

What the Papers Say, March 13, 2014

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Kommersant

1. Natalia Skorlygina and Yelizaveta Kuznetsova article headlined "Crimea to get Olympic energy" says that Russia may soon transfer mobile gas turbine power plants with a total capacity of over 200 MW from Sochi to Crimea to ensure the power supply in the peninsula in case of an energy blockade; pp 1-2 (636 words).
2. Anna Zanina et al. article called "Turnover of property" looks at how Ukrainian businesses based in Crimea may have to change their registration and nationality in line with Russian laws if the republic joins Russia; pp 1, 10 (1,239 words).
3. Sofia Samokhina and Maxim Ivanov article called "None of the above not for everyone" says a bill reinstating "none of the above" option in ballots is likely to be amended to restrict the use of the option to municipal elections only; pp 1, 3 (474 words).

4. Alexandra Mertsalova et al. article headlined "Crimea to get help from trade unions" forecasts that the number of Russian tourists visiting Crimea this summer might drop by 90 percent, but several Russian companies are ready to come to the rescue by sending their employees to Crimea on vacation; pp 1, 10 (564 words).
5. Natalia Gorodetskaya article called "Local government to be built into vertical in new way" contains criticism of a municipal government reform that is being considered by the State Duma as it effectively abolishes mayoral elections and strips local governments of financial powers; p 2 (585 words).
6. Dmitry Butrin article called "FAS told to be more specific" reports from a meeting of the board of the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service, FAS, where First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov said the merger of the service and the Federal Tariffs Service remained on the agenda; p 2 (595 words).
7. Anna Pushkarskaya article headlined "Right to rallies clashes with right to rest" says the Constitutional Court is to hear a complaint from Andrei Yakimov of the Russian human rights center Memorial, challenging a provision in the law on public gatherings that made it impossible for the organization to timely notify the St. Petersburg city authorities of an anti-fascist march during the New Year break; p 3 (476 words).
8. Alexander Chernykh article called "Introduction of school uniforms bulging at seams" says a bill that would introduce school uniforms in Russia has not been passed by the Russian State Duma yet because the Education Ministry and the Ministry of Industry and Trade disagree on amendments to it; p 3 (504 words).
9. Alexander Zheglov article headlined "Case of FSB colonel solved by plea bargain" provides details of a criminal case in connection with the murder of businessman Idris Fayzullin that is thought to have been organized by two Federal Security Service colonels; p 4 (624 words).
10. Ksenia Dementiyeva article headlined "Cheap mortgage still too far" discusses building societies as a way of bringing mortgage interest rates down and concludes that the project that proved successful in Krasnodar region is unlikely to be copied nationwide because it would require government subsidies; pp 5, 8 (632 words).
11. Yegor Popov article called "Shopfloors drifting away from Baltzavod" says the Baltysky Zavod shipyard has lost yet another lawsuit to secure its ownership rights for its propeller facility that may now be put up for auction, making it difficult for the wharf to fulfil its contracts with the Defense Ministry; p 5 (583 words).
12. Nikolai Sergeev article headlined "Police General goes beyond eavesdropping authority"

specifies the charges brought against the regional police chief of Sakhalin, Vladislav Belotserkovsky, who was detained on 11 March; p 4 (400 words).

Vedomosti

1. Natalia Ishchenko article called "Magnit to accept cards" says the Magnit discount supermarket chain is the last one in Russia to start accepting card payments for purchases in its neighborhood grocery shops; pp 1,19 (500 words).
2. Alexei Nikolsky article headlined "Russia will have to localize" examines the implications of a possible EU ban on arms exports to Russia that might be imposed amid the Ukraine standoff; pp 1-2 (550 words).
3. Editorial called "Escalation of loyalty" discusses an open letter that over 100 Russian cultural figures have signed in support of President Vladimir Putin's policy towards Ukraine as an example of how society is mobilizing in view of war; pp 1, 6 (400 words).
4. Lilia Biryukova et al. article headlined "Construction element" says the owner of the construction company SU-155, Mikhail Balakin, may compete for a seat in the Moscow City Duma in the election scheduled for September this year; p 2 (500 words).
5. Polina Khimshiashvili article called "neighbors are waiting" notes that the former Soviet republics are reluctant to voice their stance on the Russia-Ukraine crisis as they are waiting to see which of the conflicting sides comes out as the winner; p 3 (350 words).
6. Sergei Titov article headlined "New megaregulator" says a new agency established as a result of the merger of the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service and the Federal Tariffs Service might not be subordinate to the Russian government to stay independent from officials trying to influence its decisions; p 4 (500 words).
7. Margarita Papchenkova and Maxim Tovkaylo article called "Pension privatization" reports that private pension funds and asset management companies have been allowed to invest in securities of state-owned companies being privatized; p 4 (450 words).
8. Editorial called "Distant local government" slams the new local government reform that abolishes direct mayoral elections in big cities and warns that Russia will soon turn into a conglomerate of feudal domains because governors' power will not be counterbalanced by strong mayors; p 6 (400 words)

9. Op-ed by Alexei Zakharov of the Higher School of Economics called "Crimea's choice, Russia's choice" argues that the outcome of the March 16 referendum in Crimea is not at all certain and that the entire campaign of having Crimea join Russia does not seem to have been well-thought-through and is quite risky for President Vladimir Putin personally and for Russia as a whole; p 6 (800 words)

10. Polina Khimshiashvili interview with Konstantin Kosachyov, the head of the Federal Agency for Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation, called "Attendance at ballet classes grows manifold during crisis". He speaks about Ukraine and boosting Russia's image abroad; pp 8-9 (2, 400 words).

11. Igor Tsukanov article called "Vimpelcom gets involved with wrong people" says Russian mobile phone operator Vimpelcom is being investigated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC, and the Dutch authorities over its operation in Uzbekistan; p 10 (530 words).

12. Maxim Tovkaylo et al. article headlined "Russia not calling in foreign investors" says both Sberbank and VTB have postponed their investment forums over the situation in Ukraine. The St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, however, is still on the agenda; p 11(500 words).

13. Ksenia Boletskaya et al. article headlined "To sack without giving reasons" looks into possible reasons behind the abrupt removal of the head of one of Russia's top news websites, Galina Timchenko; p 24 (700 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Yekaterina Trifonova article titled "Foreign workers to find shelter at adaptation centers" says a bill has been tabled to the Russian parliament that stipulates the establishment of adaptation centers for labour migrants. A dozen of them is planned to open in Russia by the end of the year. Experts say, however, that locals may not be happy to have such centers in their neighborhood; pp 1-2 (542 words).

2. Alexandra Samarina and Alexei Gorbachev article called "Crimea swallows Russian opposition" points out that opposition parties that have no representation in the Russian parliament are reluctant to openly criticize the Russian authorities' actions in Crimea as they fear to come in confrontation with their voters' opinion that is largely supportive of the Kremlin's policy; pp 1, 3 (1,697 words).

3. Mikhail Sergeyev article headlined "China benefits from Ukraine's disintegration" looks at how China might benefit from the collapse of the Ukrainian industry and closer economic ties with Russia, and mulls over the feasibility of the West imposing sanctions against Russia; pp 1, 4 (797 words).

4. Anastasia Bashkatova article called "Government encourages internal migration" spells out the provisions of the Labour Ministry's program to encourage worker's mobility; pp 1, 4 (1,088 words).

5. Tatyana Ivzhenko article titled "Crimean Tatars have their own opinion" quotes an expert as saying that Crimean Tatars have a strong say in ensuring stability in Crimea as their community is big enough to turn Crimea into a second Kosovo. On March 12, Mustafa Dzhemilev representing the Tatar community in Crimea spoke with President Vladimir Putin over the phone; pp 1, 5 (1,269 words).

6. Yevgenya Novikova article called "Tripoli losing control over oil" reports on a new wave of the political crisis in Libya; pp 1, 7 (664 words).

7. Editorial headlined "Who will be hit by sanctions" comes to a conclusion that economic sanctions imposed on Russia are likely to be contagious and cause a large-scale crisis in Europe; p 2 (448 words).

8. Svetlana Gavrilina article titled "St. Petersburg to share bed linen with Crimea" reports that humanitarian aid is being raised in St. Petersburg for people in Crimea as well as for "refugees escaping from Ukraine" who will have to be accommodated in refugee camps; p 2 (555 words).

9. Ivan Rodin article headlined "Prop for governors" argues that the key purpose of the new local government reform to be considered by the Russian parliament is not to abolish direct mayoral elections, but to strip people of the power to directly elect their municipal councils. As a result, the ruling United Russia party is almost guaranteed to dominate local government bodies; p 3 (771 words).

10. Andrei Serenko column "Carte Blanche. To ban borsch with dumplings" says the Ukrainian crisis is likely to be exploited by politicians in Russian provinces in their election campaigns, sometimes in the most ridiculous manner such as an appeal of a Volgograd legislator to U.S. President Barack Obama telling the latter to hand Alaska back to Russia; p 3 (1,075 words).

11. Alina Terekhova article called "Russia is not under threat of 30-year plan" wonders why strategic planning does not work for Russia; p 4 (547 words).

12. Viktoria Panfilova article headlined "Matvyenko and Rahmon to talk about migrants" previews a meeting between Russian Federation Council speaker Valentina Matvyenko and Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon in Dushanbe today; p 6 (745 words).

13. Yevgeny Grigoriyev article titled "Berlin walking in step with Washington" looks at how German Chancellor Angela Merkel has to adjust her policy on Ukraine in line with the U.S. stance; p 7 (538 words).

14. Yury Paniyev article called "Russia being scolded with sanctions and army manoeuvres" looks at the most recent steps being taken against Russia in the run-up to the March 16 referendum in Crimea; p 7 (860 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Op-ed by chair of the Constitutional Court of Russia Valery Zorkin called "Civilization of law" criticizes the current Ukrainian leadership for the lack of principles and disrespect for the law and calls for an investigation into acts of violence in Kiev; pp 1, 8 (2,000 words).

2. Kira Latukhina article headlined "To preserve and multiply" reports on a meeting on economic issues that Putin has held in his Bocharov Ruchey residence; p 2 (400 words).

3. Vitaly Petrov article titled "Majority support" shares the results of a poll by the Public Onion Foundation showing that 53 percent of those interviewed (up from 48 percent a week ago) would vote for Putin if a presidential election were held next Sunday; p 2 (300 words).

4. Petr Likhomanov article called "Modest charm of Nazism" profiles female activists of Ukrainian nationalist movements; p 9 (400 words).

5. Alexander Yemelyanenko and Ilya Maximov interview with the president of the Russian Academy of Sciences Vladimir Fortov where he speaks about cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian scientists; p 7 (900 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta (weekly)

1. Igor Yelkov article headlined "Half sharp Crimea" looks at the situation in Crimea in the run-up to the March 16 referendum; pp 4-5 (1,600 words).

2. Igor Zubkov article headlined "Toss hryvnyas" ponders on possible financial benefits for Russia after Crimea switches to the ruble; p 7 (400 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Mikhail Rostovksy column headlined "Operation Y and other adventures of Zhirik" slams the proposal of LDPR head Vladimir Zhirinovskiy to establish a "Central Asian Federal District" voiced on February 23. Zhirinovskiy's reckless idea won him another "five minutes of fame", but was taken seriously by Russia's neighbors in Central Asia where nationalist sentiments are already on the rise; pp 1-2 (703 words).

2. Yekaterina Petukhova interview with the head of the Crimean electoral commission, headlined "Ballots for Crimean referendum being transported under tight escort", on preparations for the March 16 referendum; pp 1, 3 (440 words).

3. Marina Ozerova article called "Native speaker of Russian and his grandmother: New rules of granting citizenship" details a bill facilitating the procedure of granting Russian citizenship to people who speak Russian and whose ancestors used to live in Russia; pp 1-2 (835 words).

4. Oleg Bazak article headlined "Nobody to elect" says none of the potential candidates for the Ukrainian leadership are in a hurry to file their application for being formally registered as presidential candidates; p 3 (697 words).

5. Op-ed by pundit Mikhail Delyagin titled "Rich Russia being kept in poverty" criticizes the federal government for keeping Russian regions on short rations, thus impeding their development; p 3 (1,064 words).

Izvestia

1. Lyudmila Podobedova article headlined "Rosneft and Drillmec to set up joint venture" says that Russian oil company Rosneft will set up a joint company with Italian Drillmec to produce drilling and oilfield equipment; pp 1, 4 (900 words).

2. Sergei Podosenov article called "Governors sabotaging presidential decrees face resignation" says that if regional authorities do not try to raise effectiveness and fulfil goals set by President Vladimir Putin in his May decrees, they may be dismissed; pp 1, 3 (1,400 words).

3. Alexei Krivoruchek article headlined "Defense Ministry returns navy reconnaissance on border with Finland" says that a regiment of the Russian Northern Fleet will be deployed in a village 50km away from the Finnish-Russian border. Experts link this move to Arctic exploration; p 7 (450 words).

RBK Daily

1. Katerina Kitayeva et al. report "Black Lenta" says that Alexander Mamut, owner of the Afisha-Rambler-SUP company that owns the Russian news website Lenta.ru, has dismissed the chief editor of Lenta.ru, Galina Timchenko. By doing so, Mamut depreciated his media assets, article says; pp 1, 9 (1,100 words).

2. Vladimir Pavlov et al. article headlined "They will suffer for Putin" says that EU countries have agreed to tighten sanctions against Russia. This decision is to be approved at the EU foreign ministers meeting on March 17; pp 1-2 (1,200 words).

3. Alexander Litoi report "Former Pussy Riot to open Zone of Law in Mordovia" says that members of the Russian punk band Pussy Riot, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova and Maria Alyokhina, who have been released from custody under amnesty, are opening the office of their human rights organization Zona Prava, or Zone of Law, in a village in Mordovia; p 2 (150 words).

4. Maria Makutina report "President's 17 friends" says that senators appointed by President Vladimir Putin will appear in the Federation Council; p 2 (400 words).

5. Andrei Korzin report "Tough scenario" says that according to experts from the Higher School of Economics, this spring Russia will slide into the rare by world standards state of stagflation, when the inflation rate is high and the economic growth rate slows down; p 3 (700 words).

6. Roman Badanin interview with Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets; p 5 (1,000 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Vardan Ogandzhanyan report "Point of indefinite destination" says that the Russian authorities are preparing to close the single-industry towns that the Economy Ministry will recognize as "having no prospects". The closure of single-industry towns may cause disturbances and damage the country's economy, article says; pp 1-2 (850 words).

2. Yana Sergeyeva report "Difficult 100 days begin" says that Ukraine is taking austerity measures as the new Ukrainian authorities "limit officials' appetites"; p 2 (600 words).
3. Mark Agatov report "Plans of 'new life'" looks at the situation in Crimea and says that Kiev has "finally lost control over the peninsula"; p 2 (550 words).
4. Vera Moslakova report "Maximum chain of command" says that the State Duma is ready to carry out a reform of local government to the prejudice of public influence; p 2 (500 words).
5. Vitaly Slovetsky report "Danger around corner" says that the Tatarstan authorities have "all of a sudden noticed radicals" that have been operating in the republic for many years; p 2 (550 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Andrei Ryabtsev report "All illegal groups will be given chance to leave Crimea without weapons" looks at the news conference of Rustam Temirgalyev, deputy prime minister of the self-proclaimed Crimean government; p 3 (700 words).
2. Andrei Ryabtsev report "'They gave us helmets and truncheons ... It is pure comedy!'" looks at the situation in Crimea's military units surrounded by local self-defense forces; p 4 (700 words).
3. Mikhail Bocharov report "They want to take G8 and football from us" says that members of the U.S. Congress have called on President Barack Obama to "punish Moscow for Crimea"; p 6 (600 words).
4. Yelena Krivyakina report "Leader of Right Sector arrested in absentia in Moscow" says that Moscow's Basmany court has issued an arrest warrant in absentia for Dmytro Yarosh, leader of the Ukrainian radical nationalist group Right Sector; p 6 (200 words).
5. Sergei Polosatov report "They planned to organize Maidan on Bolotnaya square for \$30,000" says that Konstantin Lebedev, an associate of Left Front leader Sergei Udaltsov, has said that Russian opposition activists planned to "organize a protest camp using Georgian money in May 2012"; pp 1, 8 (400 words).

Trud

1. Sergei Ilchenko report "Crimea: Holding out during night and day" says that the Kiev authorities plan to send troops to Crimea before 16 March to disrupt the referendum on the peninsula's status; p 2 (800 words).
2. Sergei Rusev report "Yanukovych in Rostov-on-Don and uncle in Kiev" looks at the news conference of former President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovych in Rostov-on-Don; political analyst Fyodor Lukyanov provides comment; p 3 (700 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda weekly

1. Alexander Kots interview "What awaits Crimea and Russia in case of merger" with a member of the expert council under the Crimean council of ministers, who comments on Crimea's future should it merge with Russia; pp 3-4 (1,300 words).

Tvoi Den

1. Anton Stepanov report "Bandera's grin" about a Ukrainian businessman and a Euromaidan supporter who has "called for killing Russians in Crimea and Ukraine"; pp 1-2 (450 words).

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