The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

What the Papers Say, Aug. 24, 2012

By The Moscow Times

August 23, 2012

Igor Tabakov

Kommersant

1. Natalya Skorlygina and Olga Mordyushenko article headlined "Gazprom Gives Consumers to Novatek" says that E.On Russia has decided to replace its gas supplier, a subsidiary of gas giant Gazprom, with the independent gas producer Novatek; pp 1, 9 (587 words).

2. Alexander Igorev article headlined "Aid to Police to Turn Into Pay Desk" focuses on an Interior Ministry draft order regulating a mechanism for paying people for their assistance in solving crimes; pp 1, 3 (517 words).

3. Grigory Tumanov et al. article headlined "Opposition Distributed Among Park Cells" says that Moscow authorities have assigned the city's Sokolniki and Gorky parks as places for opposition protests. The protest venues will be opened on Jan. 1, 2013; pp 1, 3 (934 words).

4. Alexandra Bayazitova et al. article headlined "Half a Kilogram of Gold for One Person" says

the Finance Ministry has suggested making "featureless" bullion accounts, which total 160 billion rubles ($5 billion), legally equivalent to bank deposits; pp 1, 8 (890 words).

5. Natalya Bashlykova article headlined "President Imbued With Ryazan Region Problems" says that President Vladimir Putin has met with Ryazan region acting Governor Oleg Kovalyov, nominated by the United Russia party for the regional election, to discuss the region's socioeconomic development. The governor's press service and United Russia see the meeting as a sign of the president's support for Kovalyov; p 2 (527 words).

6. Maxim Ivanov and Ivan Safronov article headlined "Kremlin Bringing Regions Into Line" says that the Russian State Council has been given so-called "political planning" functions similar to those that the president's directorate for domestic policy has. The move is meant to ensure closer cooperation with important governors ahead of the fall elections; p 2 (842 words).

7. Yury Belov and Sofya Samokhina article headlined "Vladimir Ryzhkov Returns to Hometown" says that Vladimir Ryzhkov, one of the leaders of the Republican Party and the Party of People's Freedom, will top the party list in the Barnaul city Duma election in Altai region; p 2 (473 words).

8. Maxim Ivanov and Sofya Samokhina article headlined "Vladimir Putin Loses Trust" says that a public opinion poll conducted by the Levada Center has shown that 49 percent of Russians do not want either Vladimir Putin or Dmitry Medvedev to become the next Russian president in 2018. The top leaders' approval ratings have fallen to the record low indices of December 2011; p 3 (471 words).

9. Unattributed article in the Direct Speech column headlined "Where Do You Gather?" features opposition leaders' comments on the assignment of two Moscow parks as protest venues; p 3 (497 words).

10. Natalya Gorodetskaya article headlined "Competition to Be Organized for Deputy Ministers" says that experts from the Strategic Initiatives Agency and the Open Government group have presented a list of criteria to select candidates for the posts of deputy ministers and heads of federal agencies and services; p 3 (607 words).

11. Viktor Khamrayev and Musa Muradov interview with Moscow region governor Sergei Shoigu headlined "'If Emergency Situations Minister Becomes Popular Politician in Country, It Means Something Is Wrong in Country'," in which he speaks about problems the Moscow region is facing, the merger of Moscow and the region, and dismissals of mayors; p 4 (2,804 words).

12. Sergei Mashkin article headlined "Beating is Not Reason for Release" says the Moscow City Court has extended until December a man's term in custody on charges of murdering Colonel Yury Budanov, despite the fact that he was recently beaten up. Lawyers wanted the court to release the man on bail or put him under house arrest; p 5 (485 words).

13. Alexander Zheglov article headlined "Editorial Staff United for Probe" says that a new personnel scandal is brewing in the Interior Ministry; p 5 (512 words).

14. Alexei Sokovnin article headlined "Handover Prepared for Viktor Bout" says that the Justice Ministry has asked the U.S. to extradite Russian national Viktor Bout, sentenced to 25 years in the U.S. for arms dealings, to serve his prison term at home in Russia; p 5 (585 words).

15. Maxim Yusin article headlined "West Aligns Line of Syrian Front" says that the U.S., the U.K. and France have approved a single strategy for the fight against Syrian President Bashar Assad. Moreover, London and Paris have backed Washington in warning Syria that not only a threat of using chemical weapons but any relocation of the latter could become a reason for attacking Damascus; p 6 (442 words).

16. Maria Yefimova article headlined "Shi'i Turns TV Screen to Themselves" says that the Pan-Arab TV channel Al-Mayadeen, offering coverage of events that differs from that of Al-Jazeera, which is sponsored by Arab monarchies, has begun to function in Beirut; p 6 (568 words).

17. Pavel Tarasenko article headlined "U.S. Takes Asia Under Shield" says that the U.S. plans to significantly strengthen its missile defense in the Asia-Pacific region to more effectively respond to possible threats from North Korea. However, experts say the move is meant to deter China; p 6 (571 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Vladimir Skosyrev article headlined "U.S. Creating Anti-China Missile Shield" says the U.S. plans to considerably strengthen missile defense in Asia allegedly to deter North Korea, but the main task is to balance out China's increasing military strength. Meanwhile, Beijing is developing new intercontinental missiles capable of reaching U.S. military bases and aircraft carriers; pp 1, 7 (663 words).

2. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "Poland to Issue Passports for Ukraine" says that Poland has authorized dual citizenship and facilitated issuing Polish passports, thus worsening relations with Ukraine, which fears that young people will move to Poland en masse; pp 1-2 (841 words).

3. Alexandra Samarina article headlined "Kremlin's Theory of Strength of Materials" says that according to a public opinion poll conducted by the Levada Center, 63 percent of Russians support Putin, which is six percent less than in spring. Medvedev's approval rating stands at 57 percent, which is 7 percent less than in spring. Meanwhile, the ruling elite is splitting, concerned about the domestic socioeconomic situation; pp 1, 3 (1,169 words).

4. Anastasia Bashkatova article headlined "Population Not to Live to See Advantages of WTO" details new customs duties on imported goods approved by Russia owing to its accession to the WTO and features experts' comments on the issue; pp 1, 4 (939 words).

5. Olga Shulga article headlined "On Tasty and Healthy Elections" says that the Just Russia party and the Communist Party have complained about obstacles created by regional authorities for them ahead of the fall elections. In Krasnodar region, Communist candidates' namesakes will run for the regional parliament, and in Bryansk region, the authorities are warning municipal deputies against backing gubernatorial candidates from the opposition; pp

1, 3 (658 words).

6. Vladimir Mukhin article headlined "Moscow May Lose Tartus" says Russia has suspended use of its military facility in the Syrian port of Tartus for some time, but it could use the facility in the future; pp 1, 5 (614 words).

7. Editorial headlined "Syrian Gases" looks at the stockpiles of chemical weapons in Syria and whether Damascus will use them and says the issue may become a good reason for launching a military operation by NATO member states; p 2 (534 words).

8. Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "Opposition Goes to 'Freedom Field'" says the opposition will hold a festival called "Freedom Field" in Moscow region in early September and looks at an independent expert's report regarding three men who were detained as part of the criminal case concerning riots at a May 6 opposition rally at Bolotnaya Ploshchad; p 3 (535 words).

9. Oleg Nikiforov article headlined "Space in Image and Likeness of Atom" comments on the Federal Space Agency leadership's initiative to transform the agency into a state corporation; p 4 (778 words).

10. Daniil Borisov article headlined "Mad Fans" says that fans of the Zenit and Anzhi (based in Dagestan) football clubs have clashed in St. Petersburg. Initially, the brawl was believed to be an ethnic conflict; p 5 (493 words).

11. Andrei Serenko report "Opposition and Authorities Prepare Political Base in Volga Region" says the opposition has launched a regional youth forum called Volga-2012 in Volgograd region; p 5 (600 words).

12. Darya Tsilyurik article headlined "Health Sector Aggravates U.S. Elections" looks at the latest developments in the U.S., where the presidential election campaign is gathering pace; p 7 (481 words).

13. Nikolai Surkov article headlined "Coalition in Afghanistan Has to Fight on Two Fronts" says Afghan authorities have accused the Iranian and Pakistani special services of demoralizing the Afghan security forces and of organizing a number of attacks on foreign servicemen and advisers. The Pentagon has a different view of the situation. This threatens to frustrate the U.S. plan to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan; p 7 (585 words).

Vedomosti

1. Ksenia Dodukina and Oksana Gavshina article headlined "New vs. Former" says that Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich has openly opposed former Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin's initiatives concerning privatization of the fuel and energy sector; p 1 (620 words).

2. Lilia Biryukova article headlined "Candidates Without Filter" says that in Ryazan region, United Russia municipal officials and deputies easily give their signatures in support of gubernatorial candidates from the opposition, as the latter have little chance of being elected, but there is a semblance of rivalry between candidates; pp 1-2 (680 words).

3. Anastasia Golitsyna article headlined "How to Make Blacklists" says over 90 Internet

companies have held a meeting to discuss new laws under which access to websites posing a threat to children must be blocked as of Nov. 1; p 1 (457 words).

4. Editorial headlined "Putin's 11 Points" says that as of 2013, the effectiveness of regional heads' activities will be assessed in a new way: by 11 criteria determined by Putin instead of 74 criteria introduced by Medvedev; pp 1, 4 (527 words).

5. Vadim Volkov article headlined "Extra Jus: It Is Not a Grave, It Is a Foundation" comments on the trial of punk band Pussy Riot and says the controversial verdict passed on the women is a political step meant to unite and inspire the ruling authorities' social base; p (794 words).

6. Polina Khimshiashvili and Alexei Nikolsky article headlined "An Umbrella Against China" says the U.S.'s plans to strengthen missile defense in the Asia-Pacific region may foster military and technical cooperation between Russia and China; p 2 (382 words).

7. Another editorial headlined "Undeserved Rest" welcomes some ministries' initiatives concerning pension reform; p 4 (288 words).

8. Natalya Kostenko et al. article headlined "Volodin's Training" says the leadership of the presidential administration has met deputy governors for domestic policy to discuss cooperation between federal and regional authorities; p 2 (359 words).

9. Maxim Solyus article headlined "Thing of the Week: Pussy Riot Masks" looks at what guided the judges who sentenced the Pussy Riot punk group members given the disparity between the crime and the punishment; p 4 (304 words).

10. Mikhail Fishman article headlined "Public Interest: Staking on Fight" says that from a political point of view, the controversial verdict passed on the Pussy Riot punk group indicates a new stage in Putin's dialogue with society, a new crisis point in these relations; p 4 (469 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Yulia Krivoshapko interview with Irina Bulgakova, deputy head of the Federal Agency for Construction, Housing and Utilities in the Regional Development Ministry, headlined "Light is Wedge," in which she speaks about the proposed introduction of social norms for the use of housing and utilities services; pp 1, 3 (1,566 words).

2. Pundit Valery Tishkov article headlined "Way to Oneself" contemplates ethnic policy in Russia and suggests a number of steps to be taken by federal authorities to achieve national reconciliation; pp 1, 9 (1,757 words).

3. Valery Vyzhutovich article headlined "Between Duty and Position" comments on the forthcoming mayoral election in the Moscow region town of Khimki, focusing on ways in which an opposition candidate and a ruling party candidate, if they win the election, will behave to justify voters' trust; p 3 (684 words).

4. Nina Doronina report headlined "Cleared Cabinet" says that Kamchatka region governor Vladimir Ilyukhin has sacked the regional cabinet over scandals that some ministers were involved in; p 3 (700 words).

5. Vladislav Rilsky report "A Rootless Civilization" says the Foreign Ministry has accused Western human rights activists of hasty, subjective and politically motivated assessments in relation to the verdict on the Pussy Riot group; p 4 (450 words).

6. Yury Gavrilov article headlined "Triumph No. 5" says the S-400 Triumf surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems will be deployed in Moscow region by the end of 2012; p 5 (493 words).

7. Olga Dmitrieva article headlined "Personnel Ration for Submarine" say the Royal Navy is facing a personnel shortage; p 5 (542 words).

8. Ivan Yegorov interview with Deputy Prosecutor General Alexander Zvyagintsev, headlined "They Serve Term in Wrong Way," in which he speaks about the recent check of prisons in Russia; p 8 (2,673 words).

Izvestia

1. Dmitry Yevstifeyev article headlined "Novomikhaylovsky Interprets Flood Warning as Training" says that residents of the flood-stricken village of Novomikhaylovsky in the Tuapsinsky district of Krasnodar region did not take a flood alarm seriously, thinking that it was part of drills regularly held in the region after the major flood in Krymsk; pp 1-2 (552 words).

2. Veronika Sevostyanova and Vadim Taktarov article headlined "Police's Media Holding Company Loses Management" says that the head of the Interior Ministry's united editorial board, Nikolai Samokhvalov, and his deputy Vladimir Mironenko have been dismissed from their posts on suspicion of being involved in financial fraud schemes; pp 1-2 (666 words).

3. Anastasia Dulenkova interview with Eurasian Economic Commission Trade Minister Andrei Slepnev, headlined "'Accession to WTO Won't Decrease Consumer Prices'," in which he speaks about the consequences of Russia's joining the WTO for the domestic economy; pp 1-2 (998 words).

4. Svetlana Subbotina article headlined "A Just Russia Decides on Candidates for Khimki Mayoral Post" says that State Duma Deputy Tatyana Moskalkova of the Just Russia party, disgraced party politician Gennady Gudkov and Alexander Romanovich, the head of the Moscow region party branch, are among the party's most probable candidates for the post of mayor of the Moscow region town of Khimki; pp 1, 3 (677 words).

5. Yulia Tsoi report "Lebedev Asks Putin to Help With Business" says that Alexander Lebedev, owner of the National Reserve Bank who has complained about persecution and pressure by security agencies, decided to personally ask Putin for security guarantees for himself and his business; p 2 (600 words).

6. Konstantin Volkov interview with UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov, headlined "'If International Assistance is No Longer Given, Iran May Open the Door for Drug Trafficking'," in which he explains why Iran should not be deprived of international financial aid for its program to control drug trafficking; p 4 (511 words).

7. Political analyst Boris Mezhuyev article headlined "Vladimir Putin's Round Table and His First Knight" looks at a report by a group of experts called "Vladimir Putin's Large Government and 'Politburo 2.0'" about the current political situation in Russia and contemplates the reasons behind the publication of the report; p 6 (924 words).

8. Alexander Birman article headlined "Rebellion Without Ideal" comments on the trial of punk band Pussy Riot and compares it to the trial of the wife of prominent Chinese politician Bo Xilai; p 6 (729 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Yekaterina Petukhova article headlined "Crimean Man Dies From Molot's Blow" says that contract serviceman Alexander Fyodorov has died from a fatal blow delivered by 24-year-old Russian sambo and Pankration champion Stanislav Molodtsov, aka Molot, and notes that the issue should not be treated as the one similar to the case of martial arts champion Rasul Mirzayev, charged with delivering a fatal blow to a student; pp 1-2 (500 words).

2. Irina Finyakina article headlined "Channels and Rascals" says that a new law protecting children from harmful information on TV comes into effect on Sept. 1 and features experts' comments on the issue; pp 1-2 (450 words).

3. Yeva Merkacheva report "Poison Above All" says that treating grain and flour with toxic gas that provokes mutation has been officially authorized in Russia; pp 1, 5 (1,300 words).

4. Mikhail Zubov article headlined "Main Russian Ombudsman to Seek Pussy Riot's Release" features human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin's statements concerning the trial of punk band Pussy Riot made at a news conference; p 2 (500 words).

5. Stanislav Belkovsky article headlined "7 Questions to Opposition" criticizes the opposition for the steps it is taking for the forthcoming mayoral election in Khimki; p 3 (800 words).

6. Alina Fadeyeva report "Yabloko for Chirikova" says that the Yabloko party has decided to support the opposition's united candidate Yevgenia Chirikova in the election of mayor of Khimki; p 3 (600 words).

RBC Daily

1. Anna Reznikova article titled "Signs of Crisis" says the Ministry of Economic Development is going to work out a system of crisis indicators in the fall to provide the authorities with early warning of possible economic problems; pp 1-2 (850 words)

2. Tatyana Kosobokova article headlined "Vaccination Against Protests" says the presidential administration has begun a series of meetings with regional officials to instruct them in suppressing protest sentiments; p 2 (600 words).

3. Yulia Yakovleva article titled "We're Losing Them" say the most recent public opinion polls have shown the lowest trust ratings for President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev since December 2011; p 2 (400 words).

4. Alexandra Golubeva article headlined "Not Enough Room Made for Navalny" says that only

2,000 protesters can fit into protest venues at Moscow's Sokolniki and Gorky parks, which the authorities have set aside for rallies; p 2 (350 words).

5. Alexander Litoi article headlined "Administrative Blasphemy" says that lawyers of the convicted Pussy Riot punk group members will challenge their verdict, arguing that there was no corpus delicti in their actions; p 2 (500 words).

6. Anastasia Sotnikova article headlined "Gazprom Finds Support in Belarus" says that gas giant Gazprom will enter the Belarusian market of gas-engine fuel; p 6 (450 words).

5. Denis Pusyrev article headlined "Price of WTO" features expert comments on pricing policies in Russia after its accession to the WTO; p 10 (550 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Pavel Kanygin article headlined "Shutting Up Deacon Baranov" says that Tambov region deacon Sergy (Baranov) has complained about pressure being exerted on him by the Federal Security Service, the Russian Orthodox Church and the regional administration over his support for the convicted women of punk band Pussy Riot; pp 2-3 (2,391 words).

2. Nina Petlyanova report headlined "'Everyone Got a Hiding': As a Result 6 People Are in Pre-Trial Detention and 3 Are in Emergency Room" describes a clash between football fans in St. Petersburg; p 3 (590 words).

3. Nikita Girin article headlined "Candidate 'by Justice'" says that the Yabloko party has decided to support environmentalist and opposition leader Yevgenia Chirikova as a candidate for the mayoral election in the Moscow region town of Khimki; p 4 (378 words).

4. Alexei Polukhin article headlined "So Here Is the WTO" says that Russia has finally become a WTO member, even though it has not carried out any serious economic reforms; p 5 (702 words).

5. Diana Khachaturyan article headlined "Opposition on Hunger Strike in Tyva" says that activists of the Tyva republic branch of the combined Republican Party and People's Freedom Party have gone on hunger strike in protest against their candidates being denied registration for the municipal election; p 4 (432 words).

6. Andrei Kolesnikov report headlined "Kholmanskikh: a Future President" says that presidential envoy in the Urals Federal District Igor Kholmanskikh has taken his In Defense of Working People movement to a national scale, and considers the movement's new tasks; p 6 (598 words).

7. Klarisa Pulson article headlined "Khodorkovsky Bestseller" previews the "Prison and Freedom" book co-authored by ex-Yukos CEO Mikhail Khodorkovsky, which is due to hit Moscow bookshelves shortly; p 24 (850 words).

Moskovskiye Novosti

1. Irina Granik article titled "Select Officials" describes the details of a new three-step "open selection" process for ministry leadership vacancies conceived by Prime Minister Dmitry

Medvedev that will be piloted this September; pp 1-2 (1,200 words).

2. Alexandra Beluza interview with State Duma Deputy Ramazan Abdulatipov titled "'Tkachyov Needs to Explain Himself Somehow'," in which he speaks about a bill he is drafting that envisages holding regional and city heads accountable for nationalistic comments; pp 1-2 (450 words).

3. Mikhail Moshkin article titled "Vandals to Be Crossed" says that a new bill may soon be tabled with the State Duma toughening penalties for vandalism at churches. This follows a series of attacks on churches around Russia; p 2 (700 words).

4. Igor Kryuchkov article titled "British Conservatives Accused of Putinism" says the U.K. Tories have been criticized for turning a blind eye to human rights issues in Russia and being too friendly with the incumbent Russian authorities; p 3 (350 words).

5. Yulia Melamed article headlined "Playing Into Box" looks at the problems that have been plaguing the establishment of public television in Russia, highlighting changing viewer preferences and the fact that television is becoming a less important source of information with time; pp 5-6 (800 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Margarita Alyokhina article titled "Many Russians Feel No Pity for the Girls..." says that a Noviye Izvestia survey has shown that a relative majority of respondents, 26 per cent, consider the two-year sentence for members of punk band Pussy Riot to be fair. The next most common response, "I don't understand what they were convicted for," was given by 20 percent of the almost 4,000 polled persons; pp 1, 3 (250 words).

2. Yulia Savina article titled "Sports Minister Leaves Kamchatka Without Cabinet" says that Kamchatka region governor Vladimir Ilyukhin dismissed the entire regional cabinet on August 22 after two criminal cases were opened against the regional sports and tourism minister; p 2 (150 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Yelena Matveyeva article headlined "Border Protection to Be Boosted in North Caucasus" says that the head of border control with the Federal Security Service, Vladimir Pronichev, outlined plans to improve border control mechanisms in the North Caucasus to President Vladimir Putin at a meeting on August 22; p 2 (150 words).

2. Viktor Baranets article titled "Contract Servicemen Will Not Be Allowed to Read Newspapers, Play Cards and Complain About Their Bosses" details new instructions for contract servicemen issued by the Defense Ministry; p 3 (400 words)

3. Alexei Duel article headlined "The Real Reasons Why Village Teacher Ilya Farber Was Sent to Jail for 8 Years" is a journalistic investigation into the case of Ilya Farber, a teacher who was recently sentenced to eight years in a penal colony for bribery; pp 8-9 (3,000 words).

Trud

1. Sergei Frolov article titled "Heightening Degrees" considers problems of inter-ethnic relations in Russia and considers what can be done to mitigate them; p 2 (400 words)

2. Vitaly Golovachev article headlined "No Matter How You Sit, Dear Friends..." is a skeptical commentary on the idea that reforming the Russian Space Agency into a state corporation will do anything to fix the problems that have been plaguing the Russian space industry; p 2 (350 words).

3. Sergei Bednov article titled "All is Bad With Public TV" recaps the misfortunes that the public television initiative has been grappling with; p 5 (400 words).

Krasnaya Zvezda (weekly)

1. Dmitry Andreyev article titled "Under the Wing of Northern Eagle" gives a brief review of the Northern Eagle naval exercise under way in the Norwegian Sea; p 3 (150 words).

2. Viktor Ruchkin article titled "In a Dead End" says that it looks like Syrian government troops have almost cleared Aleppo of rebels; p 3 (500 words).

3. Interview with Major General Viktor Sevostyanov, commander of the troops of the Second Air Force and Air Defense command of the Central Military District, titled "In Real Time"; p 4 (900 words).

4. Yury Borodin article titled "Kavkaz-2012: We Came, We Saw, We Conquered" considers the work of air reconnaissance officers as part of the coverage of the Kavkaz-2012 military exercise; p 5 (700 words).

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