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News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

May 10, 2021



Over 12,000 Russian troops marched through Red Square for the annual World War II victory parade. **Kremlin.ru**

Pointed message

President Vladimir Putin oversaw Russia's annual military parade marking the 76th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany in World War II on Sunday.

Related article: Putin on WWII Victory Day Says Russia Will 'Firmly' Defend Its Interests

In his speech on Red Square, delivered amid collapsing relations with the West, Putin vowed that Russia will "firmly" defend national interests and denounced the return of "Russophobia."

Missing doctor

One of the Siberian doctors who first treated Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny and denied that he

had been poisoned after he fell gravely ill last summer has gone missing on a hunting trip, police said Sunday.

Searches are underway for Alexander Murakhovsky, who was later promoted to the post of the Omsk region's health minister and has not been seen since leaving a hunting base on an all-terrain vehicle.

Holy city

Russia on Saturday condemned attacks on civilians after violent clashes between Israeli police and Palestinians at Jerusalem's flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque compound injured more than 200 people and urged both sides to refrain from escalating violence.

In its statement, Russia's Foreign Ministry said it reaffirmed Moscow's position that "the expropriation of land and property located on it, as well as the creation of settlements by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, have no legal force."

Central Asian tensions

Putin vowed support for the former Soviet republic of Tajikistan and said Russia is bolstering its military base there amid increasing tensions in Afghanistan.

Speaking with the visiting Tajik president, Putin spoke on the subject of migrant workers in Russia and noted that Moscow is doing all it can "to make people feel comfortable."

Czech damages

Czech authorities plan to demand at least $47 million in compensation from Moscow for the deadly 2014 arms depot explosions it blames on Russian spy agencies, Finance Minister Alena Schillerová said Saturday.

Related article: Timeline: What Sparked a Slew of Russian, Czech and Bulgarian Diplomatic Expulsions?

Czech Prime Minister Andrei Babiš has previously called on other European Union members to expel at least one Russian diplomat each in solidarity with Prague.

AFP contributed reporting to this article.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2021/05/10/news-from-russia-what-you-missed-over-the-weekend-111-a73844