

Medvedev to Face Reporters

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President Dmitry Medvedev could shed more light on whether he or Prime Minister Vladimir Putin will run in the 2012 presidential election on Wednesday, when he holds his biggest news conference since taking office.

Putin and Medvedev have declined to say which of them will run in the election next March, and the two have exchanged public jibes in recent weeks, fueling speculation that Medvedev is positioning himself to seek a second term.

“Medvedev will try to show he is not simply a yes-man but that he is almost an equal to Putin,” said a trader at a Western investment bank in Moscow who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of Russian politics. “Medvedev is trying to show that he is in command, to show the elite and Putin that he is a viable candidate for the presidency.”

More than 800 journalists are accredited for the news conference, an unusually large media event for Medvedev.

He will personally chair the 1 p.m. news conference at the Skolkovo School of Management, which was founded in 2006 with the approval of then-President Putin to train a new

generation of business leaders.

Skolkovo is at the heart of Medvedev's ambitious plans to diversify Russia's \$1.5 trillion economy away from dependence on the export of natural resources by boosting the share of high-technology products.

The Kremlin has not said what kind of questions Medvedev will take.

The president plugged the news conference in his microblog on Twitter. "I'll be speaking with journalists at Skolkovo tomorrow. Whoever is interested — watch. It starts at 1 p.m.," he wrote.

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