

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

March 29, 2021



Belarus's opposition has worked to revive last summer's wave of protests against President Alexander Lukashenko after they died down following a harsh police crackdown. **Francisco Seco / AP / TASS**

Splintered resistance

Police in Belarus on Saturday detained 250 people, including five journalists, a rights group [said](#), as the opposition resumed rallies against strongman Alexander Lukashenko.

Opposition supporters in the capital Minsk had planned on gathering Saturday in the city center by early afternoon, but were prevented from doing so by police, who cordoned off several streets and a main square and park.

Private shot

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Sunday he had experienced “[slight pain](#)” in his muscles and the injection site after receiving his first dose of the coronavirus vaccine earlier last week.

The 68-year-old has not revealed which of Russia's three home-grown jabs — Sputnik V,

EpiVacCorona or CoviVac — he had been given. Unlike many world leaders, Putin also chose to be vaccinated in private.

Putin called on his fellow citizens to get vaccinated against Covid-19 and said he expects Russia to reach herd immunity and lift restrictions by late summer.

Numbing pain

Jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny asked for [painkiller injections](#) to his leg from visiting Public Monitoring Commission members Saturday.

More than 20 Russian medics [warned](#) in an open letter published Sunday that Navalny risked losing lower limb functions, speculating that the politician may be suffering from last year's nerve agent poisoning or an incomplete recovery.

Sputnik shuffle

Slovakia's Prime Minister Igor Matovic said Sunday he offered to [swap posts](#) with Finance Minister Eduard Heger to resolve a month-long crisis over secret purchases of Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine.

Slovakia received 200,000 out of the acquired 2 million Sputnik V doses but has [not yet started](#) administering them pending testing.

Sweep 16

Russian figure skaters [swept](#) the ISU World Figure Skating Championships for the first time in its 115-year history late Friday.

Anna Shcherbakova, who just turned 17 on Sunday, edged compatriots Elizaveta Tuktamysheva, the 2015 world champion, and fellow 16-year-old Alexandra Trusova for the podium sweep.

AFP contributed reporting to this article.

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