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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

# What the Papers Say, July 25, 2012

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**Igor Tabakov**

### Kommersant

1. Ivan Buranov et al. report headlined "Hand Out Weapons" comments on the proposal of Federation Council member Alexander Torshin to allow free trade of short-barrel firearms in Russia. The Public Chamber and the Interior Ministry oppose the plans. Not all United Russia members support Torshin either; pp 1, 4 (1,096 words).

2. Maxim Ivanov article headlined "About Village Souls" comments on the United Russia primaries and preparation for the gubernatorial election in Novgorod region, where municipal deputies are becoming increasingly valuable; pp 1-2 (1,367 words).

3. Alexei Sokovnin article headlined "Mikhail Khodorkovsky Appeals to Inspectorate" says the Russian Supreme Court has obliged the Moscow City Court to consider complaints in the Yukos case. Mikhail Khodorkovsky's lawyers are skeptical about the revision of the case; pp 1, 5 (614 words).

4. Kirill Melnikov article headlined "BP Moves Closer to Exit" says that the TNK-BP oil company risks turning into a state-controlled firm as Rosneft has shown interest in buying the BP stake in the Russian-British joint venture; pp 1, 9 (834 words).

5. Taisia Bekbulatova et al. report headlined "Regional Development Ministry Gets Another Ex-Governor" says that former Primorye region Governor Sergei Darkin has been appointed deputy minister of regional development; p 2 (556 words).

6. Natalya Bashlykova article headlined "Observers to Be Punished for Aggressiveness" says United Russia wants to impose strict regulation on the work of observers during elections. The opposition believes the ruling party is losing control over the voting process in the country; p 2 (724 words).

7. Dmitry Butrin article headlined "The Actions of State Are Always Boring and Undistinguished" comments on Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev chairing a meeting on development of Russian business; p 3 (1,019 words).

8. Unattributed article in the column "Direct Speech" polls politicians and public figures who express their opinion on the possibility of selling guns to individuals in Russia; p 4 (512 words).

9. Yelena Chernenko et al. report headlined "Syria Recognized to Be Chemically Dangerous" says the West is using reports on chemical weapons stored by Bashar Assad's regime as a pretext for invading the country; p 6 (632 words).

10. Sergei Strokan article headlined "China Has Territorial Claims to U.S. Bases" says that China is questioning the status of Okinawa Island where a U.S. base is stationed; p 6 (574 words).

11. Kirill Belyaninov article headlined "Republican Candidate to Be Shown to World" comments on foreign policy plans unveiled by Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney; p 6 (511 words).

### Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Viktoria Panfilova report "Tajikistan. It Is Bad War" comments on an operation against rebels in the eastern Gorno-Badakhshan autonomous region of Tajikistan; pp 1, 6 (951 words).

2. Svetlana Gamova article headlined "Lukashenko Hit With Strikes" says the Belarussian authorities are using Russian energy resources and financial support to curb protest activity in the country; pp 1-2 (636 words).

3. Ivan Rodin and Olga Shulga article headlined "Residential Registration Being Introduced for Observers" comments on the limitations on the work of observers, which United Russia wants to impose following the scandalous voting in the town of Kasimov; pp 1, 3 (732 words).

4. Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "Increased Openness of Skype" says that reports on the possibility of wiretapping Skype conversations have caused panic among Web users; pp 1, 3 (503 words).

5. Igor Naumov article headlined "Short Barrels May Make Russians Equal" comments on economic benefits and security disadvantages of the plans to allow Russians to buy short-barrel guns; pp 1, 4 (766 words).

6. Gleb Postnov article headlined "Police Look for Enemies of Muftiyat" says that over 10 people have been arrested as part of the probe into the assassination attempt on Muslim leaders in Tatarstan; pp 1-2 (787 words).

7. Editorial headlined "Last Call for World Economy" analyzes how the EU financial crisis affects the world economy and Russia. The article says Russia should not keep its foreign currency reserves in euros; p 2 (540 words).

8. Mikhail Solopov article headlined "Politics as Vocation and as Indulgence" analyzes reasons for corruption among the Russian ruling elite and notes that businessmen are seeking the posts of State Duma and Federation Council deputies to get immunity from the law-enforcement agencies; p 2 (696 words).

9. Eduard Lozansky article headlined "Long Live Selective Justice" says the U.S.A. makes a mistake paying attention to rights violations in Russia only; p 3 (724 words).

10. Alexei Gorbachev and Olga Shulga article headlined "It Gets too Crowded on Air" says that TV presenter and opposition activist Ksenia Sobchak has been ousted from the last federal TV project she was hosting; p 3 (550 words).

11. Sergei Kulikov article headlined "British Feel Smell of Budget Money" says the Russian oil company Rosneft has expressed readiness to buy the BP stake in the TNK-BP joint venture; p 4 (797 words).

12. Nikolai Surkov article headlined "It Smells of Chemical Weapons in Middle East" says the UN and the U.S.A. have warned Bashar Assad against the use of chemical weapons; p 6 (545 words).

### Vedomosti

1. Oksana Gavshina and Timofei Dzyadko article headlined "Sechin Responds to Fridman" says that Rosneft has joined the struggle for the 50 percent stake in the TNK-BP oil company; pp 1, 8 (700 words).

2. Olga Plotonova and Margarita Papchenkova article headlined "Another Ruble from Central Bank" says the Russian Central Bank has broadened the fluctuation corridor for the ruble and reduced the volume of currency interventions; p 1 (500 words).

3. Tatyana Romanova article headlined "Year of Hedgehog" says that the Otkritie financial corporation is going to use characters from the iconic Soviet cartoon, "Hedgehog in Fog," for its advertising. Experts doubt the effectiveness of the plans; p 1 (600 words).

4. Editorial headlined "We Open Curtain" analyzes Russian fears in relation to the country's accession to the WTO; pp 1, 4 (600 words).

5. Maria Zheleznova report "Enough Agents" says that United Russia member Yevgeny

Fedorov, the author of the bill on mass media, has decided to cancel his initiative until it is approved by the government. The latter is against the bill; p 2 (500 words).

6. Anastasia Kornya report "Hint to Khodorkovsky" says that the second case of Yukos will be returned for consideration to the Moscow City Court; p 2 (600 words).

7. Editorial "Access to Internet" says that according to research by the company Synovate Comcon, Russia's TV audience is decreasing and people's trust in TV channels as a source of information is falling in Russia, p 4 (300 words).

### Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Alena Uzbekova interview "Valuable Observations" with Sergei Dankvert, head of the Federal Service for Veterinary Control, speaking on the Russian accession to the WTO; pp 1, 5 (1,046 words).

2. Yury Gavrilov interview "March to Credit Card!" with Deputy Defense Minister Tatyana Shvetsova speaking on the use of bank cards by conscripts in the Russian Armed Forces and on salaries of career officers; pp 1, 6 (2,745 words).

3. Natalya Yachmennikova article headlined "No Contact" reports on failure of the Progress cargo spacecraft to dock with the International Space Station; p 3 (450 words).

4. Anna Fedyakina article headlined "Hijab Put on Live Broadcast" comments on a new Egyptian TV channel for women where all journalists are wearing Hijabs; p 8 (436 words).

5. Marina Gritsyuk interview with presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District Viktor Ishayev; p 17 (2,000 words).

### Izvestia

1. Konstantin Pukemov article headlined "Rosgidromet Creates New System of Forecast After Tragedy in Krymsk" says that the Rosgidromet weather-forecasting service is working on a new effective system of forecasting natural disasters following the deadly flood in the Krasnodar region; pp 1, 8 (717 words).

2. Dmitry Runkevich article headlined "Parties to Be Double-Checked for Constitutionality" says the State Duma Constitutional Affairs Committee is checking the documents of political parties to make sure that they comply with the Russian Constitution; pp 1-2 (579 words).

3. Ivan Cheberko article headlined "Glonass Satellites Lose Orientation" says that three Glonass satellites broke down last week; pp 1, 9 (519 words).

4. Pyer Sidibe article headlined "Regional Development Ministry and Federal Security Service to Deal With Ethnic Conflicts" says the Russian authorities are drafting measures to prevent ethnic conflicts; p 2 (467 words).

5. Anastasia Kashevarova article headlined "Berezovsky Threatens to Bypass Law on NGOs" says Russian tycoon in exile Boris Berezovsky says he will manage to continue financing Russian NGOs despite the new law declaring such organizations foreign agents. Berezovsky

also expressed support to Sergei Udaltsov and criticized the other opposition leader, Alexei Navalny; p 2 (548 words).

6. Yegor Sozayev-Guryev report "Country Modernizes Its Response to ABM" says that Russia allocates 40 billion rubles ($1.2 billion) to improve the missile system Iskander-M; p 3 (550 words).

7. Dina Ushakova report "Party Against WTO to Be Registered in Russia" says that Konstantin Babkin, head of the company Rosagromash, plans to unite opposition forces that are against Russia's joining the WTO; pp 1, 3 (700 words).

8. Konstantin Volkov article headlined "Kurds Occupy Syria's Oil-Extracting Regions" comments on the offensive by Kurds in the northeast of Syria; p 5 (491 words).

9. Pavel Panov report "China and Russia Compete for Right to Build Nuclear Power Plant in Britain" says that Rosatom (Russian state corporation for atomic energy) is studying preliminary variants of working on the British market; p 5 (300 words).

10. Boris Mezhuyev report "Catch Bear Before You Sell His Skin" looks at the Russian opposition, the political situation in the country and at political analyst Stanislav Belkovsky's comment on the Russian opposition; p 10 (900 words).

11. Alexander Sekatsky report "Syrian People and Other People" looks at the situation in Syria; p 10 (700 words).

12. Sergei Roganov report "Urals Embryos and Modern Cannibalism" looks at human embryos that have been found dumped in the Sverdlovsk region; p 10 (600 words).

### RBK Daily

1. Yulia Sinyayeva and Yaroslav Nikolayev article headlined "We Fail to Get Personnel" says that Russia's accession to the WTO requires hiring 300 more officials to work in Geneva. Moscow also needs economists and lawyers capable of defending Russia's interests on the international arena; p 1 (650 words).

2. Interview with Alexei Chesnakov, senior United Russia member, who has won the municipal election in the town of Kasimov to be later nominated to the Federation Council. Chesnakov denies allegations of ballot stuffing during the voting and criticizes the work of observers; p 2 (800 words).

3. Galina Starinskaya report "Sechin holds talks with BP again" says that Rosneft wants to buy a 50 percent stake in BP; p 6 (800 words).

### Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Natalya Vedeneyeva article headlined "Will We Outdo Everyone With Pole?" says that a Moscow State University professor has suggested that the Arctic Ocean be renamed into the Russian Ocean. Experts believe the plans to be unrealistic; pp 1-2 (641 words).

2. Vasily Mironov article headlined "Web Cameras Thrown to Storerooms" says that

the project to equip all polling stations with web cameras, which has cost 13 billion rubles (about $400 million), has proven to be useless as the cameras are not being used; pp 1, 4 (459 words).

3. Darya Fedotova article headlined "Sobchak to Come to Take Her Money on Thursday" says that a court hearing of Ksenia Sobchak's case demanding that the money seized during a search in her flat be returned, is to take place on July 26; pp 1-2 (459 words).

4. Tatyana Cherednikova article headlined "'Occupy' Moves to Izmailovo?" says that public hearings of the plan to develop Moscow's Izmailovo park have grown into a protest rally; pp 1, 4 (580 words).

5. Mikhail Zubov article headlined "Elections to Turn into Feeder" says the Russian authorities are drafting a bill on privileges to members of elections committees making them more loyal to the state; p 1 (579 words).

6. Anastasia Rodionova interview headlined "Opposition No Longer Exists for Me" with Alena Popova, an activist organizing the work of volunteers in Krymsk, who criticizes the opposition for its failure to provide help to people affected by the devastating flood; p 2 (1,089 words).

7. Ignat Kalinin article headlined "Midas Gift to Nonsystemic Opposition" says the police have been sent to gather information on volunteers in Krymsk after the flood; p 2 (481 words).

### Novaya Gazeta

1. Pavel Felgengauer article headlined "Table of Chemical Arguments" says the world community has 10 days left to prevent a war in Syria; p 8 (1,029 words).

2. Yelena Masuik interview with State Duma Deputy and opposition activist Gennady Gudkov speaking on President Vladimir Putin losing public support and saying that the enlargement of the so-called Magnitsky list may result in a revolt among the Russian elite; pp 10-11 (2,750 words).

### Moskovskiye Novosti

1. Galina Papernaya report "Embryo Shock" says that human embryos have been found dumped in the Sverdlovsk region; pp 1, 3 (700 words).

2. Yekaterina Butorina report "Last Chance for Khodorkovsky" says that the head of the Supreme Court has ordered that hearings in relation to Mikhail Khodorkovsky's complaints should be resumed; p 3 (600 words).

### Noviye Izvestia

1. Yulia Savina report "Regional Interest" says that decentralization promised by the authorities to constituent parts of Russia may be used to fight against "incorrectly" elected governors; pp 1-2 (850 words).

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