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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

What the Papers Say, May 19, 2014

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Kommersant

1. Yekaterina Gerashchenko article headlined "State returns to ceremony" says that the Construction Ministry has been made responsible for the funeral market; pp 1, 12 (510 words).

2. Svetlana Dementyeva article headlined "Reorganization vs. sanctions" says that SMP-Bank, owned by the Rotenberg brothers close to the Russian president, will allocate 117 billion rubles ($3.35 billion) to reorganize Mosoblbank and two its subsidiaries that have gone bankrupt. The move will help SMP-Bank survive the U.S. sanctions; pp 1, 10 (1,138 words).

3. Renata Yambayeva et al. interview with Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, headlined "'We are doing our best not to attract funds for which there is no need now,'" speaking about the Moscow city authorities' short- and long-term plans; pp 1, 4 (2,842 words).

4. Ivan Safronov article headlined "Russia encourages China" says that military and technical cooperation will top the agenda of President Vladimir Putin's upcoming visit to China, which begins on May 20; pp 1, 8 (665 words).

5. Natalya Korchenkova and Ivan Kuznetsov article headlined "Foreign accounts ban to be made detailed" says that Federation Council Senator Andrei Klishas has suggested specifying the notion "foreign financial instruments" that Russian officials, lawmakers and election nominees are banned from having; p 2 (606 words).

6. Sergei Goryashko article headlined "Mikhail Barshchevsky displays his opulence" looks at the 2013 income declarations submitted by the government staff. Government envoy to supreme courts Mikhail Barshchevsky has turned to be the richest, followed by government envoy to the Federation Council Vladimir Yatskin; p 2 (761 words).

7. Sofia Samokhina article headlined "Andrei Lugovoi misunderstood twice" says that the president's human rights council has condemned State Duma lawmaker Andrei Lugovoi's recent legislative initiatives concerning the performance of nongovernmental organizations and prosecution for concealing foreign citizenship; p 3 (591 words).

8. Alexei Shapovalov article headlined "Customs Union does not grow together by trade" says that trade among the Customs Union member states has reduced almost by 13 percent over a year. However, the Eurasian Economic Commission expects the situation to change for the better by the end of 2014; p 6 (541 words).

9. Tatyana Yedovina article headlined "Hieroglyph of friendship" previews Putin's visit to China, which begins on May 20; p 6 (560 words).

10. Yury Barsukov article headlined "Gazprom looks for gas in depths of Tanzania" looks at the Russian gas giant's plans for natural resources development in Africa; p 11 (555 words).

11. Vadim Nikiforov brief report "Crimean Tatars moved to outskirts" says that a rally by Crimean Tatars to mark the 70th anniversary of the deportation of Crimean Tatars was held on the outskirts of Simferopol on May 18; p 3 (150 words).

12. Ilya Barabanov report "'Donetsk people's republic' lacks men" says that Igor Strelkov, defense minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic, has complained about a lack of people ready to support people's militia; p 8 (500 words).

13. Yanina Sokolovskaya report "Federalization replaced by 'economic experiment'" looks at a 'conciliatory' round table meeting in Kharkiv. The event has not yielded results as

the representatives of the Kiev elite and Ukraine's central and western regions were the main participants in the meeting, article says; p 8 (600 words).

14. Yanina Sokolovskaya report "Donbass unfolds roads and taxes" says that the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic has begun to control local business; p 9 (600 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Vladimir Mukhin article headlined "Moscow and Beijing find 'Cooperation'" says that Russian warships have arrived in Shanghai for a joint Russian-Chinese naval drill in the East China Sea set for May 20-25. Putin, who comes to China for a visit on May 20, together with his Chinese counterpart will open the drill; pp 1-2 (584 words).

2. Velimir Razuvayev article headlined "Crimean Tatar coin" says that Crimean Tatars have staged a rally outside Simferopol to commemorate the victims of the genocide of the Crimean Tatars in 1944 despite a ban to hold mass events until June 6; pp 1, 3 (570 words).

3. Mikhail Sergeyev article headlined "State programs to be first to face cuts" says that the government will cut the financing of most state programs due to a looming economic crisis; pp 1, 4 (808 words).

4. Alexei Gorbachev article headlined "Eighty percent of citizens still want to elect mayors" says that a public opinion poll conducted by the independent pollster Levada Centre has shown that almost 80 percent of Russians advocate direct mayoral elections in large cities. However, this will hardly be taken into account by the State Duma when considering the second reading of the local government reform that will abolish direct mayoral elections in large cities that are divided into districts; pp 1, 4 (687 words).

5. Vladimir Skosyrev article headlined "Gandhi dynasty leaves scene" says that the opposition Bharatya Janata Party led by Narendra Modi has won India's parliamentary election. The article also features a Russian expert's comment on the issue; pp 1, 6 (599 words).

6. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "Donetsk Republic persistently seeks merger with Russia" says that the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic intends to remove borders with Russia today and once again ask Russia to annex it. The Ukrainian authorities are doing their best to prevent this; pp 1, 6 (1,366 words).

7. Oksana Skripnikova article headlined "'Polite conservatism' to be introduced by advanced methods" says that the ideology of conservatism, its history and future in Russia is planned

to be more actively studied; p 2 (533 words).

8. Leonid Kostin report headlined "Why municipal reform is necessary" stands up for the pending local government reform; p 2 (623 words).

9. Daria Garmonenko article headlined "New turn in Bolotnaya justice" gives an update on the trial of Left Front opposition activists Sergei Udaltsov and Leonid Razvozzhayev, charged with having organized mass riots in May 2012 on Moscow's Bolotnaya Ploshchad; p 3 (764 words).

10. Yekaterina Trifonova article headlined "Unauthorized virtual rally" says that a rally against the Russian leadership was expected to be held on May 18 in central Moscow and other large Russian cities, but it did not take place. Volunteers were invited to the rally through the internet; p 3 (716 words).

11. Leonid Radzikhovsky article published in the regular Carte Blanche column headlined "If not to catch up with, then to warm" says that the West has preferred imposing sanctions on Russian officials and businessmen than on the Russian economy or certain Russian companies because the sanctions may backlash the Western economy; p 3 (972 words).

12. Madina Shavlokhova and Ivan Shvarts article headlined "Ukrainian transit to be discussed without Ukrainians" says that the West has more promptly reacted to Putin's second letter to EU leaders on Russian gas supplies. EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger will meet today the Russian energy minister; the Ukrainian energy minister will be invited for talks within a week only; p 4 (784 words).

13. Viktor Myasnikov article headlined "Disaster happens not to Proton, but to entire Russian space sector" says that yet another failed launch of a Proton rocket is evidence of a deep crisis in the Russian space sector; p 4 (912 words).

14. Svetlana Gamova report "While Donbass wages war, Dnestr region digs trenches" says that Moldova is redeploying military hardware to the Dnestr river fearing Russian military threat; pp 9-10 (1,200 words).

15. Igor Ivanov report "Ukrainian crisis in system of international relations" looks at the situation in Ukraine and says that the "abyss of distrust between Russia and the West is deepening"; pp 9-10 (1,100 words).

16. Alexei Fenenko report "'Between-the-seas' geopolitics" looks at the Ukrainian crisis and says that "Kiev's behavior worsens the situation in the Baltic-Black Sea region"; p 10 (1,100 words).

17. Sergei Zhiltsov report "Ukraine on verge of disintegration" says that the issue of federalization of Ukraine is losing its relevance; p 11 (1,000 words).

Vedomosti

1. Darya Borisyak and Tatyana Voronova article headlined "Sanctions not to impede reorganization of Mosoblbank" says that SMP-Bank, owned by the Rotenberg brothers close to the Russian president, is bidding for reorganizing Mosoblbank that has gone bankrupt; pp 1, 14 (750 words).

2. Pavel Aptekar et al. article headlined "Logic of separation" looks at the drawbacks of the Russian authorities' policy towards national minorities; pp 1, 6 (450 words).

3. Yelizaveta Sergina et al. article headlined "Prime minister from 'Marshal'" says that Russian spin doctor Alexander Borodai, former consultant to Marshal Kapital, has been elected the prime minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic; p 3 (500 words).

4. Polina Khimshiashvili article headlined "China after Crimea" focuses on Putin's upcoming visit to China on May 20-21 ; p 3 (400 words).

5. Maria Snegovaya article headlined "Creation of new political reality" describes the current political regime in Russia, noting that it has adopted certain practices of the Soviet Union; pp 6-7 (1,300 words).

6. Maxim Buyev article headlined "Can media outlets be made less politically committed?" looks at ways to make media outlets unbiased; p 7 (450 words).

7. Polina Khimshiashvili article headlined "'I consider myself to be romantic, though I do not make impression like this'" looks at Ukrainian presidential candidate, businessman Petro Poroshenko, and his election manifesto; pp 8-9 (22,400 words).

8. Yelena Khodyakova article headlined "Russia ready to make discount for Ukraine" says that Russia is ready to give a discount on gas supplies to Ukraine if the latter pays off at least part of its gas debt; p 11 (750 words).

9. Irina Mokrousova report in the column "Person of week" looks at Gazprom CEO Alexei

Miller; p 7 (400 words).

Izvestia

1. Arseny Pogosyan article headlined "Foreign NGOs suspected of transiting our orphans to U.S." says that the number of foreign nongovernmental organizations dealing with the adoption of Russian orphans by foreign families has sharply increased since the beginning of the year. Russian lawmakers think that they are engaged in transit of Russian orphans to the U.S.; pp 1, 3 (1,024 words).

2. Irina Nenasheva article headlined "Ukrainian security agencies detain LifeNews journalists" says that two journalists from Russia's privately-owned rolling news LifeNews television channel have been detained near the Ukrainian city Kramatorsk; pp 1, 8 (508 words).

3. Lyudmila Podobedova article headlined "Russia to deliver gas to China at European price" says that during Putin's upcoming visit to China, a long-term gas contract may be signed. The gas price for China will be approximately at the EU's average despite discount forecasts, a source in Gazprom said; pp 1, 5 (1,065 words).

4. Yegor Sozayev-Guryev article headlined "President opposes involving Crimean Tatars in conflicts" gives an account of Putin's meeting with Crimean lawmakers and members of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis (parliament); p 2 (500 words).

5. Tatyana Shirmanova et al. article headlined "They suggest curbing governors' powers to appoint mayors" looks at amendments to the pending local government reform that will abolish direct mayoral elections in large cities that are divided into districts, drafted by State Duma lawmaker Dmitry Savelyev; p 2 (699 words).

6. Natalya Bashlykova article headlined "Patriots of Russia to refresh policy" says that at the May 20 party congress, the Patriots of Russia party plans to announce a new party program; p 2 (726 words).

7. Politician Boris Titov article headlined "Road to China" says that Putin's upcoming visit to China is a milestone event in Russian-Chinese relations; p 3 (879 words).

8. Ivan Cheberko article headlined "Losses from failed launch of Ekspress-AM4R [satellite] to reach 19 billion rubles ($545 million) within three years" says that the losses from the failed launch of a Proton rocket, that should have put into orbit a broadcast satellite, have

amounted to 10.64 billion rubles ($306 million); p 7 (537 words).

9. Konstantin Volkov interview with the head of the Federation Council committee on international affairs Mikhail Margelov, headlined "'It is important that compatriots are in orbit of Russian world'" speaking about measures being taken by Russia to increase its influence abroad; 8 (494 words).

10. Konstantin Volkov article headlined "Aid collection points for Donetsk to rise in number" says that the number of points to collect humanitarian aid for the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic will be increased in Russia; p 8 (494 words).

11. Maxim Sokolov article headlined "Who will be responsible for Russia before God" explains why people's support for Putin has considerably strengthened this spring; p 9 (630 words).

12. Konstantin Volkov article headlined "Kharkiv gets ready for referendum and boycott" looks at the situation in Ukraine's southeast and says that a referendum on self-determination is expected to be held in Kharkiv; p 8 (300 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Vasily Mironov article headlined "Gas more expensive than politics" looks ahead at Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak's gas talks with EU Energy Commissioner Günther Oettinger set for May 19; pp 1, 5 (690 words).

2. Tatyana Zamakhina article headlined "Forty-three bags for tea ceremony" says that some 43 agreements on bilateral cooperation are planned to be signed in the course of Putin's visit to China, which begins on May 20; p 2 (601 words).

3. Vyacheslav Prokofyev article headlined "Mistral does not change route" says that the U.S. is exerting pressure on France to compel it to give up the sale of Mistral helicopter carriers to Russia. However, Paris does not want to do this; p 7 (611 words).

4. Susanna Alperina interview with the general director of the state-funded Russian Public Television, or OTR, Anatoly Lysenko, headlined "Was it stormy on TV?", who sums up the results of the one-year performance of the television channel; p 10 (2,292 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Yelena Gamayun and Tatyana Melikyan article headlined "Is Borodai protege of oligarchs or revolutionary romantic?" says that the self-proclaimed Donetsk people's republic has got the prime minister, the head of the parliament and two ministers. Surprisingly, Russian political analyst Alexander Borodai has become the republic's prime minister; p 2 (1,019 words).

2. Alexei Lokhvitsky article headlined "Deportation victims memorial day in Crimea: Without fighting and political slogans" says that Crimean Tatars have commemorated the victims of the Crimean Tatar people's deportation without both Russian and Ukrainian flags outside Simferopol; p 2 (431 words).

3. Oleg Poptsov article headlined "Patriotic outburst blows up country" says that the Ukrainian crisis and the Russia-West standoff over Ukraine have become a test of Russians' patriotism which grew strong following Russia's victory in the Winter Olympics in Sochi; p 3 (1,256 words).

4. Marina Perevozkina interview with Oleg Muzyka, an eyewitness of the May 2 massacre in Odessa, headlined "'You together with all the rest will lie down on the third floor,' said Ukraine's Security Service officer", speaking about the May 2 fire at Odessa's trade union building; p 6 (2,741 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Natalya Zotova article headlined "Biryulevo [district] moves outside MKAD [Moscow Ring Road]" says that the killing of a Muscovite by a native of Uzbekistan has triggered mass riots in the town of Pushkino in Moscow region; p 8 (789 words).

2. Olga Prosvirova article headlined "Enforcement agents" criticizes State Duma member Andrei Lugovoi's initiative to forcibly include any NGOs that are financed from abroad and are engaged in political activities in a list of foreign agents; p 6 (601 words).

3. Pavel Kanygin interview with Hanna Herman, former deputy head of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych's administration and Yanukovych's former spokesperson, headlined "'I wanted to get Yanukovych out of this prison'", speaking about the situation in Ukraine and the forthcoming presidential election there, among other things; pp 2-3 (2,775 words).

4. Pavel Felgengauer article headlined "Arms manager" comments on former head of the

Administrative Department of the President Vladimir Kozhin's appointment as an aide for military-technical cooperation; p 7 (692 words).

5. Alexei Tarasov article headlined "Switch on cable and brain" comments on the situation with the TV2 television company in Tomsk, which may lose its broadcast license; p 5 (600 words).

Noviye Izvestia

1. Margarita Alekhina article headlined "Collective responsibility" says that the recent killing of a Muscovite by an Uzbek national in Moscow region will trigger a new wave of raids targeting migrants; pp 1, 5 (569 words).

2. Denis Konstantinov article headlined "Commemoration accompanied by roar of helicopters" looks at how Crimean Tatars have commemorated the 70th anniversary of the deportation of Crimean Tatars; p 2 (611 words).

3. Yekaterina Dyatlovskaya article headlined "'Extremely tough measure'" says that the president's human rights council has called for rejecting a bill introducing criminal punishment for concealing dual citizenship; p 2 (458 words).

4. Elya Grigoriyeva article headlined "Pipe calling" says that Russia has confirmed its willingness to cut the gas price for Ukraine, but on certain conditions. The article also features Russian experts' comments on the issue; p 3 (723 words).

5. Sergei Putilov article headlined "Burnt billions" says that the recent failed launch of a Proton-M rocket has shown that reforms in the Russian space sector have been ineffective; p 3 (699 words).

RBK Daily

1. Alexander Artemyev et al. article headlined "Authorities get lost in three tweets" says that the Russian political elite has split over the censorship in the internet; pp 1-2 (850 words).

2. Stanislav Stanskikh article headlined "State Duma deprives Federation Council of power for benefit of president" says that the State Duma has passed amendments to the Russian Constitution, which enables the president to appoint and remove from office 10 percent of the Federation Council staff; p 4 (800 words).

3. Mikhail Rubin and Farida Rustamova article headlined "Nashi [movement] with Yakemenko once again" says that the informal leader of the pro-Kremlin organization Nashi, Vasily Yakemenko, has met heads of the movement to discuss its future; p 3 (800 words).

4. Timofei Dzyadko article headlined "Shanghai tariff" says that a Russian-Chinese gas contract may be signed during Putin's visit to China on May 20-21 ; p 5 (600 words).

5. Alexander Ratnikov and Timofei Dzyadko article headlined "Delay with Yamal" says that the launch of Novatek's Yamal LNG scheduled for 2017 may be delayed, because some Western banks have refused to finance the project; pp 1, 5 (450 words).

Tvoi Den

1. Petr Stepanov article headlined "Legion of jackals" says that the Ukrainian far-right radical nationalist group Right Sector is recruiting mercenaries for guerrilla wars in Crimea and Donetsk region; p 2 (300 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Maria Grishina article titled "Donetsk self-defense forces seize National Guard HQ" reports on the situation in Donetsk region, where separatists have seized the regional command headquarters of the Ukrainian National Guard; p 4 (400 words).

2. Alexei Pankin interview with Pavel Zarifullin, director of the Moscow-based Lev Gumilev Centre, commenting on the situation with Crimean Tatars on the Crimean peninsula, p 6 (800 words).

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