

Weekly Top 10

WASHINGTON, D.C. April 8, 2020

TO: NCSEJ Leadership and Interested Parties

**FROM: Daniel Rubin, Chairman;
Aleksander Smukler, President;
Mark B. Levin, Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO**

Dear Friend,

We have been holding a series of conference calls with leaders from the region. The latest was with Chief Rabbi of Ukraine Yaakov Bleich and Chief Rabbi of Poland Michael Schudrich. On Monday, we will be holding a Webinar with the Israeli Ambassador to Russia and the head of the Bulgarian Jewish Community -- [please click here to register](#).

If you are not receiving notification of these calls and would like to join us, please contact David Pasmanik at dpasmanik@ncsej.org

Happy Passover!

Sincerely,



Mark B. Levin
NCSEJ Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO

NCSEJ WEEKLY TOP 10 **Washington, D.C. April 8, 2020**

Coronavirus diary: Can Kyrgyzstan survive this? **Nurjamal Djanibekova** **Eurasia.net | April 3, 2020**

"If you don't have your ID with you, they'll throw you into prison," one elderly gentleman warned as he strolled toward me from a checkpoint in downtown Bishkek.

Ever since officials declared the coronavirus state of emergency here in Kyrgyzstan, soldiers and police have been patrolling the streets. People on the streets must present them their papers and a self-declaration form showing where they have come from and where they are headed, and why.

"Good day! I am Inspector Daniyarova," one of them, a 30-something, said to me as she asked for my ID. She copied out the details into a notebook and, after the check, added: "We would ask that you not leave home unless necessary."

Behind me in line was a young woman who had obviously just been to a party, although all bars, clubs and restaurants should by rights be closed because of the state of emergency. She wore a black dress, a fur coat, makeup and a tired expression. The woman said she lived nearby and had just gone out for groceries and forgotten to bring along her ID.

Daniyarova instructed one of the soldiers to take the woman to her apartment and check her documents there. As they began to make their way, the woman tried to sweettalk the soldier into letting her go, but he, in violation of health preservation protocols, grabbed her by the arm to make sure she didn't make a run for it.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Deadliest outside the big cities: Coronavirus Outside of Moscow **Meduza | April 3, 2020**

Based on data available on March 28, most of Russia's confirmed COVID-19 cases were in Moscow, the Moscow region, and St. Petersburg. This is unsurprising: national capitals everywhere have taken the first blow in this pandemic because they're the most connected to international travel. The media's focus on megapolises can be misleading, however, insofar as it creates the impression that coronavirus has somehow spared more remote areas. That is not the case. Given the age demographics of many regions in Russia, it is outside Moscow and St. Petersburg where we can expect to see the most difficult situations, both in terms of the number of patients needing assistance and the number of deaths. At Meduza's request, demographer Ilya Kashnitsky and epidemiologist Anton Barchuk compared Russia's regions by the number of people who could need hospitalization and the amount of locally available medical resources. The two experts created an interactive map that helps doctors in Russia assess the seriousness of the COVID-19 crisis in different parts of the country and makes it clear how important it is to delay the epidemic's peak by as long as possible (to "flatten the curve").

[Read the full article here.](#)

Netanyahu, Putin agree to work together against coronavirus **Lahav Harkov** **The Jerusalem Post | April 6, 2020**

Israel and Russia should coordinate efforts to counter the spread of the novel coronavirus, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed in a phone conversation on Monday.

The leaders discussed possible opportunities for cooperation, including buying equipment and medical supplies.

Putin and Netanyahu also agreed to allow travel between their countries to continue so that citizens may return to their homes.

In addition, Putin wished Netanyahu and Israelis a happy Passover.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Jewish Philanthropist Boris Lozhkin Donates Protective Gear to Ukraine's ENT Specialist **David Israel** **The Jewish Press | April 6, 2020**

Ukrainian entrepreneur, philanthropist and author Boris Lozhkin, who serves as President of the Jewish Confederation of Ukraine and Vice-President of the World Jewish Congress, donated personal protective gears against the coronavirus to the Prof. O.S.Kolomyichenko Institute of Otolaryngology at the National Academy of Medical Sciences of Ukraine.

Lozhkin and his wife, Nadiia Shalomova, handed the protective overalls, next-generation respirators, goggles and disposable gloves to the doctors.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Belarus's Contingency Plans and 'Preexisting Conditions'

Grigory Ioffe
The Jamestown Foundation | April 7, 2020

According to the Belarusian Ministry of Health (MH), as of April 4, 440 people had contracted the novel coronavirus responsible for causing COVID-19. That number included 41 recovered and 394 hospitalized patients. Five people died; all of them had multiple chronic diseases that were aggravated by COVID-19 (T.me/minzdravbelarus, April 4). The above is a significant but not yet disastrous upward trend compared to the situation recorded on March 27 (see EDM, April 1).

Despite registering its first coronavirus cases weeks ago, Belarus has stayed away from the kinds of strict and far-reaching quarantine and mobility limitations imposed by other European countries (except for Sweden), making it a focus of international attention. On April 1, Deputy Health Minister Yelena Bogdan revealed that Belarus, with its 9.5 million residents, is the ninth country in the world in terms of the number of those tested. She added that, with 38 ventilators per 100,000 people, Belarus is far ahead of the United States, which has only 18 ventilators per 100,000. "Nothing insecure and extraordinary is going on" in Belarus, assured Bogdan (Tut.by, April 1). Meanwhile, President Alyaksandr Lukashenka set July 16-20 as the dates for the 29th international pop music festival Slavic Bazaar, in the city of Vitebsk (Belta,

March 27). Regular soccer and ice hockey matches continue, with arenas full of spectators. "Banning something is not our concept at all," declared Lukashenka with regard to public events, "but we are not pushing people to attend them either" (Belta, April 3).

[Read the full article here.](#)

Putin proposes additional coronavirus relief measures
Reuters | April 8, 2020

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday proposed additional measures to support businesses and workers during the coronavirus crisis and said that Russia could not simply shut its economy down due to potentially destructive consequences. Putin ordered federal and regional government to develop additional measures aimed at supporting citizens, adding that the next two to three weeks would be crucial in Russia's fight against the spread of the virus.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Journalists threatened and detained as countries on multiple continents restrict coronavirus coverage
Louisa Loveluck, Robyn Dixon and Adam Taylor
The Washington Post | April 5, 2020

LONDON — When a flu-like virus tore through the world, killing tens of millions and infecting far more, the papers in Europe told readers of "Spanish flu." King Alfonso XIII of Spain was one of many stricken, they reported in 1918. What they didn't say was that their own populations were being decimated, too.

It was the largest pandemic in modern history, but due to wartime censorship in many European countries, few citizens would know it at first. Only Spain, a nation neutral in the fight, allowed its press to work largely uncensored, and so it was that stories of the contagion spread too.

A century later, coronavirus is again testing the resilience of independent media around the world as governments exploit concerns over coverage of the epidemic to clamp down on press freedoms.

[Read the full article here.](#)

No Money, No Food: COVID-19 Hits Post-Soviet Poor
Radio Free Europe | April 6, 2020

Across former Soviet countries, lockdowns due to the coronavirus are hitting the poor hardest. The many workers in the gray areas of the economies have been left destitute and even homeless, while some charities that might provide help are closing down.

[Read the full article here.](#)

Masks For Everyone? More Countries Are Making Them Mandatory
Radio Free Europe | April 6, 2020

More countries and regions are advising -- or requiring -- all residents to wear face masks in public to protect against the spread of the coronavirus. While fabric masks don't provide full protection, doctors say they can help block transmission from people who don't yet know they're sick.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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About NCSEJ

Founded in 1971, the National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry represents the organized American Jewish community in monitoring and advocating on behalf of the estimated 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Europe and

Eurasia, including the 15 successor states of the former Soviet Union.

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