

What the Papers Say, Feb. 12

February 12, 2014



Kommersant

1. Afsati Dzhusoyti article called "Olympic deduction" provides an update on the fourth day of the Sochi Olympics; p 1 (255 words).
2. Vyacheslav Kozlov and Ivan Buranov article headlined "State of alcohol accusation" says the Interior Ministry has drafted a bill that would give police officers the right to use breathalyzers on people suspected of administrative offenses. Human rights advocates say the bill would leave room for police misconduct; pp 1, 5 (771 words).
2. Grigory Tumanov and Dmitry Butrin article called "What motherlands makes money from" looks at a bill that would streamline naturalization in Russia for people buying property here and university graduates who have worked in the country for over three years; pp 1, 5 (981 words).

3. Svetlana Dementiyeva et al. article headlined "Payments frozen in Migom" says some 200 million rubles (about \$5.6 million) is stuck in the Migom money transfer system operated by Evrotrast Bank that was stripped of its license yesterday. The Central Bank may not have the tools to give the money back to the senders; pp 1, 8 (863 words).
4. Anna Pushkarskaya article called "United court to find composition balance" reports on how judges for the newly established Supreme Court are to be selected; p 2 (631 words).
5. Dmitry Butrin and Petr Netreba article called "Getting united does not mean reaching agreement" says Kommersant has got hold of the second part of a draft treaty on the establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union. The treaty that is due to be signed in May 2014 does not cover any specific areas of economic integration except for a clause on oil and gas markets; p 2 (583 words).
6. Vladimir Barinov article called "Vyacheslav Lebedev counts revenue" summarizes an annual report of the head of the Supreme Court, Vyacheslav Lebedev, on the performance of Russian courts in 2013; p 2 (754 words).
7. Vladislav Trifonov article headlined "Odintsovo runs out of soldiers" reports on the start of a trial against Dmitry Belkin, a suspected leader of a crime gang that operated in Odintsovo, Moscow region, in the 1990s; p 4 (836 words).
8. Maxim Ivanov article entitled "Scare tactics used against terrorism threat" considers the findings of a poll conducted by Levada Centre in the wake of the December attacks in Volgograd that shows 66 percent of those interviewed believe similar attacks are possible and 56 percent believe tougher punishment for terrorism could be an effective counter-measure; p 5 (346 words).
9. Yelena Chernenko article headlined "Fighter on unseen front" reports the details of the case against U.S. citizen Robert Hoffman who was sentenced to 30 years in prison for trying to spy for Russia; p 6 (730 words).
10. Sergei Strokan article called "U.S. and France meet in peace" looks at U.S.-French relations, in view of French President Francois Hollande's state visit to the U.S., says France along with Great Britain is taking over the role of America's strategic partner in Europe, while U.S.-Germany relations are getting through hard times; p 6 (476 words).
11. Natalya Skorlygina article called "Great power plant of China" says Russia's Eastern Energy Company, or VEK, may enter into partnership with China to build a coal-fueled heat and power plant in Amur Region; p 7 (604 words).

12. Vyacheslav Sukhanov and Olga Mordyushenko article headlined "Suleiman Kerimov shutting engine down" says Russian senator Suleiman Kerimov continues selling off his assets. Now he is getting rid of a stake in the gas equipment manufacturer Iskra-Turbogaz; p 10 (543 words).

Vedomosti

1. Editorial headlined "No cheap job" dispels some myths that workforce productivity in Russia has been lagging behind rising wages and says that in some sectors productivity has been rising, but is still fairly low because of businesses' unwillingness to invest in smart technology and re-skilling of their personnel; pp 1, 6 (400 words).

2. Olga Kuvshinova and Margarita Lyutova article called "Exchange rate won't help" quotes a survey by the High School of Economics that forecasts no change in consumption habits of Russian people despite the weaker ruble; pp 1, 5 (800 words).

3. Maria Zheleznova and Maxim Glikin article headlined "Navalny's sociology" says the polling service of Aleksey Navalny's campaign team, whose forecasts proved accurate during the Moscow mayoral election in September 2013, is to be incorporated in his Foundation for the Fight against Corruption and will conduct surveys across Russia; p 2 (400 words).

4. Svetlana Bocharova and Lilia Biryukova article called "Bombs under code" looks at the Supreme Court's criticism of proposed amendments to the Criminal Code that would toughen up punishment to terrorism; p 2 (400 words).

5. Margarita Lyutova article headlined "Eastern agents" says the Far East Development Ministry is setting up two nonprofit autonomous organizations to raise investment and recruit skilled personnel for projects in Russia's Far East; p 4 (500 words).

6. Editorial headlined "Something needs to be done" points out that all extra measures that have been taken in schools in the wake of the Moscow school shooting last week are short-lived and are likely to be suspended once the media lose interest in the case; p 6 (400 words).

7. Column by chief editor of Dozhd television's website Ilya Klishin headlined "New level of fake propaganda" concludes that authorities have apparently learnt how to manipulate public opinion online, and the Dozhd television survey case that quickly spread beyond the web is evidence to it; p 7 (400 words).

8. Bela Lyauv and Anton Filatov article called "Oleg Deripaska's flat-building factory" describes a residential development project in Moscow by Oleg Deripaska's Altius Development company that is estimated to be worth 400 million dollars; p 10 (600 words).

9. Darya Borisyak and Tatyana Voronova article headlined "Candidates for rescue" says the Central Bank has decided to place the troubled mortgage lender Moi Bank. Ipoteka into resolution; p 14 (700 words).

10. Artyom Mikhaylov article headlined "Kaspersky reveals spy" says that the Russian anti-virus software company Kaspersky Lab has unearthed a global cyber espionage net that was in charge of cyber attacks on state structures, embassies, oil and gas companies in 31 countries; p 16 (300 words).

11. Maria Dranishnikova article entitled "Pills selling not so well" says sales on the Russian pharmacy market grew by mere 7 percent last year amid tougher competition; p 18 (650 words).

Izvestia

1. Anastasia Alexeyevskikh article headlined "Finance Ministry asked not to extend authority of Central Bank in recalling bank licenses" says that giving the Central Bank a wider range of powers to recall bank licenses would leave room for subjective decisions; pp 1, 4 (1,100 words).

2. Anastasia Kashevarova and Svetlana Subbotina article headlined "Ministers obliged to report to All-Russia People's Front" says that a practice of ministers reporting to the All-Russia People's Front, or ONF, public organization is being introduced in Russia. ONF representatives, for their part, will later report to the president on the current state of affairs; pp 1, 4 (350 words).

3. Dmitry Yevstifeyev article headlined "Interior Ministry to check everyone for alcohol" says that the Interior Ministry has drafted a bill that would give police officers the right to use breathalyzers on people suspected of administrative offenses; pp 1, 3 (700 words).

4. Yegor Sozayev-Guryev article headlined "State will make science younger" says that President Vladimir Putin has proposed to introduce age restriction for academicians eligible for taking up the high-ranking posts in think-tanks and research centers, thus encouraging young talents to choose scientific careers; p 2 (500 words).

5. Sergei Podosenov article headlined "People do not believe Serdyukov and Vasilyeva will be punished" reports on a survey by Levada Centre saying that 44 percent of Russians believe former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov is personally responsible for large-scale fraud and embezzlement within the ministry. However, only 11 percent think his case will reach the court; p 2 (800 words).

6. Alena Sivkova article headlined "State Duma to shed light on Dozhd financing" says that LDPR party member Vadim Dengin has suggested checking the reasons for Dozhd's access to the packages of cable television producers on preferential terms; p 5 (200 words).

7. Natalya Bashlykova article headlined "Oleg Mitvol asks to check deal between Venediktov and Sberbank" says that the leader of the Green Alliance party Oleg Mitvol has asked Prosecutor General Yury Chaika to probe into the legitimacy of Sberbank issuing \$20 million to the PublicPost web portal belonging to Ekho Moskvyy editor-in-chief Alexei Venediktov. The web portal ceased to exist in summer 2013; (800 words).

8. Dmitry Runkevich article headlined "Deputies call to shut down Ekho Moskvyy" says that a number of State Duma deputies have been outraged by prominent opposition journalist and satirist Viktor Shenderovich's comparison of the Sochi Winter Games with the 1936 Berlin Olympics in the Nazi Germany; p 6 (600 words).

9. Pundit Sergei Biryukov op-ed headlined "Ukraine: is compromise scenario possible?" looks into possible ways of overcoming the Ukrainian crisis; p 9 (850 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Svetlana Gamova article headlined "Romania brakes at border with Moldova" says Romanian President Traian Basescu has told a local television that his country is calling a halt to issuing Romanian passports to Moldovan nationals after a referendum in Gagauzia showed public support for closer ties with Russia; pp 1, 7 (650 words).

2. Vladimir Mukhin article called "Soldier and student at the same time" says a "roadmap" has been drafted for implementing a plan by the Defense Ministry to introduce military training course at universities, which will make it possible to put students on the army roll; pp 1, 6 (500 words).

3. Savely Vezhin article headlined "Values matter" argues that President Vladimir Putin's "enlightened conservatism" has secured him the status of a global leader and one of the most influential people in the world; pp 1, 2 (1,100 words).

4. Alexei Gorbachev article entitled "RPR-Parnas gives choice to supporters" says the opposition RPR-Parnas party is said to be negotiating with Vladimir Ryzhkov to talk him into rejoining the party. It is also renewing registration of some of its local branches to make sure they do not split off ahead of regional elections; pp 1,3 (700 words).
5. Alexandra Samarina article headlined "Independent trade unions get poverty handout" says three organizations that are part of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia are to get funding from the government worth a total of 200 million rubles (around \$5.7 million). Experts say the federation is an extremely wealthy and nontransparent organization who seeks to fight against the government's unfair labour policies. Whether getting money from the state is consistent with this mission is a big question; pp 1, 3 (1,300 words).
6. Alina Terekhova article headlined "Bank cleansing cuts up people's deposits" says the Deposit Insurance Agency forecasts a 17 percent rise in bank deposits this year despite the fact that some 30 banks and financial organizations have lost their licenses recently; pp 1, 4 (900 words).
7. Igor Naumov article called "Sochi backed up with last year snow" reports the highlights of the Feb. 11 IOC news conference in Sochi; p 2 (400 words).
8. Andrei Melnikov op-ed headlined "Carte Blanche. Save and keep from harm" calls for having armed guards at churches; p 3 (500 words).
9. Anastasia Bashkatova article called "Russian industry might make claim on budget" says the government is likely to offer support to metals makers and car producers to make up for their debt and tax burden and a slump in production; p 4 (900 words).
10. Mikhail Sergeev article entitled "Currency wars grip Customs Union" says the Central Bank's policy of a weaker ruble has caused an overnight devaluation of the Kazakh tenge. The Kazakh authorities explained they wanted the local producers to stay competitive as Russia is the country's main trade partner; p 4 (900 words).
11. Alexander Uss article headlined "Turning to the East" previews the 11th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum, outlines options for the economic development of Siberia; p 5 (2,900 words).
12. Svetlana Gavrilina article called "'Warsaw Prisoner' sentenced to four years in colony" says a St. Petersburg court has for the first time ever given a prison sentence to a heritage protection activist, finding him guilty of using violence against police; p 6 (600 words).

13. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "Putin will continue conversation with Yanukovich after Games" offers an update on the developments in the crisis-hit Ukraine, speculates that Russia might have taken time out to hold the Olympics and wait and see if President Viktor Yanukovich gets more accommodating; p 7 (1,500 words).

14. Anton Khodasevich article called "Belarus on brink of bankruptcy and devaluation" views Belarus' trade deficit last year as a sign of the looming cabinet dismissal; p 7 (600 words).

15. Yevgeny Grigoriyev article headlined "European Union promises Kiev carrot and hints at stick" says that foreign ministers of 28 states have demanded on a meeting in Brussels that Ukraine form a new government with representatives of opposition in it, implement a constitutional reform and organize early presidential election; p 8 (400 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Irina Krasnopolskaya and Irina Nevinnaya op-ed headlined "Pain" raises the alarm about a corrupt system of distributing narcotic pain killers that effectively makes it impossible for terminally ill people to obtain them unless they are admitted to hospital or a hospice. The issue got publicity after Rear Admiral Vyacheslav Apanasenko, who had cancer, killed himself because he could not bear the pain anymore; pp 1, 15 (847 words).

2. Sergei Ptichkin article headlined "Fighter dances solo" focuses on Russian exhibits at this year's Singapore Airshow; p 8 (721 words).

3. Fedor Lukyanov column headlined "Presentiment of conservative turnaround?" wonders if the referendum in Switzerland that back immigration quotas indicates a set trend towards right-wing views in Europe; p 13 (686 words).

4. Yevgeny Shestakov article headlined "Giraffe executed in European manner" comments on the culling of a giraffe at Copenhagen zoo, denouncing it "as the most disgusting crime against animals that was committed in a country that sees itself as the creme de la creme of civilization"; p 13 (727 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Lina Panchenko article headlined "Different prisons of Serdyukov's girlfriends" features a complaint letter from Irina Yegorova, the only defendant in the Oboronservis case still kept in a detention facility; pp 1, 4 (600 words).

2. Anastasia Baikalova article headlined "Nabiullina keeps on thinning banks" reports on revamping the licenses of Evrotrast Bank and Link Bank; p 2 (400 words).

3. Nikolai Vardul article headlined "Who dropped ruble and why" looks into the recent fluctuations of the ruble rate; p 4 (1,100 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Olga Musafirova article headlined "Stand or fall" speculates on who will accept Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich if he has to flee the country; p 5 (500 words).

2. Maria Yepifanova article headlined "Either raider siege or friendly meeting" says that co-chair of the RPR-Parnas party Vladimir Ryzhkov has quit the party leaving it to his former allies Boris Nemtsov and Mikhail Kasyanov; pp 7-8 (800 words).

3. Vladimir Pastukhov article headlined "Zigzag for luck" speculates on what the new liberal Kremlin policy may mean; pp 8-9 (1,500 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Vera Moslakova article headlined "Obstacle line" reports that Russian lawmakers have passed a bill setting additional grounds for carrying out unscheduled checks of NGOs; p 2 (500 words).

2. Artyom Lunkov article headlined "People with criminal record not allowed into lawmakers" says that lawmakers are expected to consider a bill obliging candidates to disclose their previous criminal record in the bulletins; p 2 (400 words).

3. Arina Raksina report headlined "Answer is no" says that President Vladimir Putin has said the city of Sochi would not receive more investments after the Olympics; p 3 (550 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Dmitry Babich article headlined "You, heart of Europe" comments on the situation in Ukraine; p 10 (350 words).

Argumenty i Fakty

1. Oleg Tkachenko and Alexander Dugin article headlined "Ukrainian game of patience" speculates on the future of Ukrainian protests; p 16 (1,000 words).

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