

What the Papers Say, Feb. 16, 2014

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Kommersant

1. Interview with Deputy Mayor Marat Khusnullin headlined "'New policy eliminates chaos in development'" where he speaks about the capital's development market; p. 1, 4.
2. "Single state exam to be re-examined" says that Russian universities had to change the list of entrance exams for this year's graduates and looks at the problems arising from the move; p. 1, 5.
3. "VTB going to consolidated" says that the VTB group is discussing a merger of several of its banks, the Bank of Moscow and the VTB 24 in the first place, aiming to cut expenditures amid a stagnating economy; p. 1, 8.
4. "Stop, he withdraws" says that outstanding Russian figure-skater Yevgeny Plushchenko has withdrawn from competition in Sochi and announced he has finished his career due to a back trauma; p. 1, 12.

5. "FMS invites people to passport control" says that the Federal Migration Service is setting up a registry of lost passports aiming to prevent crimes committed with false IDs; p. 2.
6. Interview with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier headlined "'Our countries are united by much more than it may seem'" where he speaks about his visit to Russia and prospects for Russian-German relations; p. 2.
7. "Ella Panfilova becomes president's candidate" says that President Vladimir Putin has officially nominated Ella Panfilova, chairperson of the Civil Dignity movement and former head of the presidential human rights council, for the position of ombudsman; p. 3.

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. "People's support is priority" says that today the State Duma is to pass in the third reading a bill on elections to the State Duma based on the concept proposed by President Putin; p. 1-2.
2. "Filter for newcomers across entire vertical" looks at the obstacles the amendments to the law on elections to the State Duma create for small parties; p. 1, 3.
3. "United Russia preparing amnesty for migrants" says that head of the State Duma Committee for Economic Policy Igor Rudensky has called for sorting out the mess in the migration policy and has proposed declaring a migration amnesty; p. 1, 4.
4. "Brussels cancelling visas for Moldovan citizens" says that the European Parliament has approved a visa-free regime for Moldovan citizens in an attempt to make the EU look a more attractive integration project than the Customs Union; p. 1, 7.
5. "Lull in Kiev to last until Monday" says that Kiev doubts that international mediators, Russia and the EU, will be able to come to terms and work out proposals aiming to settle the political crisis in Ukraine. Meanwhile, the situation in Kiev may aggravate by Feb. 17 ; p. 1, 7.
6. "Field Marshal el-Sissi received in Novo-Ogaryovo" says that Egyptian Defense Minister Abdel Fattah el-Sissi met President Vladimir Putin in his residence in Moscow where Putin wished him success in his presidential campaign. Meanwhile, military cooperation between Moscow and Cairo is expected to grow as Russian and Egyptian foreign and defense ministers discussed a new arms deal estimated at about \$2 billion dollars; p. 1,8.
7. "Buses and commuter trains in Sochi set records, too" says that Sochi transport infrastructure has been operating well through the Olympics ordeal; p. 2.
8. "Navalny announces mobilization in the Moscow region" says that as former mayoral candidate Alexei Navalny has called on volunteers to participate in municipal election campaigns in the Moscow region. Experts do not rule out the possibility of a coalition between Navalny's Party of Progress, Yabloko, RPR-Parnas and several other parties; p. 3.
9. "They want less housing for labor migrants" says that lawmakers are drafting a bill to make it more difficult for labor migrants to get in mortgage programs; p. 3.
10. "Russia divided into developed and undeveloped" says that an analytical report compiled

for the East+West=Invest conference to take place in Moscow in late March says that the business climate improvement marked by the Doing Business rating is a formality as the formal progress has not resulted in either economic or investment growth; p. 4.

11. "European Parliament afraid of U.S.' discontent" says that the European Parliament has refused to give guarantees of asylum or security to NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden having given in to the pressure exerted by the U.S.; p. 8.

Vedomosti

1. "Tax mechanism" says that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has approved a single global standard of automated information exchange about financial accounts; p. 1, 4.

2. "Tesco coming to Russia" says that world's third biggest retailer, Tesco, is expected to come to the Russian market soon; p. 1, 19.

3. Editorial headlined "Salutary conflict" says that the State Duma has passed in the first reading amendments that make life easier for officials and lawmakers possessing businesses and comments that the Kremlin may have decided to give them a break after five years of a tough ban; p. 1, 6.

4. "Two plus two is \$3 billion" says that during the visit of Egyptian Defense Minister Abdel Fattah el-Sissi to Moscow the top officials came to terms on arms contracts worth more than \$2 billion; p. 2.

5. "Candidate based on place of residence" says that the RPR-Parnas party, Navalny's unregistered Party of Progress and Party of 5 December have voiced the initial variant of a joint list of candidates for the City Duma election set for September; p. 3.

6. "Demand for pilots going down" says that Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has announced 320 billion rubles (\$9 billion) will be spent on developing and purchasing drones — until 2020; p. 3.

7. Editorial headlined "Pobedonostsev's cocktail" comments on the decision to give lectures to staff of the presidential administration on conservatism, its values and people who promoted them; p. 6.

8. "Freedom against will" says that the new bill on elections to the State Duma bring the country back to the electoral system of 2003; p. 7.

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. "Withdrawal" looks at the 25th anniversary of the withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan and contemplates whether a lesson has been learnt; p. 1, 12.

2. Interview with outgoing ombudsman Vladimir Lukin headlined "Is it easy to be society's defense lawyer?" where he speaks about his work as ombudsman; p. 10.

3. Alexander Gasyuk Interview with head of Kharkiv, Gennady Kernes, headlined "Far

from Maidan" where he speaks about setting up the Ukrainian Front movement and the political crisis in Ukraine; p. 11.

4. "Geneva-2 being torn from reality" comments on an animated discussion of the resolutions on humanitarian aid to Syria drafted by Russia and the West; p. 18.

5. Interview with Montenegrin President Filip Vujanovic headlined "Good taste of power"; p. 18.

Izvestia

1. "State companies to be obliged to reveal results of audit checks" says that the government is drafting amendments to the mechanism of auditing of state companies; p. 1, 4.

2. "They want to strip conscript soldiers of right to vote" says an LDPR deputy has submitted to the State Duma a bill depriving conscript soldiers of their right to elect governors and legislative bodies of the region where they serve; p. 1-2.

3. "LGBT activists complain to Council of Europe" says that activists of the Russian LGBT-community have complained to the Council of Europe about the prejudice of Russian officials who repeatedly infringe on their rights thus violating Russia's international obligations; p. 3.

4. "Dmitry Rogozin sets up new body to introduce Glonass" says that Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin has set up an interdepartmental working group to deal with the development and use of the navigation system Glonass; p. 3.

5. "Gazprom to continue paying in kind for Sakhalin 2" says that Gazprom will continue paying royalty in kind for the project Sakhalin 2 and Sakhalin residents will continue receiving cheap gas; p. 1-2.

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. "Well-filtered democracy" criticizes the bill on elections to the State Duma for barring small parties from competition; p. 1-2.

2. "Opposition for idiots" comments on the reasons behind the split in the RPR-Parnas party and Vladimir Ryzhkov leaving the party; p. 3.

3. "Yatsenyuk gets green after talk with Tymoshenko" talks about the Ukrainian opposition leader's meeting with imprisoned former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko: protesters in Kiev are to decide whether Yatsenyuk must take up premiership or not; p. 3.

4. "Yanukovich's litmus day" features political analysts' forecasts about the development of the Ukrainian crisis; p. 3.

Novaya Gazeta

1. "I ask not to blame anyone except Health Ministry and government" looks at the suicide of Rear Admiral Vyacheslav Apanasenko, who had cancer. The article says that the rules for distributing analgesics for terminally ill people should be eased in Russia; p. 2.

2. "To broadcast until money runs out" says that while the management of the privately-owned liberal internet and satellite broadcaster Dozhd TV is struggling for the channel's survival, it "continues to lead its previous life"; p. 4-5.
3. "Do you want positive things? Here you are" looks at the Olympic Games in Sochi; p. 21.

RBK Daily

1. "Two hours with Elvira Nabiullina" says that 500 bankers have arrived in the Moscow region to meet the head of the Central Bank, Elvira Nabiullina. Everyone was concerned about one thing: how many banks there will be in the country by 2015; p. 1, 6.
2. "Labor obligation" says that the United Russia faction in the State Duma will make labor migrants officially state the aim of their entry into Russia; p. 2.
3. "Currency Games" says that Bloomberg has reported quoting sources in the Russian government that the maintenance of Olympic facilities in Sochi will cost Russia \$7 billion dollars during the next three years; p. 2.
4. "Locked city" says investor Alexander Vinokurov has decided to stop publishing the magazine Bolshoi Gorod (Big City). This is the only asset in his media holding company Dozhd that has not decreased net losses over the last few years, the article says; p. 7.

Noviye Izvestia

1. "Serdyukov's case may slip through crack" says that the State Duma is unlikely to back the Communists' initiative to carry out a parliamentary investigation in relation to former Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov; p. 2.
2. "Half of Russians do not believe security forces can protect them against terrorists" says that according to a Levada Center poll, 49 percent of respondents doubt that law enforcers can protect them against terrorist attacks; p. 2.

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. "Egypt's future president flies in for Putin's approval" looks at the visit of Egyptian Defense Minister Abdel Fattah el-Sissi and his meeting with Putin. Egypt wants to sign a \$2 billion weapon deal with Moscow, the article says; p. 2.
2. "Single people from gay countries not to be allowed to adopt" says that Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has signed a resolution tightening the rules of adoption of Russian orphans by foreigners; p. 3.
3. "American bobsleigh pilot: Russia holds Games excellently!" features comments of an US athlete on the Olympics in Sochi.; p. 8.

Trud

1. "You are not a critic, you are simply an idiot" looks at Kremlin critic Viktor Shenderovich's comments on the Olympics in Sochi. Shenderovich "does not see much difference between

the Games in Sochi and Nazi Olympics in 1936", the article says; p. 2.

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