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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

What the Papers Say, March 21

March 21, 2014



Kommersant

1. Kirill Belyaninov et al. report headlined "White House makes its own blacklist" says that U.S. President Barack Obama has introduced a new set of sanctions, this time affecting more leading Russian politicians and businessmen from Putin's inner circle; pp 1, 4 (2,619 words).

2. Andrei Kolesnikov report headlined "Big business goes to resort" gives an ironic account of President Putin's meeting with the biggest Russian businessmen following the Congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, where Crimea was among the topics on the agenda; pp 1, 2 (1,681 words).

3. Yury Barsukov and Yelena Chernenko article headlined "Discounts leaving along with fleet" says that the Ukrainian authorities may soon lose the gas discount Kiev got in 2010 in exchange for the prolongation of the Black Sea Fleet's presence in Crimea; pp 1, 7 (586 words).

4. Maxim Ivanov article headlined "Crimea admitted with one vote against it" says that at an emergency session the State Duma ratified the treaty on the admission of the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol to the Russian Federation, with Ilya Ponomarev being the only lawmaker to vote against it; p 4 (639 words).

5. Nina Sokolova and Yelena Chernenko article headlined "Still no visas" says that the Ukrainian authorities are split on whether a visa regime with Russia should be introduced; p 5 (659 words).

6. Anna Pushkarskaya article headlined "Referendum attributed to Ukraine" says that today the Venice Commission is expected to approve the conclusion that the referendum on Crimea's admission to the Russian Federation was illegal; p 5 (487 words).

7. Ilya Barabanov article headlined "Crimea joins the queue" says that people in Crimea have begun submitting papers required to get a Russian passport; p 5 (496 words).

8. Yelena Chernenko article headlined "West wants to leave Moscow on its own" says that being unable to quickly impose tough economic sanctions against Russia, the U.S. is trying to secure its political isolation. Experts, however, doubt that the pressure will significantly affect Moscow's course; p 5 (622 words).

9. Dmitry Tratas article headlined "Rules of game" looks at a news conference head of the Federal Reserve System Janet Yellen held following the session of the Open Market Committee; p 7 (373 words).

10. Ksenia Dementyeva et al. report headlined "Crimea cut off from banks" says that the Ukrainian authorities are threatening tough measures for Ukrainian companies with businesses in Crimea; pp 7, 8 (892 words).

11. Yekaterina Gerashchenko et al. article headlined "Roshen left without sweets" says that the accounts of the Ukrainian confectionery holding in Russia have been frozen and its plant in Lipetsk has suspended operations; p 10 (400 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Mikhail Sergeiev article headlined "Kiev ready to take ransom for Crimea" says that leader of the Batkivshchyna (Fatherland) faction has stated that if Russia agrees to pay higher utilities tariffs for Crimea they will lift the energy blockade. The authorities in Kiev may soon begin negotiations on 'compensation' for losing Crimea; pp 1, 4 (883 words).

2. Yevgeny Grigoryev and Anna Gushchina article headlined "European sanctions to hit at Valuyev, Shoigu" says that with the help of anti-corruption campaigner Alexei Navalny the EU has expanded the list of Russians its sanctions are to be applied to; pp 1, 8 (953 words).

3. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "Kiev already almost in EU" says that the Ukrainian authorities have decided to withdraw from the CIS. They also voiced their intention to impose a visa regime on Russia but took it back the next day. However, Moscow may be the one to insist on a visa regime with Ukraine now, experts warn; pp 1, 7 (1,403 words).

4. Yekaterina Trifonova article headlined "Lawyers demand protection from investigation" says that the Council of the Federal Bar Chamber suggests that the Criminal Code be amended to limit investigators' rights; pp 1, 3 (663 words).

5. Alexandra Samarina article headlined "Crimea may become new federal district" says that the National Strategy Institute headed by Mikhail Remizov is drafting a concept of Crimea's integration to outline options for the solution of the region's problems; pp 1, 3 (891 words).

6. Svetlana Gamova article headlined "Chisinau remembers 'its land' in Ukraine" looks at a scandal escalating in Moldova. The opposition is against Moldova joining EU sanctions against Russia and warns that it may result in the loss of Transdnestr region. Moreover, some politicians hope that Moscow will help Moldova get back part of the Odessa region; pp 1, 7 (702 words).

7. Editorial headlined "One more time about labeling patriots and traitors" says that following the admission of Crimea to Russia, the stance of a politician on Russia's move will determine the authorities' and society's attitude towards him: if he supports it, he is a patriot, if he does not, he is a traitor. It will make it more difficult for non-parliamentary opposition to act; p 2 (468 words).

8. Vladimir Gundarev article headlined "Second fleet division in Crimea" says that Russia's Black Sea Fleet may get 46 Ukrainian vessels; p 2 (647 words).

9. Andrei Melnikov article headlined "Synod withstands temptation with geopolitics" looks at the session of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church which was to discuss its steps following the admission of Crimea to Russia; p 2 (832 words).

10. Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "Passport in exchange for loyalty" says that soon the State Duma is to discuss an infamous bill to facilitate the procedure for getting Russian citizenship for those who lived on the territory of the former U.S.S.R.; p 3 (468 words).

11. Andrei Serenko column "Carte blanche. Early State Duma election to be held?" says that the admission of the Republic of Crimea and the town of Sevastopol to Russia raises the issue of their representation in the Federal Assembly. President Putin may use the opportunity to reset the Russian political system and strengthen his position in parliament by holding early parliamentary elections; p 3 (682 words).

12. Mikhail Sergeiev "Vladimir Putin is bringing business back to Russia" says that at a congress of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs President Putin demanded that business should register companies and pay taxes in Russia. Realizing that business will have to follow the recommendation, the entrepreneurs are trying to get compensation for the trouble, like tax benefits and limitation of employees' rights; p 4 (487 words).

13. Vladimir Mukhin article headlined "Homeless officers to be supported by ruble" says that the Defense Ministry plans to increase three-fold compensation for officers who have to rent housing; p 6 (829 words).

14. Yury Roks article headlined "Yerevan quarrels with Washington" says that the U.S. is disappointed with Armenia's support for Crimea's admission to Russia; p 7 (697 words).

15. Yury Paniyev article headlined "Peace between Russia, Ukraine — happiness for Ban Ki-Moon" looks at UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's visit to Moscow to help solve the Russian-Ukrainian crisis; p 8 (850 words).

Vedomosti

1. Dmitry Kazmin et al. report headlined "Obama isolates Ozero cooperative" says that U.S. President Barack Obama has imposed sanctions against the Bank Rossia and a number of businessmen close to President Putin; pp 1, 2 (750 words).

2. Ksenia Boletskaya and Igor Tsukanov article headlined "Vkontakte put up for sale" says that the UCP foundation is ready to sell 48 percent of shares of the Vkontakte social network to Alisher Usmanov and Mail.ru Group but bidders do not like the price; pp 1, 18 (500 words).

3. Editorial headlined "Patriotic X-ray" looks at the dangers of President Putin's suggestion to ease conditions for Russian companies participating in state tenders and ban state purchases of some categories of imported goods; pp 1, 6 (400 words).

4. Alexei Nikolsky article headlined "To retirement via Russia" says that President Putin has signed a degree stipulating procedure for Ukrainian military willing to join the Russian Armed

Forces; p 2 (350 words).

5. Liliya Biryukova and Anastasia Kornya article headlined "Business landing troops in Crimea" says that Delovaya Rossiya (Rus: Business Russia) has decided to open a new regional branch in Crimea and to take businessmen who are ready to invest in Crimean projects to the region; p 2 (300 words).

6. Margarita Papchenkova article headlined "Government preparing for worst" says that the government is drafting measures in case of a crisis and economic sanctions; p 4 (450 words).

7. Sergei Titov article headlined "Devaluation frightens away recession" says that gradual devaluation of the national currency sped up production in February. Experts, however, are wary that the improvement does not last long; p 5 (300 words).

8. Patrick Jenkins et al. report headlined "Sanctions not in effect in London" says that Britain is not going to support sanctions against Russia, for the time being unwilling to frighten off Russian companies in the country; p 5 (350 words).

9. Margarita Lyutova article headlined "Suspicious Ukraine" says that Russia has stepped up control on the border with Ukraine ahead of today's signing of the political part of the agreement on Ukraine's association with the EU; p 5 (450 words).

10. Editorial headlined "Crimean majority" says that experts refer to Vladimir Putin's electorate mobilized over the admission of Crimea as "the Crimean majority" and comments on its peculiarities; p 6 (300 words).

11. Article by ditor-in-chief of the Dozhd satellite and internet broadcaster Mikhail Zygar headlined "President Putin's Crimean confession" looks at the evolution of President Putin's views, including his acquaintance with former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and comments on his address to the Federal Assembly on Crimea; p 6 (800 words).

12. Mikhail Serov article headlined "Fleet to sink gas discount" says that as Crimea joined Russia Ukraine may soon lose its gas discount granted for accommodating Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Crimea; p 12 (400 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Anna Fedyakina article headlined "Kiev railway station" says that the Ukrainian authorities

voiced two mutually exclusive stances on visa regime with Russia within 12 hours; pp 1, 7 (1,250 words).

2. Tatyana Zamakhina article headlined "Things in common" looks at UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's meeting with President Putin and says that the top officials were on the same wavelength regarding the situation with Russian-speaking people in Ukraine; p 2 (450 words).

3. Tatyana Zykova and Roman Markelov article headlined "Abroad not to help"' says that the Finance Ministry has drafted amendments to impose huge fines on offshore companies; p 2 (250 words).

4. Yury Gavrilov et al. report headlined "Don't raise anchor, stand in place" says that the Crimean authorities have begun accepting military property; p 6 (850 words).

5. Alexander Gasyuk article headlined "Moscow reciprocates" says that in retaliation for U.S. sanctions against Russia the Russian Foreign Ministry has composed its own list of U.S. officials to be affected by sanctions; p 7 (500 words).

6. Yevgeny Shestakov article headlined "Yatsenyuk like Yanukovych" says that as the EU is pondering how far to go in its confrontation with Russia, Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseny Yatsenyuk stated that no documents on economic association with Europe will be ratified; p 8 (550 words).

7. Article by Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin headlined "Cyborgs have heard the call" looks at Russia's program to create "combat robots"; p 17 (2,200 words).

Izvestia

1. Alyona Sivkova and Ruben Garsia article headlined "Governor Denin ends up on blacklist due to ties with business" says that the All-Russia People's Front has drafted a report on violations by the Bryansk regional governor Nikolai Denin. As the result of a similar report, the Novosibirsk regional governor Vasily Yurchenko was dismissed so Denin may face the same consequences; pp 1, 2 (1,356 words).

2. Boris Mezhuyev article headlined "Rich also laugh" says that the sanctions Washington has imposed against Russian politicians and businessmen will only work for Russia's benefit; p 1 (486 words).

3. Yegor Sozayev-Guryev article headlined "UN secretary-general comes to Russia to settle Ukrainian issue" gives highlights of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's visit to Russia; p 2 (383 words).

4. Tatyana Baykova article headlined "Moscow does not fear Kiev's statements on introduction of visas" says that Russia's measures in response to the introduction of visa regime with Russia will strongly hit Ukraine; p 10 (471 words).

5. Maria Gorkovskaya interview with president of French-Russian Trade and Industrial Chamber Emmanuel Quidet headlined "Brussels cannot take European business hostage " where he says that the EU will be the first to suffer from economic sanctions against Russia; p 10 (728 words).

6. Article by head of the CIS Institute Konstantin Zatulin headlined "Trial with Crimea" hails Crimea's admission to Russia; p 12 (824 words).

7. Sergei Roganov article headlined "Again too little money for fish" comments on Alexei Navalny's article in The New York Times where he offered his own blacklist and provides some information discrediting the anti-corruption campaigner; p 12 (855 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Maria Yepifanova interview with Nikolai Zlobin, president of the Center on Global Interests (Washington) headlined "'Russia is lucky Obama is president now" addresses U.S. sanctions against Russia and their possible consequences' pp 2-3 (900 words).

2. Andrei Lipsky interview with constitutional law expert and aide to former Russian president Boris Yeltsin Mikhail Krasnov headlined "'Everything is a boomerang in today's world" covers the legal aspects of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis; pp 4-5 (1,600 words).

3. Yulia Polukhina article headlined "Process: something went wrong" details the trial over opposition activists Sergei Udaltsov and Leonid Razvozzhayev focusing on a recent testimony that seems to have changed the course of the trial; pp 8-9 (2,100 words).

4. Marina Tokareva article with rock singer Andrei Makarevich, who is close to the opposition, headlined "'It is easier to banish demons from man than to settle angels in one" addresses Makarevich's political position; pp 20 (1,100 words).

5. Irina Petrovskaya article headlined "'Crimea island' by the other Aksenov" analyzes

the way Crimea's merger with Russia was covered by Russian major television channels; p 24 (950 words).

RBK Daily

1. Unattributed article headlined "Vladimir Putin surrounded by sanctions" details recently imposed U.S. sanctions against businessmen associated with Vladimir Putin. The situation is described as "the open phase of a cold war with the U.S."; pp 1-2 (1,300 words).

2. Alexander Litoy article headlined "From captures to referendums" says that pro-Russian rallies are expected to take place in some of Ukraine's eastern and southern regions over the upcoming weekend. The protesters are likely to demand referendums on their regions' statuses; pp 1-2 (1,400 words).

3. Yelena Malysheva and Yekaterina Larinina article headlined "Special taxes without special benefits" details the taxation plan for Crimea put forward by the Russian finance and economic development ministries; p 3 (500 words).

4. Andrei Kotov and Alexander Polotsky article headlined "Who will pay for sanctions" summarizes available information about pending EU sanctions against Russia; p 4 (800 words).

5. Sergei Velesevich et al. article headlined "Russians need house by sea" says Russians have displayed strong interest in buying real estate in Crimea; p 8 (1,100 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Olga Bozhyeva article headlined "Do not humiliate Ukrainian servicemen" defends Ukrainian servicemen in Crimea who surrendered their units to Russian forces; pp 1-2 (400 words).

2. Irina Sukhova and Tatyana Antonova article headlined "Poor visa" speculates on the economic consequences of Ukraine's decision to introduce a visa regime with Russia; pp 1-2 (700 words).

3. Marina Ozerova article headlined "Slapdash law" analyzes inconsistencies in the treaty on Crimea's merger with Russia recently ratified by Russian lawmakers; p 2 (400 words).

4.Oleg Bazak article headlined "Yulia Tymoshenko: 'I am back, I sympathize with all who did not expect it'" analyzes the political implication of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's return to Ukrainian politics; p 3 (500 words).

5. Ignat Kalinin article headlined "Notice from Crimea" covers the planned enactment of Russian conscription laws in Crimea; p 5 (600 words).

6. Leonid Berres and Irina Badmayeva article headlined "How much to pay for accession" covers the economic consequences of Crimea's merger with Russia; p 6 (900 words).

Trud

1. Alexander Protsenko article headlined "Eastern sweets" says that Western sanctions will force Russia to turn towards Asia; pp 1,3 (1,650 words).

2. Yelena Goncharova article headlined "Song about visas: is performed slowly and dolefully" says that the Ukrainian authorities's intention to introduce a visa regime with Russia will harm Ukrainians; pp 1-2 (700 words).

3. Sergei Frolov article headlined "Even when leaving, one should not slam the door" says that "It would be better for Ukraine to get divorced from Crimea without unnecessary hysterics or insults"; p 2 (850 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Alexander Kots and Dmitriy Steshin article headlined "Donbass blocks mines with arms so it doesn't fall to Banderites" covers pro-Russian sentiments in eastern Ukraine; p 4 (1,100 words).

2. Alexander Gamov interview with the son of Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev headlined "Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] passed Crimea on to Ukraine, not my father" recalls the passing of Crimea to Ukraine from a historical perspective; p 8 (800 words).

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