

What the Papers Say, July 4, 2012

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Kommersant

1. Pavel Tarasenko et al. report headlined "Dismissed With Asylum" says the West is allegedly urging Russia to provide Syrian President Bashar Assad with political asylum. Experts believe this scenario is the most likely to be implemented, as Assad has for the first time made it clear that he may step down as president; pp 1, 3 (711 words).
2. Pyotr Natreba article headlined "Stop for Demands" comments on Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Sakhalin, where he granted local authorities the right to set up special economic zones; pp 1, 3 (851 words).
3. Yelena Kiseleva article headlined "Five-Year Managerial Term Finishes at VEB" says a large-scale Vneshekonombank management reshuffle is expected in the near future; pp 1, 8 (919 words).

4. Maria Yakovleva and Dmitry Ladygin article headlined "Market of Collective Compensations" says Russian mutual funds lost 1.2 billion rubles (\$36 million) in June. The authors note that after 16 years of funds' work and four crises, investors have lost interest in them; pp 1, 8 (530 words).
5. Viktor Khamrayev article headlined "Deputies Ready to Name Foreign Agents" says amendments to the controversial bill on NGOs are being considered by State Duma committees without any criticism; p 2 (584 words).
6. Maxim Ivanov article headlined "Communists and A Just Russia Members Show United Front" says the Communists and A Just Russia want to appeal to the Russian Constitutional Court against the laws on rallies and gubernatorial elections recently passed by United Russia; p 2 (605 words).
7. Unattributed article headlined "Why Do We Need Him?" polls politicians and public figures who speak for and against Russia providing Bashar Assad with asylum; p 3 (432 words).
8. Natalya Gorodetskaya article headlined "Locals for Discussion" says the so-called "municipal filter" in gubernatorial elections is expected to revive active political life at the municipal level; p 4 (1,037 words).
9. Natalya Gorodetskaya interview with Stepan Kirichuk, head of the Federation Council committee on regional politics and local government, who praises the municipal filter for gubernatorial candidates; p 4 (654 words).
10. Another Natalya Gorodetskaya interview, with Igor Kokin, deputy head of the faculty of state and municipal service of the Russian Academy of National Economy, who says that the municipal filter will cause problems for the local authorities; p 4 (627 words).
11. Article by Emil Markvart, president of the European Club of Local Government Experts, in opinion column headlined "Price of Issue" compares the Russian municipal filter with EU practices and comes to the conclusion that the Russian regulations are ineffective; p 4 (400 words).
12. Yelena Chernenko article headlined "Iran Makes Move With Submarine" says another round of international talks on the Iranian nuclear program has yielded no results; p 6 (511 words).
13. Pavel Tarasenko interview with U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman speaking on prospects for Russian-U.S. cooperation in the energy sector; p 6 (502 words).
14. Roman Rozhkov article headlined "Presidential Rights Read Out to Internet" says the presidential human rights council has criticized a bill imposing restrictions on some websites. The bill may result in censorship on the Web and the closure of many websites that do not violate the law, rights activists believe; p 9 (492 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Igor Naumov article headlined "Real Sector Dreams of Devaluation" says experts are not ruling out the possibility of the further depreciation of the ruble. One dollar may cost 39

rubles by the end of 2012; pp 1, 4 (900 words).

2. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "Ukraine Indulges Russian Language" says the Ukrainian parliament has adopted a controversial law on awarding Russian the special status of regional language after Sergei Ivanov, the head of the Russian presidential administration, visited Kiev and urged the country's authorities to support the Russian language; pp 1, 6 (937 words).

3. Ivan Rodin article headlined "One and Only Voting Day" says the State Duma has adopted a law on the introduction of a single voting day. As of 2013, all elections will be held in September only; pp 1, 3 (866 words).

4. Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "Strategy of Ignoring" says Russian prosecutor's offices and courts are ignoring complaints by the opposition about the violation of their rights in the course of recent detentions and searches; pp 1, 3 (703 words).

5. Vladimir Mukhin article headlined "Non-Virtual Problems of the Russian Army" says military budget cuts may prevent the introduction of new high-tech technologies in the Russian army. Meanwhile, preparations are under way for the Kavkaz-2012 military drills in September; pp 1 — 2 (820 words).

6. Viktoria Panfilova article headlined "Uzbekistan Returning to U.S.A." says Tashkent is to become a key U.S. ally in preparing a possible operation against Iran. The plans are to be discussed at the meeting of the two countries' top military brass and diplomats in Washington; pp 1, 6 (825 words).

7. Editorial headlined "Russia at a Breakup" comments on how foreign geopolitical challenges that Russia is facing from the West, Asia, the Arctic and the Middle East affect its domestic policy; p 2 (487 words).

8. Oleg Vladykin article headlined "State Defense Order Not Subject to Contraction and Delay" says Russian President Vladimir Putin has demanded that the state defense order be fulfilled on time and in accordance with prices stipulated in contracts; p 2 (576 words).

9. Olga Shulga article headlined "Letters Stolen in Time" says the hacked e-mail correspondence of blogger and opposition activist Alexei Navalny is being used to damage his image on the Internet. Experts consider the attack on the blogger to be a logical move by the authorities aimed at curtailing his rapidly growing popularity; p 3 (709 words).

10. Viktor Litovkin piece titled "Military Acceptance Ordered to Return" considers Putin's recent call to reinstate the practice of military order acceptance in light of quality problems with Russian-made arms; p 3 (850 words).

11. Sergei Kulikov article headlined "WTO Accession to Be Tested by Russia's Main Law" recaps on a complaint to the Constitutional Court that State Duma deputies have filed on the grounds that the protocol on Russia's membership in the WTO does not comply with the Russian Constitution; p 4 (750 words).

12. Nikolai Petrov article "2012: Interim Results and Prospects of the Leap Year for Russia" considers the most significant political developments that have transpired in the first six

months of the year and considers what might be in store for the country throughout 2012; p 5 (2,300 words).

13. Vladimir Skosyrev article headlined "Cameron Raises Wave Over EU Membership" says U.K. Prime Minister David Cameron was quite vague about EU membership prospects in his speech to parliament on July 3; p 7 (476 words).

14. Nikolai Surkov and Darya Tsilyurik article headlined "Medvedev Hits Raw Nerve With Tokyo" says Japan has protested against Prime Minister Medvedev's visit to the Kuril islands; p 7 (496 words).

15. Darya Tsilyurik article headlined "United Opposition Being Prepared for Bashar Assad" says the Syrian opposition is still unable to settle on a single political platform. Armed opposition groups boycotted a recent Syrian opposition meeting in Cairo; p 7 (513 words).

16. Nikolai Surkov interview with NATO Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Security Policy Dirk Brengelmann, speaking on the Syrian conflict, the situation in Afghanistan and the new European missile-defense system; p 7 (722 words).

Vedomosti

1. Tatyana Voronova and Vasily Kudinov article headlined "Capital to Grow Into" says The Banker magazine, which compiles a rating of leading global banks, has reported that Russian financial institutions are developing more slowly than their Western rivals; p 1 (503 words).

2. Alexei Nikolsky et al. report headlined "4,000 Billion Ruble Secret" reviews the Russian government's financing plans for the rearmament of the armed forces through 2020 and notes that some \$121 billion is to be allocated for an unknown weapon; p 1 (374 words).

3. Yelena Mazneva article headlined "Discount From the East" says Russian gas monopolist Gazprom is to give a \$1.3 billion discount to Germany's E.ON on the gas that is sold to the concern, as part of its \$7 billion annual discount reserve; pp 1, 8 (660 words).

4. Editorial headlined "Washed-Out Territories" comments on the State Duma deputies' opposition to the relocation of the parliament to Moscow region. The demarche shows that Prime Minister Medvedev is losing his power; pp 1, 4 (491 words).

5. Maria Zheleznova article titled "Agents Everywhere" says the provisions of the controversial bill on foreign-funded Russian NGOs may be made even tougher before the draft law goes to its second reading; p 2 (450 words).

6. Natalya Kostenko article headlined "Tandem Help" says both Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev will back United Russia nominees during the regional election campaign in autumn; p 2 (300 words).

7. Yekaterina Kravchenko article titled "Temptation of Devaluation" says experts warn that expensive oil will not prop up the Russian ruble. Meanwhile, devaluation is a tempting way for the authorities to increase fiscal revenues; p 3 (150 words).

8. Commentary by opposition politician Vladimir Milov headlined "Public Politics: Prepare Your Wallets" criticizes the Russian government's policy allowing energy company monopolists to raise tariffs for Russian consumers; p 4 (399 words).

9. Another commentary by pundits Mikhail Dmitriyev and Sergei Belanovsky titled "Authorities Going Through Half-Decay Period" says that decisions taken by the authorities in the last six months have exacerbated the political crisis in the country and highlighted the dropping political authority of both Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin; p 4 (1,200 words).

10. Another editorial headlined "To Make Money on WTO" says while political parties are gaining political points for criticizing Russia's accession to the WTO, different sectors of economy are making money on state protection from imports; p 4 (311 words).

Izvestia

1. Anastasia Alexeyevskikh article headlined "Government to Boost Anti-Crisis Support for Banks" says a State Duma deputy has suggested that Vneshekonombank should provide Russian banks with subordinated loans as part of state anti-crisis measures; pp 1, 4 (723 words).

2. Denis Telmanov article headlined "Russian Army Being Put on Wheels" says the Russian Defense Ministry plans to start equipping the armed forces with hardware on wheels, but not caterpillars; pp 1, 4 (614 words).

3. Ivan Cheberko article headlined "Space Technologies to Be Put on Retail Sale" says the Russian Energia missile and space corporation is planning to take part in a U.S. project to develop the new Orion and CST-100 spacecraft; pp 1, 4 (468 words).

4. Maria Parfyonova article headlined "Energy Ministry Does Not Want to Give Shelf to All Interested Parties" says the Russian Energy Ministry has prepared a draft program on the development of Russia's continental shelf, which does not envisage boosting the number of companies that are engaged in doing this; pp 1 — 2 (604 words).

5. Pyer Sidibe and Olga Tropkina article headlined "Investigation Takes Navalny Case Under Special Control" says the Investigative Committee and the Interior Ministry are to check the financing mechanisms of Alexei Navalny's anti-corruption fund; p 2 (640 words).

6. Yekaterina Karacheva and Roman Vetrov article titled "Kolokoltsev's Colleague Tipped for Head of Interior Ministry's Own Security Directorate" looks at more possible top-level reshuffles in the Russian Interior Ministry; p 3 (800 words).

7. Petr Kozlov article titled "Ksenia Sobchak's Lawyer Threatens Criminal Case for Refusal to Return 1.4 Million Euros" quotes official Investigative Committee spokesman Vladimir Markin as saying that law enforcers are not planning to return the cash seized during a search at her home yet; p 3 (300 words).

8. Pyer Sidibe interview with Perm region Governor Viktor Basargin speaking on his decision to recall Alexander Pochinok from the Federation Council; p 3 (327 words).

9. Konstantin Volkov article titled "Our Peacekeepers May Be Sent to Mali" says Russia may send its peacekeepers to the African country in order to protect ancient mausoleums being ravaged by Islamist rebels if the respective UN Security Council decision is taken; p 5 (600 words).

10. Maria Tsiptsyura and Yanina Sokolovskaya interview with Ukrainian parliament Speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn speaking on the status of the Russian language in the country; p 5 (730 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Lyubov Protsenko and Irina Rybnikova interview with Moscow region Governor Sergei Shoigu speaking on development plans for the region; p 1, 6 (3,197 words).

2. Kira Latukhina article headlined "Army Horizons" describes in detail a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin over supplies of military hardware and equipment to ground and airborne troops; p 2 (650 words).

3. Tatyana Zyкова article headlined "Central Bank Sustains Blow" speaking on the ruble rate and the Russian Central Bank policy on national currency; p 1, 4 (514 words).

4. Vitaly Petrov article headlined "Lucky Islands" comments on Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's visit to the Kuril Islands; p 3 (1,054 words).

5. Tamara Mikhailova interview with State Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin, reviewing the results of the parliament's spring session; p 3 (936 words).

6. Yevgeny Shestakov article headlined "Russians Become Hostages" comments on the ongoing lawlessness in Libya and slams the new authorities of the country for keeping a group of Russian nationals in jail; p 8 (655 words).

7. Olga Dmitriyeva article headlined "How Expensive Is Monarchy for People" reviews the annual budget of the British monarchy made public by royal bookkeepers; p 8 (441 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. "State Duma Practices 'Gray' Scheme Vote" says the Russian Audit Chamber has found violations of the law in the State Duma purchase of the electronic voting system; pp 1, 3 (592 words).

2. Mikhail Rostovsky article headlined "Navalny and 'Big Brother'" considers the latest e-mail account hacking of opposition leader Alexei Navalny; pp 1 — 2 (925 words).

3. Viktoria Prikhodko interview with Mikhail Fedotov, head of the presidential human rights council, speaking on the new principles of forming the council; p 2 (673 words).

4. Alexander Melman article headlined "Are They Proper Figures?" reviews the list of public figures nominated to the board of the Public TV to be set up in Russia; p 4 (561 words).

Moskovskiye Novosti

1. Alexandra Ponomaryova article headlined "A Bleary Barrel" says that oil prices have exceeded \$100 per barrel for the first time in the last few weeks. However, pundits believe that a further devaluation of the ruble is likely and forecast that capital outflow this year may exceed \$90 billion; p 1 (600 words).
2. Viktoria Charochkina and Natalia Rozhkova write in an article headlined "Behind the Scenes" that the State Duma has adopted a law for launching public television in Russia, while the Public Chamber has announced a list of possible candidates for the broadcaster's council. Only one-third of the candidates to be considered for council membership have experience in TV broadcasting; p 2 (600 words).
3. Yelena Mishina article headlined "We Catch Our Own Fish" says Medvedev's flight to the Kuril islands was twice delayed, however the president made it to his main destination of the trip around the Sakhalin region; p 2 (600 words).
4. In his article "Combat Vehicle With Low Survivability", Alexander Sadchikov writes that President Vladimir Putin demanded that defense officials stick to deadlines for new equipment supplies to ground and airborne troops. The state has allocated more than \$81 million for the renewal of military hardware in the ground and airborne troops for the period up to 2020; p 2 (450 words).
5. Pavel Nikulin et al. article headlined "Search With Break-In" says Alexei Navalny's complaint about the illegal use of electronic data seized during recent searches of his apartment and offices by the Investigative Committee is unlikely to culminate in a successful outcome. At the same time, two United Russia deputies have turned to the Prosecutor General's Office, requesting an investigation into alleged corrupt practices by Navalny; p 3 (550 words).
6. Yulia Khomchenko article headlined "Odd Man in" says Dmitry Medvedev wants to stimulate birth rates by giving priority to families with three children or more in the queue for accommodation leased by the state; p 3 (250 words).
7. The Constitutional Court may be asked to look at the new penalties recently introduced for violations at rallies and protests. A Just Russia intends to file an appeal that has already been signed by 50 Duma deputies. At least 40 other signatures are required to make a parliamentary appeal to the court eligible. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation promised to support the initiative; p 3 (150 words).

RBK Daily

1. Alexander Litoi article titled "Communist TV" says the supporters of the leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Gennady Zyuganov, are planning to launch their own TV channel. Zyuganov expects that it will take around seven to eight months, however experts are skeptical about the channel's prospects; p 3 (350 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Unattributed article headlined "Alexei Navalny: if at least something illegal had been in my e-mail, I would have been sent to a prison cell long ago" looks at the most recent hacking of Navalny's e-mail by a hacker under the pseudonym "Hell"; p 2 (548 words).
2. Ivan Zhilin article headlined "Nikita Belykh: There Was Certainly No Money Carving Here" publishes Kirov region Governor Nikita Belykh's stance on the hacking of Navalny's e-mail account; p 2 (455 words).
3. Yulia Latynina article headlined "Bravo, Sidyakin!" says corrupt officials, United Russia and people surrounding President Putin will be made worse off under the new bill on foreign NGOs most, as a large number of Putin's supporters used foreign financing to travel and study abroad; p 7 (747 words).

Trud

1. Nikolai Sergeyev article titled "All Will Leave but the Cop Will Remain" considers the latest loss on NTV, the Honest Monday (Chestny Ponedelnik) show, which will be pulled off the air following the departure of its host Sergei Minayev; p 11 (550 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Argi Gevorkyan and Sergei Putilov article headlined "Global Savings" looks at possible government cost-cutting measures in the face of another wave of an economic crisis. The authorities are said to be deciding between culling military spending and welfare payments; pp 1,3 (1,000 words)
2. Yulia Savina article titled "Unfounded Arming" says there is still no legislative basis for the introduction of the martial police that the General Staff promised by December; p 2 (600 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Opinion piece by pundit Veronika Krashennikova titled "'Transitional Government' for Syria Is the Same as a 'No-Fly Zone' for Libya" considers the outcomes of the recent Geneva conference on Syria; p 6 (450 words).
2. Viktor Sokirko article titled "Battalions Seeking Food" looks at new food-supply procedures for the Russian army; p 12 (300 words)

Krasnaya Zvezda

1. Yury Belousov article titled "Air Shied Above Central Military District" says six new air defense command posts have gone on combat duty with the start of the summer period.
2. Andrei Gavrilenko article headlined "In Frukus Footsteps" recaps on the recently wrapped up Frukus-2012 drills; p 3 (300 words)

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