

What the Papers Say, Dec. 11, 2013

By [The Moscow Times](#)

December 11, 2013



Kommersant

1. Kirill Melnikov and Anna Solodovnikova article headlined "Mikhail Gutseryev goes for second round" says businessman Mikhail Gutseryev, owner of the Russian oil firm Russneft, is ready to buy oil assets to form a new oil company; pp 1, 11 (742 words).

2. Andrei Kolesnikov article headlined "Human rights evening" gives an account of President Vladimir Putin's meeting with human rights activists; pp 1, 3 (1,223 words).

3. Yury Barsukov article called "Gazprom finds allies in Europe" says Bulgaria, Slovenia and Greece intend to join efforts in support of the South Stream gas pipeline project. It is likely to be discussed on Dec. 12 at a meeting with European commissioner for energy Guenther Oettinger. Earlier the project was declared to be in violation of the European legislation; pp 1, 11 (554 words).

4. Vladislav Trifonov and Vladislav Novy article headlined "Investigators explore telephone lines" reports on a criminal investigation into the suspected embezzlement of some \$606,000 from Russia's national telecoms regulator Rostelecom; pp 1, 4 (766 words).
5. Natalya Gorodetskaya article headlined "Ministry of regional development not to become ministry of ethnic affairs" says the department for state policy in the field of ethnic relations at the Regional Development Ministry will beef up staffing, but will not be reorganized into a separate ministry; p 2 (505 words).
6. Ivan Safronov article headlined "Sergei Shoigu accepts 2014 threats for execution" reports in detail on a sitting of the year-end session of the Defense Ministry board chaired by President Vladimir Putin; p 2 (698 words).
7. Taisia Bekbulatova article called "Term of importance expires for Moscow referendum" says the Moscow branch of the Communist Party has finally received permission from the Moscow city electoral commission to hold a referendum on utility prices and housing maintenance, but the issues have already lost their importance; p 2 (546 words).
8. Irina Alexanderova et al. article called "Supreme Court intervenes in Nikita Belykh's dispute with CPRF" says the Supreme Court has upheld a libel lawsuit of Kirov Region governor Nikita Belykh against leader of the local Communist Party branch Sergei Mamayev; p 2 (494 words).
9. Anna Pushkarskaya article headlined "Arbitration loses gowns" says the State Duma is to pass today a bill on the merger of the Supreme Arbitration Court and the Supreme Court in the first reading despite a call from the Supreme Arbitration Court and the Public Chamber to give more time to the reform; p 3 (678 words).
10. Sofya Samokhina article headlined "Bolotnaya Square suspects asked to plead guilty" says eight suspects in the Bolotnaya Square unrest case may be convicted and granted an amnesty within the next six months if they plead guilty; p 3 (551 words).
11. Igor Lesovskikh article called "Aksana Panova may be allowed to go at large without journalism" reports on recent developments in the case of former chief editor of Yekaterinburg news agency Ura.ru Aksana Panova who is standing trial on charges of abuse of office and fraud. The prosecution has demanded that she be given a five-year suspended sentence, but barred from working as a journalist for two years; p 4 (438 words).
12. Sergei Mashkin article called "Poet killed on wrongly interpreted patriotic grounds" says a Moscow court has given long prison sentences to two accomplices in the murder of Chechen poet Ruslan Akhtakhanov, but the killer and the mastermind of the murder are still being searched for; p 4 (509 words).

13. Anton Prusakov article headlined "Arzamas causes harm to shaurma" says that unrest continues in Arzamas where a Russian man was stabbed to death in what people believe to be an ethnic conflict; p 5 (862 words).

14. Vadim Visloguzov article headlined "State Duma returns tax dodgers to investigators" says the Russian parliament has passed in the first reading a controversial bill that will enable the Investigative Committee to launch criminal proceedings on tax evasion charges even before receiving appropriate files from taxation agencies. The bill is to be amended, though, following criticism from the business community and on Putin's initiative; p 6 (673 words).

15. Maria Yefimova article called "Iraq losing Syrian war" comments on the situation in Iraq and looks at a rise in insurgent activities in several Iraqi provinces; p 7 (448 words).

16. Sergei Strokan article headlined "Pentagon trying to boost transit" comments on U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel's visits to Pakistan and Afghanistan; p 7 (583 words).

17. Maxim Yusin article headlined "Viktor Yanukovich retreats into fields" says Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, who has held talks with his three predecessors (Leonid Kravchuk, Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yushchenko), has made it clear that an association agreement with the EU could still be signed if the European Commission meets a number of concessions that will secure Ukraine's economic interests. "The ball is now in the court of the opposition," says the author; p 8 (580 words).

18. Mikhail Ivanov article headlined "State Duma stands up for Kiev's Lenin" says the State Duma has denounced the toppling of a Lenin monument in Kiev and criticized the West for getting involved in the Ukrainian developments. Meanwhile, the Communist Party and the A Just Russia party slammed the Russian ambassador in Kiev, Mikhail Zurabov, for keeping silent; p 8 (525 words).

19. Kirill Belyaninov and Yelena Chernenko article called "Russia coming to rescue of deal with Iran" previews today's meeting between Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and the Iranian leadership in Tehran. One of the key items on the agenda is the agreements on Iran's nuclear program that were reached at the conference in Geneva; p 8 (717 words).

20. Vladislav Novy column called "Rules of the game" discusses a "civilian" satellite navigation project ERA-Glonass that is being launched by the government; p 9 (344 words).

Vedomosti

1. Margarita Papchenkova and Maxim Tovkaylov article headlined "How they will help VEB" says the government is going to boost the capital of the state-owned VEB bank with means from the National Welfare Fund. The bank is to receive at least 200 billion rubles (\$6 billion) to offset its losses from a growing number of bad loans; p 1 (366 words).
2. Yury Nekhaychuk and Darya Borisyak article called "Golden policies of Renaissance" looks at the successful insurance business of the Renaissance Kredit bank; pp 1, 14 (478 words).
3. Editorial headlined "Amnesty as message" criticizes an amnesty bill that was tabled on Dec. 9 to the parliament as arbitrary and says the authorities are not interested in a dialogue with society and in the humanization of criminal legislation and the prison system; pp 1, 6 (410 words).
4. Maria Kunle article called "Agriculture ministry to make farmers happy with subsidies" says the Agriculture Ministry commission on subsidies has resumed its work and is to discuss subsidized interest rates on loans for agricultural producers at a meeting today; p 18 (628 words).
5. Editorial headlined "Waiting for jobs" says that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has announced a plan to create 25 million "modernized" jobs and increase productivity by 50 percent by 2020. The author wonders whether it is feasible given the recent uninspiring job loss statistics; p 6 (303 words).
6. Andrei Kolesnikov op-ed headlined "Political economy: Counterrevolution defends itself" says the Russian constitution, that was adopted 20 years ago, has undergone natural evolutionary changes as the regime in Russia has changed, too; p 7 (409 words).
7. Alexei Nikolsky article headlined "Serdyukov's bases are not needed" says Russian air bases are to be transformed back into aviation divisions before the end of the year; p 2 (309 words).
8. Ruslan Pukhov, director of the center for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, article headlined "Modernization of army: How we can improve army budget" advocates new military spending priorities in view of economic recession; p 6 (727 words).
9. Svetlana Bocharova et al. article called "Amnesty with limitations" says Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, who are doing time for their Pussy Riot stunt, are likely to be granted an amnesty, but the Bolotnaya Square suspects and the Arctic Sunrise crew members, who are being tried on hooliganism charges, will only be released if courts pass verdicts in their cases before the amnesty bill takes effect; p 2 (668 words).

10. Prof Nikolay Rozov op-ed called "Constitution and regime incompatible" predicts that the Constitution will continue to be amended, the articles on key values and freedoms are likely to suffer most; p 7 (880 words).

11. Maxim Tovkaylo and Sergei Titov article headlined "President to wait for State Duma" says the parliament has passed in the first reading a controversial bill that will enable investigators to launch criminal proceedings on tax evasion charges without taking account of taxation agencies' opinion. The bill is to be amended, though, following criticism from the business community and government officials; p 4 (515 words).

12. Yulia Orlova and Darya Borisyak article headlined "Central Bank lets ruble go" says the Central Bank is reducing its intervention on the foreign exchange market, which will make the rouble exchange rate more volatile; p 15 (421 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Yury Panyev article headlined "Cuba gets \$29Bln richer" says Russia is writing off Cuba's \$29-billion-debt, hopefully paving the way to a revival in trade cooperation; pp 1-2 (621 words).

2. Ivan Rodin and Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "History of one amnesty" says the State Duma has started working on an amnesty project that is unlikely to result in the release of the Bolotnaya Square case suspects as they are still under trial. "President Putin has not yielded" to public pressure, the authors conclude; pp 1, 3 (1,185 words).

3. Alexandra Samarina article called "Only one in 15 instructions of the president gets executed" says President Vladimir Putin is likely to speak about the implementation of his so-called May Instructions in his State of the Nation address to be delivered on Dec. 12. The national government and local authorities have found numerous cunning ways to ignore the instructions; pp 1, 3 (1,092 words).

4. Svetlana Gamova article headlined "Dniester region to be left without Russian flag" says Moscow and Kiev are against the adoption of the Russian legislation in the breakaway Transdnestr region; pp 1, 7 (721 words).

5. Tatyana Ivzhenko article called "West not to help Maidan" says the Ukrainian authorities may succeed in breaking up opposition rallies in central Kiev, but unrest is likely to continue because it is a genuine protest movement against the political, economic and social crisis in the country; pp 1, 7 (1,238 words).

6. Yevgenia Novikova article headlined "Canada enters North Pole from rear" says Canada has filed to a special United Nations commission a preliminary bid to assert control over a large part of the Arctic. The area is also being contested by Russia, the United States, Norway, Denmark and China; pp 1, 8 (871 words).

7. Viktor Litovkin article called "Commander-in-chief sets promising tasks to generals" reports in detail on a sitting of the year-end session of the Defense Ministry board chaired by President Vladimir Putin; p 2 (774 words).

8. Vladimir Olenchenko column headlined "European Union after Vilnius: Response measures or usual practice?" slams the EU for its anti-Russian policies and for aggressive attempts to take Ukraine under its control; p 3 (716 words).

9. Alina Terekhova article headlined "Russia sets world record in number of emigrants" looks at the results of a poll by Zurich Insurance that shows 60 percent of Russians have considered leaving the country; p 4 (652 words).

10. Dmitry Abzalov op-ed headlined "New leader of world conservatism" looks at Putin's foreign policy, praises his conservative and consistent approach; p 5 (831 words).

11. Alexander Ryabushev article called "Dangerous arsenal in Russian enclave" looks at the problem of obsolete ammunition stockpiles in the Kaliningrad region; p 6 (641 words).

12. Viktor Skosyrev article headlined "Purge in North Korea reminds of 1937" looks at the recent developments in North Korea where the once powerful uncle of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un was removed from his posts. The young leader may be seeking to consolidate his power, but it may be only the start of a purge that will only make the country unstable; p 8 (559 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Article by Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev headlined "Twenty years: Path to understanding law" dedicated to the 20th anniversary since the adoption of the Russian constitution; pp 1, 3 (3,628 words).

2. Tatyana Zamakhina article called "Expedition to Arctic" gives an account of the year-end session of the Defense Ministry board chaired by Putin; p 2 (737 words).

3. Vladimir Kuzmin article called "Steps to dialogue" points out that Russia is ready for a

dialogue on adjusting the Third Energy Package and on the South Stream gas pipeline project; p 4 (513 words).

4. Timur Alyev report "They pulled net" says that police in Dagestan have detained 52 alleged members of a cell of the radical Islamic group Hezb-e Tahrir al-Islami; p 7 (150 words).

5. Roman Markelov article called "If war starts tomorrow. Price war" doubts that oil prices may drop because of a price war that may begin as a result of disagreements within the OPEC. Oil prices are bound to grow due to rising demand in China, but the oil market will not survive in its present state beyond 2025 because alternative energy sources are taking over; pp 1, 8 (717 words).

6. Fyodor Lukyanov op-ed headlined "Far East gets closer" contemplates the U.S. foreign policy and concludes that it will get increasingly focused on Southeast Asia; p 8 (730 words).

7. Pavel Dulman article headlined "Opposition folding its tents and packing up" reports on how the riot police forced protesters out of their strongholds in central Kiev; p 9 (532 words).

Izvestia

1. Ivan Cheberko report "Arrived" says that Ukraine has raised the price on Zenit rockets so much as the Russian Space Agency has refused to buy them for the federal space program; pp 1, 3 (3,600 words).

2. Dmitry Runkevich report "Seven events allowed on Red Square" says that only seven main events will be allowed to be held on Red Square; pp 1, 4 (850 words).

3. Dmitry Runkevich et al. report "State companies find way to bypass Putin's recommendations" says that despite Putin's statements, state companies do not intend to give up expensive corporate parties at the state's expense; pp 1, 4 (900 words).

4. Anna Akhmedyeva report "Audit Chamber classifies audit of RIA Novosti" says that according to sources close to the Audit Chamber, the agency has classified a report on the audit of the activities of the news agency RIA Novosti; pp 1, 4 (500 words).

5. Natalya Bashlykova report "Mass media to be made responsible for republication of incorrect information" says that in January 2014 the State Duma committee on information policy will table a bill toughening control over the activities of mass media; p 2 (750 words).

6. Anastasia Kashevarova report "Serdyukov's case to be closed due to amnesty" says that a criminal case against former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov may be closed in connection with an amnesty; p 2 (900 words).

7. Alexei Krivoruchek report "Bulava missiles to be covered for R0.5bn" says that over 100 Bulava missiles will be placed in warehouses hidden in rocks in Severomorsk, Murmansk region; p 5 (550 words)

8. Petr Kozlov report "Igor Shuvalov to teach American establishment not to be afraid of Russia" says that First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov is on a working visit in the U.S. to focus on economic issues; p 6 (600 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Nikolai Makeyev report "Dmitry Medvedev opens plant of illusions" critically looks at the prime minister's videoblog statements saying, among other things, that 25 million jobs will be created in Russia by 2020; pp 1, 4 (600 words).

2. Irina Sukhova report "Amnesty: Who will leave?" looks at the amnesty announced in Russia and says that suspects in the Bolotnaya case and environmentalists from Greenpeace's ship Arctic Sunrise are unlikely to be amnestied; pp 1-2 (800 words).

3. Alexander Melman et al. report "Half year for 'purges'" says that the dissolution of the news agency RIA Novosti will take between three and six months; p 2 (650 words).

4. Natalya Rozhkova report "Nationalists leave Manezh Square to people from Caucasus" says that people from North Caucasus plan to hold a rally on Moscow's Manezh Square on Dec. 25; p 3 (600 words).

RBC daily

1. Stepan Opalev and Alexander Litoy article entitled "Law for Greenpeace" says that Transport Ministry has elaborated amendments to the Administrative Offences Code that envisage new fines for environmental activists like the 30 members of the crew of the Arctic Sunrise, who were detained by Russian border guards in the Pechora Sea on Sept. 19 when they tried to stage a protest against oil drilling at the Prirazlomnaya platform; p 1 (400 words).

2. Irina Yuzbekova article entitled "Internet has become too dangerous" says in 2014 the Internet as we know it may disappear with dozens of national networks with limited access to foreign resources appearing in its stead. Russian experts are commenting on the forecast; pp 1,8 (700 words)

3. Section "Photo of the day" publishes a photo from the memorial service in honor of former President Nelson Mandela at the FNB Stadium in Johannesburg on Dec. 10 and a short article enumerating the highlights of the service under the caption "Madiba's last stadium" p 5 (100 words).

4. Alexander Litoiy interview with Moscow teacher Ilya Farber, sentenced to over seven years behind bars over bribe-taking and abuse of office, headlined "The main thing is not to fear, but learn from everything and not give in". Farber talks about his life in prison and gives details of his case; p 3 (1,100 words).

5. Alisa Shtykina article entitled "Southern deal" says Chechnya and Dagestan top the anti-rating of most corrupt regions in public procurement; pp 1- 2 (600 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Observer Andrei Kolesnikov article entitled "Russia here, Russia there" predicts that after the state news agency RIA Novosti has been turned into the Rossiya Segodnya (Russia Today) international news agency, the state propaganda machine will become more blunt and omnipresent; p 3 (500 words).

2. Leonid Nikitinsky article entitled "Locked behind seven seals" looks at the broad amnesty draft that President Vladimir Putin has submitted to the State Duma; p 2 (800 words)

3. First reaction to the presidential amnesty draft from Russian human rights activists and lawyers collected under the caption "Amnesty of guilt"; pp 2-3 (600 words)

4. Pavel Kanygin article entitled "Will it resolve on its own?" says the Kiev authorities have changes their tactics; they have stopped cleaning the streets in the center of the city from snow and are pinning their hopes the Euro-Maidan will dissolve on its own. People here believe Russian television coverage of the events in Kiev are regular "propaganda diarrhoea"; p 4 (800 words).

5. Olga Musafirova article headlined "Pictures from the square" on the work of journalists during Kiev events; p 5 (800 words).

6. Yelena Milashina article entitled "Bastrykin's humiliation" looks at reasons behind the dismissal of Chechnya's main prosecutor Sergei Bobrov; pp 12-13 (2,200 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Sergei Putilov article entitled "We've been friends at whose expense?" says that the plans to write off debts of the CIS member-states as well as countries of the far abroad may become a burden too heavy to carry for the Russian economy; pp 1, 3 (1,000 words).

2. Yekaterina Dyatlovskaya article headlined "Amnesty not for all" says that about 30,000 people may be granted amnesty in accordance with President's Putin decree in view of the 20th anniversary of the Constitution. However, under the caption "No pardon for Mikhail Khodorkovsky" the authors says that some people will be excluded from the amnesty; pp 1- 2 (800 words).

3. Mikhail Vinogradov article entitled "Our Stierlitzs [allusion to main character of popular spy TV series] disclosed over insurance" says that Russian diplomats accused of fraud in the U.S. are now suspected of spying; p 2 (300 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Sergei Vladimirov article entitled "Maidan awakes when city falls asleep" on the events in Kiev in the last two weeks, with leading Ukrainian politicians commenting; p 5 (800 words).

2. Viktor Baranets report headlined "We are closing down the debts issue! I said: we are closing it down!" from the expanded Defense Ministry collegium at the Chief of Staff military academy. President Putin said the phrase in the headline in his address to the collegium, speaking about the existing housing problems in the Armed Forces; p 2 (600 words).

3. Yelena Chinkova interview with Ukrainian lawmaker Oleh Tsaryov headlined "Americans want victims!" in which the deputy says the events in Kiev are sponsored from abroad, by the U.S. in particular; p 7 (500 words).

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