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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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On Saturday Russia's daily deaths from Covid topped 1,000. **Yaroslav Belyaev / TASS**

Fourth Wave

Russia on Saturday topped 1,000 deaths in 24 hours for the first time since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, with the country's jab drive at a standstill and few restrictions in place.

An official government tally showed 1,002 deaths and 33,208 new infections, setting a high for both fatalities and cases for the third day in a row. Russia on Sunday reported a record high of 34,303 new coronavirus cases.

Fake Spirits

Russian authorities said on Saturday they had arrested two people as part of an investigation into the death of 18 people in the Urals who were poisoned by bootleg alcohol, the second such incident in recent weeks.

Investigators said "several individuals sold people an alcohol liquid that was dangerous for their health" over the past two weeks in Yekaterinburg, Russia's fourth-largest city.

Jail Torture

Russian investigators on Saturday launched a probe into a riot at a prison involving at least 200 inmates, which a rights monitor said was sparked by abuse.

The incident in Vladikavkaz, the capital of Russia's republic of North Ossetia, comes after Russia's prison service earlier this month sacked several officers after harrowing videos emerged of alleged rape and torture at a jail hospital in the central Russian city of Saratov.

Space Jam

A Russian actress and a film director returned to Earth Sunday after spending 12 days on the International Space Station (ISS) shooting scenes for the first movie in orbit.

Yulia Peresild and Klim Shipenko landed as scheduled on Kazakhstan's steppe at 04:36 GMT, according to footage broadcast live by the Russian space agency.

Skirmish

Moscow said Friday that its destroyer Admiral Tributs chased off the U.S. Navy destroyer USS Chafee after it attempted to violate Russia's territorial waters in the Sea of Japan. Washington refuted Moscow's claims.

The incident took place as Russia and China were conducting naval exercises in the area.

Media Crackdown

Russia's government on Friday declared two more popular media outlets, Rosbalt and Republic "foreign agents," pressing ahead with a crackdown on dissent and freedom of expression.

Rosbalt.ru is a popular news portal with offices in Moscow and St. Petersburg, while Republic is a subscription-based website that specializes in news analysis.

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