moscow began distributing Russia's homemade coronavirus vaccine to high-risk groups — health, education and social workers aged 18-60 — at 70 clinics.

Mayor Sergei Sobyanin [said](#) up to 7 million people have to be inoculated as part of the voluntary Covid-19 vaccination drive. Around 2 million Russians are expected to be [vaccinated](#) with the free two-shot jab in December.

## Scattered rallies

Opposition protesters in Belarus rallied Sunday in the latest of nearly four months of demonstrations against the re-election of President Alexander Lukashenko.

In contrast to mass Sunday protests that have taken place since the August vote, the opposition has for weeks sought to foil a toughening crackdown by staging numerous smaller

protests. Minsk police said that around 300 people were taken into police custody during the protests in Minsk.

### **Revisionist power**

Russia [lashed out](#) at the United States as a “revisionist power” after its immigration authorities classified Russians born on the disputed Kuril Islands who apply for diversity visas as Japanese nationals.

Japan, which claims the islands as its Northern Territories, and Russia have yet to strike a formal peace deal over the territorial dispute.

### **Cattle call**

Villagers in the Far East republic of Sakha held an online bovine [beauty pageant](#), with contestants from across Russia’s largest federal subject submitting photos of their best-dressed livestock.

Twin bulls Ootoy and Tootoy wearing sailor’s jackets and caps were named the winners of the second annual contest.

### **All of the lights**

A fireworks plant [caught fire](#) in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don, setting off a mass explosion and lighting the night sky with a dangerous fireworks display.

Over 400 firefighters were reportedly deployed to put out the blaze at a two-story pavilion that was fully stocked with fireworks ahead of the New Year.

### **Embed:**

В Ростове загорелся павильон с пиротехникой, площадь пожара составила 2,5 тыс. квадратных метров [pic.twitter.com/GoBe0IELqu](https://www.pic.twitter.com/GoBe0IELqu)

— ПБК (@ru\_rbc) [December 6, 2020](#)

*AFP contributed reporting to this article.*

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