

News From Russia: What You Missed Over the Weekend

October 11, 2021



A twin-engine plane belonging to a flying club in the town of Menzelinsk crashed seconds after take-off Sunday morning. **Yegor Aleyev / TASS**

Deadly crash

Sixteen people were [killed](#) when a plane carrying parachutists crashed in the town of Menzelinsk in Russia's central republic of Tatarstan on Sunday, the Emergencies Ministry said.

Tatarstan head Rustam Minnikhanov, who traveled to the scene, said pilots had reported an engine failure and requested an emergency landing shortly after taking off. Six passengers survived the crash and were hospitalized with critical injuries.

Theater tragedy

A 38-year-old performer at Russia's legendary Bolshoi Theater was [killed](#) Saturday in an accident on stage during the performance of an opera, the Moscow company said.

The theater said the incident took place during a set change in *Sadko*, a 19th century opera by Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

Food for booze

Authorities in the Russian region of Orenburg [said](#) Sunday they are offering locals free food in exchange for any bootleg alcohol they may have purchased, after 34 people died from drinking counterfeit liquor tainted with highly toxic methanol.

The deaths are the latest in a string of similar incidents involving poisonings by cheap alcohol substitutes — a persistent problem in a country where 21 million people live below the poverty line.

Navalny app

Google has restored jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's election recommendation app weeks after removing it just as Russians went to the polls in nationwide parliamentary elections, Navalny's close aides [said](#) Saturday.

Team Navalny lawyer Ivan Zhdanov said he hopes that Apple will take similar steps, but criticized the tech giants for "being [taken hostage](#)" by the Russian government on the day of the vote.

Doping ban

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) announced Saturday that its executive committee has revoked the "approved" status of Russia's national anti-doping laboratory in Moscow, banning it from conducting anti-doping analysis of athletes' blood samples.

The decision means the Moscow lab, which had been provisionally suspended since January 2020, is barred from carrying out any anti-doping analysis of the world's top athletes and results are ineligible for inclusion in athletes' so-called biological passports.

Celebrity crash

Socialite and television presenter Ksenia Sobchak was involved in a car crash in which at least one passenger has died and two others were raced to the hospital in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi, media [reported](#) Sunday.

Sobchak, who escaped the deadly collision with a concussion, took to social media to express "horror and shock" over the casualties and pledged financial support to the victims. The driver of Sobchak's rented Mercedes has said he is to blame and apologized for the incident.

AFP contributed reporting.

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