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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Yury Kadobnov / AFP

Infectious variant

Russia on Sunday confirmed its first case of the new, more-contagious U.K. coronavirus strain despite an earlier move by officials to suspend flights from Britain to stop the mutation from reaching Russia's borders.

One person returning to Russia from Britain was found to have been infected with the new strain in late 2020, the head of national health regulator Rospotrebnadzor told state-run television Sunday.

Stalin Doner

A Stalin-themed shawarma shop in Moscow was forced to close the day after it opened and sparked public outcry over its provocative branding featuring the dictator's portrait and employees dressed in Soviet security service uniforms.

Owner Stanislav Voltman said he plans to reopen as soon as he hires new staff "who are willing to work under the conditions surrounding my poor spot."

'People's mayor'

Sardana Avksentiyeva, the popular independent mayor of the world's second-coldest city of Yakutsk, has submitted her resignation due to health concerns.

Avksentiyeva urged constituents to vote for her successor Yevgeny Grigoryev in direct elections this spring.

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Публикация от Сардана Авксентьева (@sardanaavksentieva)

Kyrgyz vote

Populist Sadyr Japarov claimed victory in Kyrgyzstan's presidential elections Sunday and pledged to weed out graft in the Central Asian country after a political crisis put him on the path to power.

A referendum held in parallel showed the public strongly preferring presidential rule, which would grant Japarov sweeping powers when a new constitution is put to the people later this year.

Care home fire

Seven people died in a fire at a private home for the elderly in the Tyumen region of western Siberia.

Police apprehended the care home's owner in the town of Borovsky on charges of safety violations.

AFP contributed reporting to this article.

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