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Storm Halts Oil Loadings at Novorossiisk

By The Moscow Times

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Loading of crude oil at Russia's biggest outlet for energy and commodities might not resume before Wednesday. **Maxim Stulov**

The Black Sea port of Novorossiisk, Russia's biggest outlet for energy resources and commodities such as grain, halted crude-oil loading but continues to load all other cargoes, a port spokeswoman said Friday.

"The Novorossiisk Commercial Sea Port continues all types of docking, loading and discharge operations for all types of cargo, except for operations in the Sheskharis oil area, as weather conditions allow them to be carried out safely in the harbor of the Novorossiisk port," the spokeswoman said.

"At Sheskharis, loading has been stopped, vessels have been taken out on roads, and port equipment has been secured."

Transshipment from the Transneft export pipeline system takes place at Sheskharis.

Transneft said loadings were halted Jan. 15.

“There will be no loading before Monday. It could even not be before Wednesday,” Transneft official Igor Dyomin said.

“Transneft continues pumping oil to Novorossiisk. We have enough spare reservoirs.”

The Federal Hydrometeorological Center said high winds between 14 and 17 meters per second will not subside before Tuesday.

Earlier on Friday, Novorossiisk said total cargo turnover edged up last year as growth in general cargo shipments, mostly steel, offset declines in crude oil and grain.

Russia plans to increase shipments of its Urals crude oil from Novorossiisk to 3.135 million tons in January from 2.91 million in December.

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