

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

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Ukraine standoff

The United States on Saturday urged Russia to pull back from the brink over Ukraine, warning that the G7 and its allies will impose tough measures if it abandons diplomacy.

"But if they choose not to pursue that path, there will be massive consequences and severe costs in response, and the G7 is absolutely united in that," a senior State Department official told reporters at a meeting of the grouping's top diplomats in Liverpool, northwest England, adding that Moscow still had time to change course.

Taxi for Vladimir

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the collapse of the Soviet Union spelled the end of "historical Russia," revealing he drove a taxi to make ends meet following the U.S.S.R.'s fall.

Putin, a former agent of the Soviet Union's KGB security services who has previously

lamented the U.S.S.R.'s fall, said the disintegration three decades ago remains a "tragedy" for "most citizens."

QR codes

Russia's lower house of parliament will pull from consideration a bill to introduce mandatory coronavirus passes to access public transport that was designed to jump-start the country's slow vaccination campaign, its speaker Vyacheslav Volodin [said](#) Sunday.

The State Duma will continue debating another bill that will mandate so-called QR codes for access to bars and restaurants for the first half of 2022, Duma deputy speaker Pyotr Tolstoy added Monday.

Arms race

Russia leads the world in hypersonic missiles and will likely develop new technology to "fight" other countries' weapons by the time they catch up, Putin [said](#) Sunday.

Speaking in the same documentary film where he lamented the Soviet collapse, Putin said Russia and the United States currently have approximate parity in the number of warheads and their carriers.

AFP contributed reporting.

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