The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

March 28, 2022



**UNIAN**

### Shut it down

Russian media regulator, Roskomnadzor, warned media outlets against broadcasting their interview with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, saying they could be subject to investigation and action could be taken against them.

While Russian outlets branded “foreign agents” published the interview, the independent Novaya Gazeta newspaper and the Kommersant business daily appeared to heed the warning and withheld its publication.

### Crackdown continued

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday signed into law a bill introducing jail terms of up to 15 years for publishing "fake" information about Russia's actions abroad, as Moscow's troops continue their military operation in Ukraine.

The bill, adopted by Russia's parliament last week, sets out jail terms and fines for people who publish "knowingly false information" about actions abroad by Russian government agencies.

## Recognition to annexation

The head of Ukraine's Luhansk separatist region said Sunday it may hold a referendum on becoming part of Russia, after Moscow sent troops into its pro-Western neighbor.

The announcement of a possible referendum drew mixed reactions from Russian lawmakers, with some saying “now is not the right time” while others suggesting that Ukraine’s two breakaway republics have the constitutional mandate to join Russia.

## Schroedinger’s Shoigu

Russia's defense minister reappeared on television images broadcast Saturday, after his two-week absence from view prompted questions from journalists.

The Defense Ministry published a video showing Sergei Shoigu, a staunch ally of Putin, chairing a meeting on Russia's defense procurement.

No dates accompany the images on state television but Shoigu refers to a Finance Ministry meeting that took place on Friday.

## Karabakh tensions

Moscow on Saturday accused Azerbaijan of violating a ceasefire agreement by entering the Russian peacekeeping mission's zone in the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh, the first time Russia publicly assigned the blame for violating the 2020 deal.

The Russian Defense Ministry also accused Azerbaijani troops of using Turkish-made drones to strike Karabakh troops, while the foreign ministry in Moscow expressed "extreme concern" over the spiraling tensions in the region. Azerbaijan said the statement “does not reflect the truth.”

*AFP contributed reporting.*

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/03/28/news-from-russia-what-you-missed-over-the-weekend-156-a77100