

What the Papers Say, April 16, 2014

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Kommersant

1. Vladislav Novy article called "Rostelecom gets travel voucher to Crimea" says the Russian telecom operator Rostelecom is to open an office in Crimea. The company may either build its own network, or buy the already available ones from Ukrainian companies Datagrup or, possibly, Rinat Akhmetov's Ukrtelecom; pp 1, 13 (546 words).

2. Ilya Barabanov et al. article headlined "Ukraine being switched to combat mode" reports on the latest developments in the east of Ukraine where an "anti-terrorist" operation is under way; pp 1, 8 (1,096 words).

3. Alexei Shapovalov and Dmitry Butrin article called "To spend everything on growth" looks at a forecast by the Economic Development Ministry that will be considered at today's government meeting. One of the scenarios deems it possible for the Russian economy to grow by 10 percent in 2015 provided that 6,000 billion rubles (about \$166 billion) is invested in the economy in 2014-15; pp 1, 6 (920 words).

4. Maxim Ivanov article headlined "Personal responsibility for personal pages" gives details of amendments that have been incorporated in a new version of the bill "On information, information technology and information protection". If passed, the bill will require popular bloggers to get registered with the Russian communications watchdog Roskomnadzor; p 2 (798 words).
5. Anna Pushkarskaya article called "Constitutional Court frees voters" says the Constitutional Court has reinstated people's right to early voting if they have valid reasons to be away from their place of permanent residence on the voting day; p 2 (578 words).
6. Irina Nagornyykh article headlined "Lawyers to be offered to work at elections in organized way" forecasts that an association of lawyers specializing in the electoral legislation will be set up in Russia. The members of the association will monitor how political parties comply with the electoral legislation and will perform an expert review of electoral disputes; p 3 (405 words).
7. Natalya Pavlova article titled "Murtaza Rakhimov looks for substitute for Rustem Khamitov" looks at the criticism of the head of the Bashkortostan republic, Rustem Khamitov, that has been voiced by his predecessor Murtaza Rakhimov in an interview with a local website. Sources in Khamitov's administration say Rakhimov is trying to set Khamitov at loggerheads with Rady Khabirov and Khamit Mavlyarov, whom he named as potential successors to the republic's incumbent president; p 3 (708 words).
8. Kirill Antonov article headlined "Tatarstan does not want to pay for watching" says the head of the Tatarstan republic, Rustam Minnikhanov, has disapproved of a bill by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation proposing that video cameras should be installed at polling stations; p 3 (498 words).
9. Vadim Pasmurtsev article called "Territory in wet spot" looks at how Khabarovsk region is still coping with the aftermath of last year's disastrous flooding; p 4 (2,363 words).
10. Vyacheslav Kozlov article titled "FMS shows drive to investigate" says the Federal Migration Service has published a bill that would grant it investigative functions and would turn it into a true security structure; p 5 (644 words).
11. Petr Netreba article called "Budget to grow through territories" considers some ideas that the Finance Ministry has come up with when drafting a budget plan for 2015-17. These include a proposal that debt-ridden regions should reconsider some of the tax incentives that are now available locally; p 6 (547 words).
12. Anastasia Manuilova article titled "Small business to get immunized from FAS" says

the Economic Development Ministry has drafted an amendment to the current legislation that would protect small business from abrupt audits by the Federal Anti-Monopoly Service; p 6 (390 words).

13. Yelena Chernenko article headlined "NATO called to east" reports from a meeting of 28 Defense ministers of NATO member states who have considered building up their military presence on the border with Russia in view of the Ukraine crisis; p 7 (567 words).

14. Pavel Tarasenko article called "Russia appreciates Chinese restraint" reports on Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's brief visit to China; p 7 (684 words).

15. Svetlana Dementyeva column "Rules of game" tries to figure out why Genbank, one of Russian small banks, has been slow in opening fully functional offices in Crimea; p 9 (426 words).

16. Kirill Melnikov article headlined "Ministers calculate Rosneft" says it is now up to President Vladimir Putin to decide whether to provide public funding for a \$18 billion petrochemical facility that the Russian oil company Rosneft wants to build in the Far East. The Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Energy doubt the expediency of the project; p 9 (564 words).

17. Yury Barsukov article called "Ukraine returns to Polish pipeline" says the German energy company RWE has started reverse-flow deliveries of natural gas to Ukraine. An expert says Gazprom will actually benefit from this arrangement as it sells the gas to Germany, while it is not clear how Ukraine could settle RWE bills; p 11 (493 words).

18. Ivan Safronov report "Handover jammed" says that the return of Ukrainian military hardware from Crimea to Ukraine has been postponed; pp 1, 8 (800 words).

Vedomosti

1. Margarita Papchenkova article called "To Russia for free" says the Russian government is considering tax amnesty on the capital being brought back to Russia; pp 1, 4 (600 words).

2. Nikolai Epple report headlined "Power of world" speculates that Russia may have opposed the idea of having U.S. peacekeeping forces in the east of Ukraine because it is going to send its own peacekeeping troops there; pp 1, 6 (500 words).

3. Anastasia Kornya article titled "Early and 'correctly'" reports that the Constitutional Court has reinstated people's right to early voting if they are unable to cast their ballot on the polling day. A Communist lawmaker says the decision will benefit the ruling party; p 2 (600 words).
4. Alexei Nikolsky and Polina Khimshiashvili article called "Reconnaissance by fire" reports on the "anti-terrorist operation" currently under way in the east of Ukraine and on the diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis that have so far proved futile; p 3 (550 words).
5. Pavel Aptekar report called "Early voting" is skeptical about the ruling of the Constitutional Court reinstating people's right to early voting and views it as the revival of "shady voting practices" as the authorities are afraid of losing local elections; p 6 (400 words).
6. Kirill Rogov report titled "Chimaeras of confrontation" argues that the policy of confrontation that Russian "pseudopatriots" have opted for is not viable because it will be disastrous for the Russian economy; pp 6, 7 (1,500 words).
7. Olga Kuvshinova column headlined "Man of the week: 0.5 percent GDP" warns against changing the state budget policy too often, even for the sake of boosting economic growth, as it will only spur uncertainly; p 7 (400 words).
8. Anastasia Golitsyna et al. article headlined "It's hard to be blogger" considers the way to enforce new "anti-terrorist" regulations to be soon approved by the Russian parliament that will require popular bloggers to registers as media outlets; pp 10, 22 (1,100 words).
9. Galina Starinskaya et al. article called "Sanctions may be imposed against Sechin" looks at how the sanctions that may be imposed by the U.S. against Rosneft president Igor Sechin, could affect the company's operations; p 12 (900 words).
10. Darya Borisyak and Tatyana Voronova article called "Crimean bank holidays" looks at how people in Crimea have been coping without banking services that are now unavailable because Russian banks are only starting to arrive in the region; pp 11, 16 (1,000 words).
11. Mikhail Serov article titled "Lukoil does not need little" gives details of the sale by Lukoil of its 50 percent stake in Caspian Investment Resources, or CIR, to Sinopec; p 14 (500 words).
12. Artem Mikhaylov article called "Snowden effect" says Russian companies spent 30 percent more on preventing information leaks in 2013 that the year before as "white-collar" crime is rising; p 19 (500 words).

Nezavisimaya Gazeta

1. Yury Paniyev article called "West in anticipation of outcome" says the U.S. and the EU are preparing to expand their blacklists of Russian officials and are thinking of other sanctions to be taken against Russia, but are reluctant to announce them before the Geneva meeting on April 17 where "a chance will be given to diplomacy" to resolve the Ukraine crisis; pp 1, 8 (900 words).
2. Sokhbet Mamedov article titled "Iran ready to strengthen Azerbaijan's Defense" looks at intensifying relations between Azerbaijan and Iran in view of Azeri leader Ilham Alyev's recent visit to Iran and the planned reciprocal visit to Azerbaijan by Iranian President Hasan Ruhani; pp 1, 7 (400 words).
3. Tatyana Ivzhenko article headlined "New Maidan ripening in Kiev" says people's discontent with the interim authorities is growing not only in the east of Ukraine, but in Kiev too, with an upsurge in protests expected during Easter; pp 1, 7 (1,900 words).
4. Andrei Serenko article called "Business of Volgograd's grey party cardinals disrupted" says the United Russia leadership has "prescribed its Volgograd branch a reset" after the executive bodies of the local party branch lost the trust of Putin, forcing him to sack governor Sergei Bozhenov. The lists of candidates for seats in the regional legislative assembly have been nullified, although some candidates are said to have paid up to \$830,000 to make it there; pp 1, 5 (600 words).
5. Ivan Rodin article called "Struggle for daylight saving time going on within authorities" speculates that by postponing the first reading of a bill reinstating daylight saving time, the State Duma wanted to avoid "offending" Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who is to report to the State Duma on April 22; pp 1, 6 (600 words).
6. Alina Terekhova article titled "Beijing appreciates gas exports from Russia" refers to an article in China's People's Daily that cast doubt on the solidity of Russia's positions on the Asian energy market; contains an opinion by Sberbank Investment Research analyst Valery Nesterov, who supposes that China is haggling for better contractual terms; pp 1, 4 (650 words).
7. Vladimir Mukhin article headlined "Mini-armies multiplying in Ukraine" points to a growing number of armed paramilitary groups on the both sides of the conflict in Ukraine, says their involvement in the political crisis is likely to lead to a civil war; p 2 (600 words).
8. Vladimir Ivanov article called "War of special services that looks like a joke" quotes

an expert with the Main Intelligence Directorate as saying that the conversation between two Russian intelligence officers, that has been allegedly intercepted by the Ukrainian security service, is an "amateurish fake"; p 2 (500 words).

9. Petr Mordasov article titled "Regions to decide future of reform" reports on the first reading of a bill on the local government reform in the State Duma; p 2 (800 words).

10. Editorial headlined "Culture Ministry finds other experts" criticizes the Ministry of Culture for trying to "fight against a wrong kind of art", restricting funding for unconventional or experimental art; p 2 (450 words).

11. Alexei Gorbachev article titled "Political rehabilitation of 2000s" doubts that the decision of the Constitutional Court to reinstate people's right to early voting is actually about their rights. Early voting has always been used as manipulation and a campaigning tool; experts say; p 3 (650 words).

12. Yekaterina Trifonova article headlined "Mikhail Khodorkovsky to gather opposition in Kiev" previews an international conference called "Ukraine-Russia: Dialogue" that is due to take place in Kiev in late April and will be hosted by Mikhail Khodorkovsky. Pundit Alexei Makarkin says that Khodorkovsky is obviously hoping that one day people in Russia will be disillusioned with the country's policy on Ukraine; p 3 (750 words).

13. Georgy Kunadze report headlined "Carte Blanche. Post-Soviet unsettled mind" mocks the anti-West and anti-liberal rhetoric that now prevails in Russian society; p 3 (600 words).

14. Anastasia Bashkatova article called "Shadow of default crawling upon Kiev" says nobody doubts that Ukraine is insolvent, so the West may opt for writing off Ukraine's debts, which will hurt Russia; p 4 (1,000 words).

15. Vladislav Maltsev report "Ukraine conceals meeting of the Pope with Patriarch Kirill" says that the Moscow Patriarchate has accused the Byzantine Catholic Church of a new crusade against the Orthodox Church; pp 1-2 of the supplement NG Religions (1,500 words).

Rossiiskaya Gazeta

1. Petr Likhomanov article headlined "Terrorists in Kiev..." gives details of an assault against presidential candidate Oleh Tsaryov in Kiev and points out that many in Ukraine have condemned it; pp 1, 8 (1,006 words).

2. Boris Yashmanov interview with presidential advisor Veniamin Yakovlev headlined "Come to judge". The latter speaks about the final phase of forming the Supreme Court of Russia that will incorporate the High Court of Russia; p 6 (1,132 words).
3. Tamara Shkel article called "Platform for debate" reports on the visit of a State Duma delegation led by speaker Sergei Naryshkin to the UNESCO headquarters in France. The author notes that Naryshkin was able to go to France despite being on the EU blacklist; p 6 (614 words).
4. Vladislav Vorobyev article headlined "War to order" says those who are calling for postponing the May 25 presidential election in Ukraine until autumn are playing into the hands of Yulia Tymoshenko, Arseny Yatsenyuk and Oleksandr Turchynov as they do not want their key opponent, "chocolate" tycoon Petro Poroshenko who has been keeping a low profile recently, to win; p 8 (489 words).
5. Fedor Lukyanov op-ed titled "Order that did not happen" says there has never been "a world order" and praises Russia for keeping cool in the ongoing Ukrainian crisis and seeking a diplomatic resolution to it; p 8 (732 words).
6. Yevgeny Shestakov article called "From West to East" comments on Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's visit to China; points out that General Secretary of the Communist Party of China Xi Jinping also met Lavrov, which is a sign of China's support of the stance that Russia has taken in the conflict with the West; p 9 (814 words).
7. Vsevolod Ovchinnikov article headlined "On the threshold to world leadership" argues that China poses no threat to Russia. Quite the opposite, having such a strong neighbor in the East, it will be easier for Russia to develop its far-eastern areas, article says; p 9 (766 words).
8. Vladislav Vorobyev article "Tanks in Donbass ..." says that blood has been spilled in the southeast of Ukraine; pp 1, 8 (900 words).
9. Kira Latukhina report "Ukraine on phone" says that the Russian president's press secretary Dmitry Peskov has spoken on the issues that the phone-in session with Putin on April 17 will be dedicated to; p 2 (650 words).
10. Vladimir Kuzmin report "Apprehension of civil war" looks at Dmitry Medvedev's news conference on the Ukrainian crisis; p 3 (850 words).

Izvestia

1. Ivan Cheberko report "Criminal case opened in relation to president of RSC Energia says that the Investigative Committee has instituted criminal proceedings in relation to the head of the Rocket and Space Corporation Energia, Vitaly Lopota; pp 1-2 (600 words).
2. Boris Mezhuyev report "Alexei Chaly and his strategic choice" says that Alexei Chaly has resigned as acting Sevastopol governor; pp 1, 9 (1,100 words).
3. Yelena Malai report "Lawsuit being prepared to Hague court against UNA-UNSO and Right Sector" says that a State Duma deputy has prepared an inquiry to the Prosecutor General's Office and the Investigative Committee on crimes committed by members of Ukraine's nationalist organizations UNA-UNSO and Right Sector; pp 1, 3 (800 words).
4. Natalia Bashlykova report "Russia may fail to recognize Ukrainian presidential election" says that the State Duma and the Federation Council will not send their observers to the presidential election in Ukraine; p 7 (1,100 words).
5. Darya Tsoi report "To us, Turchynov is no-one and his name is nothing" looks at special operations in Ukraine's eastern regions; p 7 (850 words).

Moskovsky Komsomolets

1. Alexander Minkin report "Snipers look at presidents" looks at the situation in Ukraine ahead of the presidential election; pp 1-2 (700 words).
2. Maria Perevozkina report "Russians are not involved in war in Donetsk republic" says that a representative of the "people's government" in Donetsk has explained why they have decided not to block the local airport; pp 1-2 (650 words).
3. Igor Karmazin report "Candidates for beating" looks at the forthcoming presidential election in Ukraine and at prospects of it being cancelled; p 2 (650 words).
4. Andrei Yashlavsky report "Will quartet meet in Geneva?" says that a special operation in the east of Ukraine may disrupt the four-party negotiations on the Ukrainian crisis in Geneva on 17 April; p 2 (300 words).

Novaya Gazeta

1. Pavel Kanygin report headlined "Russian army almost unseen" covers recent developments in east Ukraine's towns of Slovyansk and Horlivka; pp 1-2 (1,900 words).
2. Olga Musafirova article headlined "\$200 for 'outside', 500 for 'inside'" argues that the recent pro-Russian protests in east Ukraine's Donbass region were sponsored from outside Ukraine; p 3 (900 words).
3. Andrei Lipsky interview with historian Alexei Miller headlined "Russia and Ukraine: moment of truth" reviews the current conflict between the Ukrainian and Russian authority from a historical perspective; pp 4-5 (2,400 words).
4. Vera Chelishcheva article headlined "Iron curtain for one person" details the recent denial of Mikhail Khodorkovsky's associate Platon Lebedev's request to leave Russia by the Russian migration service, refuting the publicized version that Lebedev's request was denied due to an unpaid debt; p 7 (500 words).
5. Andrei Sukhotin article headlined "Real estate in Sodom and Gomorrah" says that, despite a cooling in Russia's relations with the West, many Russian officials still own property there; pp 10-11 (1,200 words).
6. Stanislav Stanskikh article headlined "Lawful foreign agents" says the Constitutional Court has ruled that the law on foreign agent status for foreign-sponsored NGOs was in line with the constitution; p 12 (700 words).

RBK Daily

1. Alexander Artemyev et al. article headlined "Bloggers' faces to be revealed" details a recently tabled bill that, if signed into law, will oblige popular bloggers to register their blogs as media outlets; pp 1-2 (1,300 words).

Novaya Izvestia

1. Dmitry Dirnev article headlined "Eastern front" reports on developments in Ukraine's Donetsk region which is becoming increasingly militarized; pp 1-2 (500 words).

2. Sergei Putilov article headlined "Ice fairy tale" says that Russia's effort to exploit energy deposits in the Arctic region may be set back due to the cooling in its relations with the West; p 3 (600 words).

Komsomolskaya Pravda

1. Nigina Beroyeva article headlined "Citizen Defense fighters: fighting in Kramatorsk, aircraft firing, some of our soldiers killed and wounded" chronicles clashes between pro-Russian "citizens' defense" activists and the Ukrainian army in east Ukraine; pp 1, 4 (400 words).

Argumenty i Fakty

1. Vlad Panov article headlined "Saw Maidan, reap storm" analyses developments in east Ukraine; pp 8-9 (1,300 words).

2. Unattributed brief interview with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov headlined "What does Moscow want from Ukraine?" in which Lavrov advocates the idea of Ukraine's federalization; p 8 (200 words).

3. Viktor Nevolin article headlined "Tymoshenko wants blood?" argues that Ukraine's Yulia Tymoshenko is lobbying hard-line decisions in the Ukrainian government on dealing with the ongoing east Ukraine crisis in order to boost her ratings in the upcoming presidential elections; p 11 (600 words).

Tvoi Den

1. Anton Stepanov article headlined "People's war in progress" chronicles clashes in eastern Ukraine's Slovyansk and Kramatorsk; pp 1-3 (400 words).

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