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# Fires, Festivals and Free Speech Crackdown: Russia's August in Photos

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Russia marked several grim milestones in August. Wildfires in Siberia and other regions hit new records while excess deaths soared due to the coronavirus. The country also continued its crackdown on independent media ahead of key legislative elections, branding the Dozhd broadcaster and iStories investigative outlet as "foreign agents." At the same time, the country marked traditions like the Apple Feast of the Savior, an annual military orchestra festival and its showcase military technological forum. Here's a look back at the month's highlights:

A young girl poses for pictures with the skyscrapers of Moscow City. **Natalia Kolesnikova / AFP**

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