

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 25, 2021



Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Grim records

Russia on Saturday reported another [record high](#) number of both new coronavirus cases and deaths. Officials reported 37,678 new coronavirus cases and 1,075 fatalities from Covid-19 over the last 24 hours.

The twin records come as Europe's hardest hit country with dramatically low vaccination rates braces for nationwide curbs this week, with non-essential services shut between Oct. 28 and Nov. 7.

Trading blame

Russians hoping to apply for an immigrant visa to the United States are now required to travel to the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, the State Department [confirmed](#) Sunday, while blaming restrictions imposed by Moscow.

On the State Department website, Russia has been added to a short list of countries where "the United States has no consular representation or in which the political or security situation is tenuous or uncertain enough" to prevent consular staff from processing immigrant visa applications.

Shoot the messenger

Moscow on Saturday put a former prison inmate seeking asylum in France on a [wanted list](#) after he leaked harrowing videos of alleged rape and torture inside a Russian prison.

According to a notice published on the Russian Interior Ministry's website, Sergei Savelyev — a Belarus national — is wanted in connection with an unspecified criminal case.

‘Abundance of caution’

Namibia has [discontinued](#) the use of Russia's Sputnik V Covid-19 vaccine following concerns raised by neighboring South Africa, the health ministry said on Saturday.

Neighboring South Africa earlier last week said it would not approve Sputnik V due to concerns it could increase the risk of HIV infection among men, a claim the vaccine's developer says is unfounded.

Out in the cold

Moscow's Gazprom [could cut](#) Moldova's gas supply if the country does not settle its bill and sign a new contract, the energy giant's top official was quoted by Russia's Interfax news agency as saying Saturday.

Moldova declared a 30-day state of emergency on Friday in an effort to secure the ex-Soviet country cheaper natural gas from Europe after Moscow — its traditional supplier — raised prices.

Balkan asylum

Montenegro has [granted asylum](#) to a Russian billionaire wanted by Moscow for his alleged role in two murders on the grounds that he is being persecuted, his lawyer said on Saturday.

Azerbaijan-born Telman Ismailov, who has in the past [sparked the ire](#) of Russian President Vladimir Putin with his extravagant lifestyle, was [arrested](#) in Podgorica early this month on an international arrest warrant issued by Moscow for his extradition.

AFP contributed reporting.

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