

Belarus traditionally celebrates Victory Day on May 9th — a holiday to remember the hard-fought battle for the freedom and independence of the Motherland



Fearlessness and heroism reflected in vibrant, eloquent images



INTERNATIONAL

# The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 18 (784) ● THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019 ● WWW.SB.BY

## Flame of Peace solemnly marched across the country

The 2nd European Games torch relay has arrived in Belarus. The meeting ceremony was held at the Belarusian-Polish border at the international Varshavsky Most checkpoint.

The torch relay procession arrived in the Republic after completing its foreign stage. A torch lighting ceremony was held on the border, to follow the Flame of Peace across Belarus, completed by the 100m race Olympic champion, Yulia Nesterenko.

In Brest, the 2nd European Games flame arrived on May 12th-13th. The torch was carried through the central streets of the regional centre to highlight the large-scale event to residents and visitors. Among the torchbearers were well-known Belarusians, including natives of the Brest Region.

The Flame of Peace torch relay began on May 3rd in Rome and will finish on June 21st with the solemn lighting of the Olympic flame bowl at the central arena of the 2nd European Games, the Dinamo National Olympic Stadium. In total, the flame will travel through 55 towns in 8 countries (Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Austria, the Czech Republic, Poland and Belarus) and the route stretches for 7,700km. 450 torchbearers, 100 volunteers and 10 keepers of the flame will take part in the relay.

European Games II will be held in Minsk from 21st to 30th June at 12 sports grounds. More than 4,000 athletes from 50 countries will compete for 200 sets of medals in 15 sports.

Torchbearer of the 2nd European Games  
Flame of Peace torch relay —  
Olympic champion Yulia Nesterenko



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# A day smelling of gunpowder and tasting of the bitterness of losses

Belarus traditionally celebrates Victory Day on May 9th — a holiday to remember the hard-fought battle for the freedom and independence of the Motherland



By Vladimir Velikhov

This is not a mere holiday for Belarusians but also a day of memory, deep respect and gratitude to all those who brought the Great Victory closer. Belarus honours the heroism and fearlessness of the Motherland's defenders — those who believed in victory and fought courageously for their land. The whole country greatly appreciates the dedication of home front workers and all those who, in the post-war years, raised the destroyed cities and villages from the ruins.

On May 9th, 1945, the Soviet people achieved their victory in the Great Patriotic War, which lasted 1,418 days and nights and began, for Belarus, on June 22nd, 1941. In the first days of the war, enemy aircraft bombed railway junctions, airfields, Brest, Grodno, Volkovysk, Baranovichi and other Belarusian cities. The border guards were the first to meet the enemy, but none of the posts surrendered to the invaders. The defenders of the Brest Fortress,

Minsk and Mogilev stood firm. On July 14th, Soviet 'Katyusha' rocket launchers were used for the first time against the enemy near Orsha. Resistance to the enemy in battles in Belarus made it possible to disrupt the German's plans for a rapid offensive against Moscow. However, despite their courage and heroism, Belarus was occupied by the Germans by early September 1941.

After the start of the occupation in Belarus, unprecedented resistance to the enemy was seen, both in its extent and tenacity. The partisan movement became the main form of the national struggle; during the war, over 374,000 partisans were involved, and the anti-fascist underground numbered more than 70,000 people. Representatives of different Soviet nations, as well as anti-fascists from the European countries, battled in guerrilla groups alongside Belarusians.

During the war, there were about 30 guerrilla areas the fascists failed to occupy. The Klichev area, for example, was con-

## ACCENT

The memory of our soldiers has not only remained on monuments, obelisks and mass graves: it lives on in the hearts of all Belarusians. The best proof of this is the traditional *Belarus Remembers!* campaign.

trolled by partisans from March 1942 and, by early 1944, occupied a territory of 3,000 sq.km (over 70,000 civilians were under the protection of 18,000 partisans). The Polotsk-Lepel zone was created in the autumn of 1942 and, by late 1943, covered 1,220 settlements and involved more than 73,5000 civilians. The area was liberated, and Soviet power restored, overseen by 16 partisan brigades and remaining under the control of guerrillas almost until the liberation of Belarus.

Belarusians are one of the nations most affected by the war. The fascists conducted

over 140 punitive operations in Belarus, during which 5,454 villages were completely or partially destroyed. The village of Khatyn is a tragic symbol of the mass destruction of civilians: 149 inhabitants were killed, and 28 homes were burned. 618 villages shared the fate of Khatyn and 188 of them have never been restored.

There were about 250 camps for Soviet prisoners of war and 350 places of detention operating in Belarus. Among them was the fourth largest death camp in Europe — Trostenets, where more than 200,000 people were killed. 34.4m Soviet servicemen — including over 1.3m Belarusians and natives of Belarus — participated in the hostilities during the war. More than 300,000 of them were awarded orders and medals for courage and heroism. 444 soldiers were awarded the honorary title of Hero of the Soviet Union, including 88 members of the underground and partisan movement. In Belarus, 70 people became Full Cavaliers of the Order of Glory and 4 Belarusians are twice He-

roes of the Soviet Union. Belarus lost more than half of its national wealth in the war. 209 cities and district centres were destroyed and burned. The human losses were huge. According to modern researchers, during the Great Patriotic War, 2.5-3m people died in Belarus.

The contribution of Belarusians to the Great Victory and the defeat of fascism has been recognised all over the world. The international conference — convened on April 27th, 1945 in San Francisco to establish the UN — decided to include the BSSR on the list of the founding countries of this international organisation.

In Belarus, the memory of the Great Patriotic War has been preserved throughout the post-war years. Minsk, the capital of Belarus, was awarded the honorary title of Hero City, in addition to 11 other Soviet cities, for its mass heroism and courage in the fight against the aggressors. The Brest Fortress received the title of Hero-Fortress. Other cities of Belarus received awards. Numerous obelisks, monuments, memorials, and burial sites — which number almost 6,000 in Belarus — testify to the victims of the war and the nation's achievement.

In the annals of Belarus there has never been any other battle crueller than the Great Patriotic War, nor has there been a feat more significant than that of the Soviet soldiers who defended the Motherland from the enemy and saved mankind from Nazism. The memory of the terrible war and the Great Victory cannot fade; it is forever inscribed in the history of the Motherland for every Belarusian family. The past tragedy and subsequent victory are an eternal source of pain and bitterness, pride and glory of the Belarusian people.



# Memory of those who died for freedom

President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko laid a wreath at the Victory Monument in Minsk

By Olga Korneeva

Flowers were also laid at the monument by the sons of the Head of State. The ceremony was attended by leaders of national government bodies, the National Assembly, the courts, the Security Council and the Armed Forces, law enforcement agencies, youth organisations and public associations, the CIS Executive

Committee, representatives of the diplomatic corps, the Belarusian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic churches.

A minute of silence was observed in tribute to the memory of those killed during the Great Patriotic War. The Guards of Honour of the Minsk Military Commandant's Office marched past the guests. The event continued with a festive theatrical



Alexander Lukashenko supports *Belarus Remembers!* youth initiative

performance in Pobedy Square. After the event, Mr. Lukashenko talked to veterans of the Great Patriotic War, representatives of the diplomatic corps and youth. Activists of the Belarusian Republican

Youth Union showed the President the *Belarus Remembers!* album featuring photos and brief stories about their family members who fought in the Great Patriotic War. This album will be taken to different cities

and towns around the country, where others will be able to add photos of their family members. The book will take its place in the Belarusian State Great Patriotic War History Museum by Independence Day.

## Belarus will remember



May 9th celebrations in Brest

By Natalia Yemelyanova

### Future generations should know what price the nation paid for its independence

Speaking at the wreath-laying ceremony on the 74th anniversary of the Great Victory, the President of Belarus stressed that it was on Belarusian soil that Soviet soldiers debunked the myth of the invincibility of the military machine of the Third Reich. “They fought for the Motherland. They defended to the death near Minsk and Mogilev, on the banks of the Dnieper and Berezina, and each line of defence for the enemy was a Brest Fortress,” said the Head of State. “Grief affected almost every Belarusian family. Two-thirds of those killed during the war years were civilians. The terrible genocide suffered by the Belarusian people is well known, in places such as Khatyn, Dalva, Ozarichi, Shunevka, Trostenets. There is no end to this tragic list.”

Mr. Lukashenko especially noted the fate of the children of the war. Today, these elderly people are living testimonies and witnesses to the atrocities of the occupiers. “The witnessed recall how their relatives and friends

were killed, and they grew up in the famine and cold of the first post-war years. Just as much as the adults, they defended and built up our country,” the President added. “The saddest pages in the sorrowful book of war are the children’s concentration camps. Thousands were sent there but few survived.”

The Head of State believes that ‘anyone in Europe today who promotes neo-Nazi rallies and marches for the elderly soldiers of the SS battalions should come to Belarus and visit Krasny Bereg where there was a concentration camp — to hear a high-pitched scream and see the memorial to unfulfilled childhood dreams’. “The Great Victory is the unconditional triumph of life over death. Our future generations should know what price our people paid for their freedom — for good, peace and justice, so that this will never happen again,” stressed Mr. Lukashenko.

The President believes that to preserve the memory of the Victory, we must remember it ourselves and teach our children. “Wherever possible, we should show our children — even those who are small — that this is our

Victory, and it is not only the achievement of those people who won (although they are, of course, the ones who brought us Victory), but it is our legacy,” he said, adding that the idea of preserving the memory of the Great Victory is not new — especially for politicians. “It is natural, every year it will be more difficult as time is inexorable and the human memory cannot remember everything. We need to think about how to preserve the key principles which make us human and focus on the future,” he said.

Mr. Lukashenko stressed the need to take measures at state level to pass on the knowledge, experience and memory of the events of the Great Patriotic War from the older generation of young people. In his meetings with young people he said he often asks them whether we are capable of remembering. “In the vast majority, I believe they are,” he said. His confidence is supported by events held in Belarus with the participation and on the initiative of young people — in particular, the *Belarus Remembers!* campaign, which was devised here and spread to other countries, under other names.

## Events and heroes of the past should never be forgotten

By Alexandra Potvorova

### Capsules containing soil from memorials and mass graves of the Great Patriotic War laid in the crypt of All Saints Church

The event was organised by the All Saints Church parish and the Belarusian Union of Officers. The laying of the capsules was timed to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus from occupation. The ceremony was preceded by the annual divine liturgy in the church’s crypt, dedicated to the Great Victory of 1945.

The capsules contain soil from the ‘Breakthrough’ memorial to partisan glory (Ushachi) where 1,500 partisans and civilians — killed by fascists on May 4th and 5th, 1944 when breaking the blockade — were buried. The Polotsk-Lepel guerrilla zone is one of the largest resistance zones seen during the Great Patriotic War; called the Partisan Republic. It covered an area of over 3,000 sq.km and included 1,220 settlements and about 80 thousand civilians. Ushachi was considered the capital of the area. From December 1943 — February 1944, the fascists made 5 unsuccessful attempts to clear partisans in the Polotsk-Lepel zone. On April 11th, 1944, a large-scale punitive operation began, and battles continued for 25 days. On the night of May 4th-5th, the partisans made a breakthrough in the ring of fire and liberated 15,000 civilians. In the summer of 1974, the ‘Breakthrough’ memorial

complex — a monument to partisan glory — was unveiled on the site.

Soil from the grave of the Hero of the Soviet Union, senior officer of the medical service and medical instructor, Zinaida Tusnolobova-Marchenko, was brought from Polotsk to the crypt. In eight months of fighting on the Voronezh front, she helped 128 wounded to leave the battlefield. She was seriously injured and had her legs and hands amputated. After the war, she was active in public services in Polotsk, raising two children.

The capsule now also contains soil from the Lidova Mound mass grave (Velizh in the Smolensk Region) where lieutenant pilot, Alexander Mamkin, along with other soldiers, saved a group of children before losing his life. Together with three other pilots, he evacuated the children from Polotsk orphanage No.1, which was in the German occupied garrison in Belchitsy. A punitive operation was planned, and the pilots worked at night. During their last flight, on April 11th, 1944, the lieutenant’s plane was shot down. He managed to land the plane with the children and wounded partisans but was seriously wounded himself and later died. In nine flights, Alexander Mamkin saved 80 children. The main parts of the rescue operation were filmed by special groups of Moscow cameramen. Some of the films have been preserved and are now kept at Moscow’s State History Museum.

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# Symbols of our Independence

On the second Sunday of May, the country celebrates the Day of State Emblem and State Flag of Belarus. Traditionally, meetings and concerts dedicated to the celebration are held in all regions.



By Svetlana Yevgenieva

On State Flag Square in Minsk, a red and green 98m<sup>2</sup> ornamental flag was raised to the height of 70 metres on the flagpole. Here, the symbols of independence create a single architectural ensemble: the coat of arms and the text of the national anthem cast in bronze. The *Pride of Our Motherland* event was organised on the square, gathering the combined pioneer squads of the Minsk City Pioneer Organisation, representatives of public authorities and

public organisations and veterans of the Great Patriotic War.

In Brest, the State Emblem and State Flag Day was cele-

brated with a concert by local artistic groups. In Vitebsk, a traditional meeting took place in Pobedy Avenue. A solemn flag raising ceremony was organised near the Order of Victory memorial. The best sportsmen carried a flag and a torch lit on Pobedy Square near the Eternal Flame. A solemn state flag raising ceremony was also celebrated in Mogilev.

Meanwhile, lectures and movie screenings were organised in many schools, while libraries hosted specialised exhibitions devoted to the state symbols.

**President Alexander Lukashenko congratulated Belarusians on the State Emblem and State Flag Day. His message read: ‘These are symbols of the country’s sovereignty, which embody the national idea, reflect our glorious history and centuries-old traditions and emphasise our self-identity and independence in choosing our path of development’. The Head of State noted that, being a link between generations, they unite Belarusians in the pursuit of justice, good neighbourliness and peace.**



Prague is the Czech capital

## Avenues for further bilateral work outlined

Belarus and Czech Republic plan to bolster industrial and scientific contacts

By Natalia Yemelianova

The issues were high on the agenda at the 11th session of the Belarusian-Czech commission on economic, industrial, scientific, and technical co-operation in Prague. Negotiations between Belarus’ Deputy Foreign Minister — Yevgeny Shestakov — and the Czech Deputy Industry and Trade Minister, Eduard Muricky, took place.

The two sides evaluated the state of bilateral relations,

discussed prospects for co-operation and possible problems. They also held a plenary session of the commission to discuss liaisons in the area of power and mechanical engineering, agriculture, science and technology, innovations, finance, co-operation between the chambers of commerce and industry and the development of the legal base.

A protocol was signed as a result of the session which will become a road map to guide work for the next year.

## Prospects depend on beneficial partnership

*Made in Belarus* large-scale exhibition of Belarusian goods hosted by Atakent International Exhibition Centre in Almaty



By Olga Korneeva

The exhibition presented Belarusian mechanical engineering and mining, petrochemicals and transport, household appliances and food products, consumer goods, new solutions and medical tourism. Overall, more than 300 brands from Belarus were on display.

In particular, the Minsk Tractor Works presented its agricultural machinery adapted for Kazakhstan. The BELARUS 921.3 tractor was designed for gardening and is much smaller than regular machinery. BelAZ pre-

sented mockup models of its 90-tonne dump trucks. Such machines are used in Kazakhstan’s quarries. Belshina JSC showcased a new line-up of passenger car tyres, while the Brest Electrotechnical Plant displayed automatic devices for railways, communications and telecommunications. These solutions are already in operation along the Almaty-Anrahai-Chu railway section and at the stations of the Atyrau Refinery.

The exhibition was an important showcase event for Belarusian solutions and knowhow. Visitors could see Belarusian anti-tumour medicines, equipment for frag-

mentation and classification of mineral resources, and new materials and products based on them that have applications in multiple areas, including space and aviation, construction, medicine, defence and security.

The Kazakhstan-Belarus Business Forum took place in the Atakent International Exhibition Centre. Its participants discussed the state and prospects for trade and economic co-operation, joint projects and mutual investment, collaboration in the manufacturing industry, financial support for exports and liaisons in healthcare and tourism.

## New experience comes with time

Chinese specialists plan to share their experiences of the development of digital transport corridors with Belarus. The idea is contained in the agreement the Belarusian side signed with LOGINK (the National Public Information Platform for Transportation and Logistics) in Beijing.

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Igor Mikhailovsky, the Director of the Applied Software Systems Institute of the Belarusian Ministry of Communication and Informatisation, said, “We’ve signed an agreement with China’s largest logistics operator LOGINK with a view to creating digital transport corridors, logistics systems, and further consultations. As an institute which develops information systems, we’ve signed agreements with potential partners from various countries, including China.”

He explained that the Chinese company performs logistics functions over an entire region and has signed agreements with foreign partners. “They have a significant logistics network. We plan

to interact with the company within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, to develop our transit interests and take advantage of other opportunities,” he said. “We are at the centre of Europe. The Chinese market is currently of great interest to other countries, particularly in the fields of transit, and the possibilities of accelerating these processes and removing as many barriers as possible. It becomes feasible within the framework of digital transformation. Once the largest logistics operators of different countries have normalised data sharing relations, then all our digital corridors and fast transit will be implemented as well as Belarus’ interests (since we are located between the West and the East),” Mr. Mikhailovsky added.



# New plans in the light of new oil situation

Belarus intends to start importing oil via Baltic or Ukrainian ports by the end of this year as an alternative to Russian oil



By Alexey Fedosov

At a seminar-conference on exporting products of the Belneftekhim Concern to the EU, the Deputy Director General for Commerce of Belarusian Oil Company — Sergey Grib — said, “We intend to start importing this year.” In his words, the final decision on the alternative oil import route will depend on the trans-shipment and transportation terms Belarus’ neighbours will offer. “These will be either Baltic Sea ports or Odessa or a combination [of both]. The Mozyr Oil Refinery is closer to Ukraine. It is quite possible that alternative oil will be delivered via Ukraine. Naf-

tan is closer to Baltic Sea ports, respectively it would be logical to consider Baltic Sea ports,” he explained.

Mr. Grib added that Belarusian oil refineries can process 18 oil varieties. In particular, they can process oil from Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria. He did not specify what import options were being discussed.

Previously, the official had said that while searching for terminals in the Baltic States, Belarus will bear in mind the ability to import oil by sea. Buying assets in ports is also a good idea taking into account the search for alternative ways to import oil after the Russia’s tax policy. “Actually, this

At seminar-conference

matter is always on the agenda. Everything will depend on what our partners from the Baltic States will offer. We are talking about 200,000-300,000 tonnes per month,” Mr. Grib added.

Earlier, the Deputy Chairman of Belneftekhim Concern’s Board — Vladimir Sizov — noted that Belneftekhim has been working on diversification of oil supply routes for a while. It has already had experience of bringing oil from various regions, gained possible partners and worked out the logistics of bringing alternative oil to the Belarusian refineries using the capacities of seaports, pipelines and railway transport.

# Belarusian brands featured at Zimbabwe exhibition



By Svetlana Savelieva

**Made in Belarus expo on show at Zimbabwe International Trade Fair 2019, being held for the 60th time**

The Belarusian pavilion featured companies such as BelAZ and Minsk Tractor Works, as well as an information stand about the economic potential of Belarus. The Minister of Industry and Commerce of Zimbabwe, Mangaliso Ndlovu, attended the stand, to be taken on a 3D tour of the BelAZ plant using VR glasses. These allow the viewer to see the manufacturing process of rock haulers from start to shipment.

BelAZ exhibited mining trucks that can transport heavy rocks from deep mines and quarries and are capable of operating in different climatic conditions: from -50°C to +50°C. It presented trucks with a payload capacity of 55 tonnes and 130 tonnes, front-end loaders and all-wheeled bulldozers intended for the mechanisation of loading, digging and excavation operations in open quarries, and water sprinkling vehicles aimed at watering open pits.

From 2014, Zimbabwe has been one of the most promising markets for BelAZ. In 2017, the plant delivered 52 vehicles, one

of the biggest annual shipments sold to a non-CIS country.

Minsk Tractor Works demonstrated its BELARUS tractors for agricultural and municipal purposes. The company has been actively co-operating with Africa, considering the rapid development of the agricultural sector in the region. In 2018, they signed a major contract with their Zimbabwean partners.

Taking part in the exposition was also the Sohra group of companies — a maintenance contractor and supplier of Belarusian mining machinery, trucks, tractors, special-purpose machinery and other products to Africa.

Zimbabwe is now viewed as an important partner for Belarus in the South-African region. In line with agreements reached between the presidents of Belarus and Zimbabwe, the two countries plan to bolster ties in such areas as the mining industry, agriculture and energy, including highways and railroads, construction, transport and logistics.

# More payments to the treasury

By Oleg Bogomazov

**Wholesale trade is the most profitable sector of the Belarusian economy — as stated by Finance. Accounting. Audit magazine**

In 2018, this branch of the economy accounted for about Br3.5bn, or 14 percent of total payments controlled by tax authorities. At the same time, the inflow of funds from this sector slowed: growth was about 10 percent, compared to 25 percent in 2017.

The activities of land and pipeline transport are placed second — over 1.5 times behind the leader. The industry is the second as far as the number of contributors is concerned.

Retail trade occupied third position last year, embracing the greatest number of tax payers. Its contributions to the treasury rose by 21.6 percent.

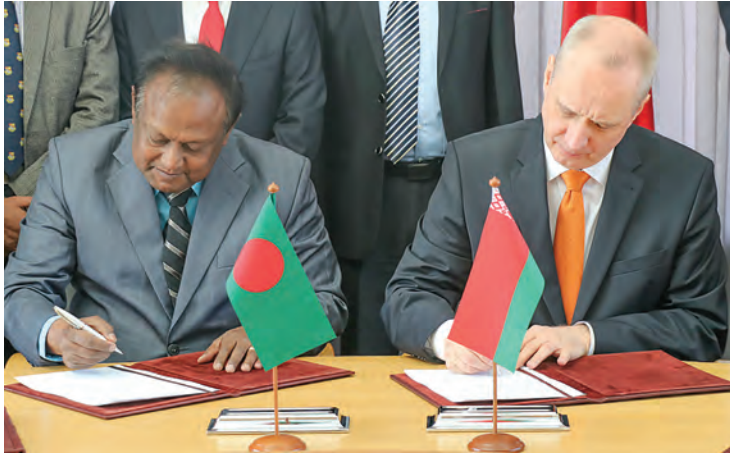
Economic activities such as provision of electricity, gas, steam, hot water and condi-



tioned air, construction, beverage production, information and communications, tobacco production, mining, coke and petroleum products were also among the top 10.

Among the agencies, the largest volume of payments to the treasury, according to the tax authorities, was provided last year by enterprises of the Belgospishcheprom Concern: their taxes rose by almost 30 percent, to reach Br1.5bn. The Energy Ministry is placed second (Br1.4bn) and Belneftekhim’s companies are in third place (Br1.3bn). The top five also include the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Communication and Informatisation.

# Promising joint projects outlined



By Kristina Yurieva

**Bangladesh likely to attract Belarusian specialists and technology for infrastructure development**

The possibility of using Belarusian specialists and technology for infrastructure development in Bangladesh was discussed at the first meeting of the Belarus-Bangladesh joint commission held at the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, under the chairmanship of Belarus’ Deputy Foreign Minister, Andrei Dapkunas, and Bangladesh’s Minister of Commerce, Tipu Munshi.

The parties discussed ways to increase mutual trade. They also commented on the way the economies of Belarus and Bangladesh complement each other, which creates great opportunities to build on mutual supplies of industrial goods and agricultural products, including food.

“The bilateral commission outlined the most promising

joint projects in mechanical engineering and discussed the possibility of using Belarusian specialists and technology to develop the infrastructure in Bangladesh. Belarusian representatives confirmed their readiness for a considerable increase in supplies of road-construction, farming and freight machinery to Bangladesh, including after-sales maintenance,” said the Ministry, noting also that our Bangladeshi partners have shown interest in adopting Belarusian technology and training specialists in agricultural mechanisation, including potato growing and the processing of agrarian products, medical education and research, nuclear security and high-tech manufacturing.

The Bangladeshi delegation also met with the Chairman of the Council of the Republic, Mikhail Myasnikov, to discuss the bilateral partnership, including a new contract for the delivery of \$100m of equipment to Bangladesh.





By Alexander Pimenov

The presentation of the ‘Motherland’ monument — erected in the French city of Thiel on the anniversary of the liberation of France from Nazi occupiers — was held in the Business and Cultural Complex of the Embassy of Belarus in Russia.

This is a project to the memory of a unique and single female guerrilla group of 37 women from the USSR and Europe, who fled from the Hérouville concentration camp in France. “A third of them were Belarusians,” says Senior Advisor and Head of the Business and Cultural Complex — Vasiliy Chernik. “A separate combat group of the female guerrilla group, whose commanders were Belarusian girls, Nadezhda Lisovets and Rosalia Fridzon, joined the European Resistance Forces fighting France.”

Mr. Chernik noted that the presentation of the monument

# New bridges that unite

In France, a monument to the female partisan detachment, a third of whom were Belarusians, will be unveiled

at the Embassy in Moscow on the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus and its subsequent erection in France, will contribute to the strengthening of friendly international relations, the preservation of historical truth about the joint fight against fascism, the participation of compatriots in the French guerrilla forces (called ‘maquis’), and their exploits in the liberation of Europe.

By agreement with the leadership of the city of Thiel, the unveiling of the bronze monument will coincide with the date of the liberation of France. “We hope that it will take place with the participation of the Belarusian and Russian diplomatic missions in this country. The monument, in the form of a three-metre tall female figure with a carbine in its hands, will be installed on the site where the concentration camp was situated (from which the prisoners fled). In this camp, the Nazis developed an underground plant producing FAU rockets, which they then fired at the UK. For many, those mines became a mass grave... Today, when the truth about the Great Victory is being revised and distorted, we need to work together, preserving the old and creating new bridges that bring peoples together,” said the creator of the monument, People’s Artist of Russia, sculptor Vladimir Surovtsev.

Nadezhda Lisovets was sent to the Hérouville concentration camp from Minsk, where she oversaw a safe house for underground resistance members and partisans and liaised with the ‘Avenger’ guerrilla group and Logoisk’s underground

district committee of the Communist Party of Belarus. Rosalia Fridzon, from the guerrilla brigade, was arrested at the safe house in Minsk and sent to the camp. Having fled and formed an international partisan female squad, the Belarusians, along with all the participants, made an oath which became widely known in France after its liberation: ‘In fulfilling my duty to the Motherland, I pledge to selflessly serve the interests of the French people, on whose side I defend the interests of my homeland. I will do my best to protect my French brothers in the struggle against the common enemy’.

Nadezhda Lisovets and Rosalia Fridzon became lieutenants of the French army and received awards; after the war, they returned to Belarus. In 1966, at the request of French President Charles de Gaulle, while on a visit to the USSR, the Belarusian-French heroines were summoned to Moscow to meet him. There, the famous French General gave them their honours.

The *Motherland* project includes not only the creation and installation of a monument in France, but also the making of a documentary film directed by Mikhail Matrosov. It focuses on the search for the remains of soldiers of the Great Victory, their burial and the creation of memorials to military glory, through the prism of Vladimir Surovtsev’s creativity. Monuments by the sculptor are found in sixteen countries around the world. His father took part in the liberation of Belarus and was awarded the Order of Glory for the breaching of the Zapadny Bug River near Brest.

## Vacancies for the over-50s

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

**Minsk’s Centre of Active Longevity plans to implement a startup for the employment of pensioners**

The idea is that the Centre will act as a link between employers and their future employees — experienced and active people over 50 years old, on a regular basis. Training and retraining to meet employers’ needs will also be conducted.

The idea was prompted by their experience when the institution acted as a partner to the *Senior Specialist* project — becoming a platform for training future administrators for a network of pharmacies.

“I believe that life is just beginning at the age of 50. If you



are active, then why not develop a detailed professional plan for yourself up to 65-75 years and even beyond? Almost all our customers want to develop and learn something new, as they plan to stay in demand as long as possible. Our task is to help them

in this,” the Director of the Centre says. “Employment projects in which we participate break stereotypes that life stops after retirement and show people new opportunities. Of course, it will take time to overcome ageism, but we are ready to work on it.”

## Diverse partnership



By Olga Korneeva

**Belarus can rely on UN assistance with health-care and environmental protection**

The UN Resident Co-ordinator in Belarus, Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecki, said, “In the future, we intend to take care of matters concerning gender equality and the counteraction of domestic violence. We will also pay attention to healthcare matters. There are additional plans to develop projects in the area of climate and environmental protection. Belarus has managed to preserve its swamps. It is a unique experience on the worldwide scale. We will help

spread it to other countries. These areas are examples of where Belarus can count on the UN’s assistance.”

Apart from projects designed for the entire country, the United Nations Organisation works hard at the level of small towns. According to the UN representative, the regions are interested in getting involved in initiatives, in naming their priorities and growth points. “The European Union, the UN and the UNDP are busy implementing a major programme for the development of small and medium businesses. New opportunities for self-realisation are being made available thanks to the project,” she noted.

Belarus is a founding member of the organisation and the UN office in Belarus was established in autumn 1992. Since then, UN agencies, foundations and programmes have worked in Belarus jointly to satisfy the needs of the nation’s development and improve the economic and social conditions of Belarusians.

## Everything united in a single strategy

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Igor Kizim, sees only positives in the advancement of Belarusian-Ukrainian relations — he stated to reporters after meeting top officials of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee



Igor Kizim

By Natalia Yemelyanova

According to Mr. Kizim, Ukraine has come up with a precise strategy for advancing relations with many countries, including Belarus, in recent years. He said he saw no reasons to change the strategy after a new Head of State was elected. “As an ambassador, I’ve analysed all the possible variants of the development of Ukrainian-Belarusian relations and see only positives. Furthermore, I take pride in the fact that, with our co-operation, everything is falling into place after a period of economic downturn. In 2018, Belarusian-Ukrainian trade was close to \$5.5bn. We hope the growth will continue.”

The reporters asked wheth-

er the new Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, might visit this year’s *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* as the former Ukrainian leader, Leonid Kuchma, had previously. Mr. Kizim stressed that, as an ambassador, he is interested in any contact between the two countries at the top level, since they mobilise resources and increase the strength of municipal authorities, usually having a positive effect. “We are certainly not opposed to the idea. If an invitation is extended, we will consider it,” said the Ambassador.

Mr. Kizim met with the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee’s Deputy Chairman, Vladimir Penin, in Vitebsk, to discuss prospects for interregional co-operation.



# Skills of telling the truth about one's contemporaries

International *Mass Media in Belarus* Specialised Exhibition held for the 23rd year in a row

By Vladimir Mikhailov

The forum gathered more than 50 exhibitors representing the media of Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic States, Uzbekistan and China. The successful development of journalism is one of the most important factors of information sovereignty. This was noted in the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko's greeting to the participants of the *Mass Media in Belarus* exhibition: his address was read at the opening ceremony by the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration — Vladimir Zhevnyak. In turn, the Information Minister, Alexander Karlyukevich, emphasised that each journalist must realise their great responsibility to society. “The fundamentals of journalism remain unchanged: unconditional commitment to the facts, objectivity, impartiality, professionalism, a thirst for self-realisation and creativity,” he said.

The exhibition reflected the entire spectrum of the information space of the country. It was attended by both print and audio-visual national and regional media, Internet services, news agencies, operators and distributors of cable television, distributors of printed products and publishers. It was a good opportunity for journalists to meet with their colleagues, while visitors could get to know and communicate with the stars of radio and television, journalists of news agencies and the print media.

Each of the exhibitors tried to draw attention to their stand. The Belarusian Telegraph Agency treated visitors to partisan porridge, while BelTA's stand presented unique archive footage from 1941-1944. The *75 Moments of War* photo exhibition — dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus from Nazi occupiers — did not go unnoticed. Among the shots were aerial photography of a burning Minsk after the Luftwaffe raids of June 24th-25th, 1941, the ranks of Soviet prisoners of war, German equipment on the streets of the capital, the victorious hoisting of the banner over the Brest Fortress, a joyful meeting of liberators and sorting debris in the ruined capital on the present Nezavisimosti Avenue.

The Belarus Segodnya Pub-



lishing House stand attracted great attention. It represented a wide range of print and electronic media, as well as online publications, which have begun to be seen since last year's innovative legislation. The *Traditions of Sovereign Belarus* project was also presented — clearly showing the sovereign path of the country and the cultural heritage Belarusians have not only preserved but multiplied, within a quarter of a century.

The *Pages of Belarusian Sports* multimedia project was also unveiled; it's dedicated to the upcoming 2nd European Games. Visitors were also able to get the autographs of famous Belarusian athletes taking part in the Games.

Those coming to the Belarusian State University's Journalism Department stand could see the *Unique Belarus* photo project initiated by students. The essence of the project is that beautiful pictures can be created just using a mobile phone. Many

were extremely successful in this regard. The joint stand of the Confucius Chair of the Belarusian State University of Physical Culture and the Chinese Embassy in Belarus invited its guests to participate in a traditional Chinese tea ceremony and receive a master class in one of the Chinese martial arts. About 40 Chinese publications and books were presented.

On the eve of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus, Belpochta held a promotional event — *Send a Message to a Great Patriotic War Veteran* — on the fringes of the forum. Visitors to the exhibition could sign postcards and thank those who contributed to the long-awaited Victory and peace in our native land. Letters to veterans with kind and warm wishes would be delivered free of charge throughout Belarus.

The main intrigue of the media festival was resolved during the forum: the winners of the *Golden Letter* National Com-



Bright kaleidoscope of exhibition

petition of Print Media were named. Awards went to winners in 23 categories. In total, over 330 applications were received for the competition this year.

The *Mass Media in Belarus* exhibition is an event for the whole journalistic community. Speaking about its principles, Mr. Karlyukevich stressed that there are unshakable, fundamental principles in the journalist's profession, “This is an unconditional commitment to facts, objectivity and impartiality, professionalism, a thirst for self-realisation and creativity. However, a journalist cannot be a journalist with their mind alone. It is also necessary to realise their responsible mission... While honestly representing the life of society in all its diversity, not hiding problems, but still focusing more on promoting a positive agenda, not to destroy but to create.”

Overall, about 500 print, audio-visual and electronic media, national and regional publications of newspapers and magazines from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, China, Uz-

diaspora contributed to creating a noisy, lively festival — bringing together thousands of different professionals. Visitors could not only see the state of modern journalism and forecast its development, but also learn about many different aspects of our country in a short time, open new pages in its past, be inspired by the beauty of the Belarusian nature and get acquainted with the surprising heroes of publications and TV programmes. The theme of the Small Motherland is worthy of becoming a leitmotif not only for this, but for all future *Mass Media in Belarus* exhibitions.

There are an increasing number of interesting regional publications every year and everyone is always keen to admire the beautiful Belarusian landscapes and faces of our people — seen in the photo exhibition *My Native Land*, dedicated to the Year of the Small Motherland and taking up a large part of the space at BelExpo. Guests of the forum spent a considerable time in enjoying the exhibition.



INSIDE

The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
May 16  
2019





# EU leaders gather for informal summit

**EU plans for life after Brexit and the tussle for top jobs at Sibiu summit in Romania**

EU leaders focused on strategic plans for the Union in the coming years. They also agreed to meet again on May 28th, 2019, in Brussels to discuss the outcome of the European Parliament elections. “We talked both about internal affairs as well as global challenges, bearing in mind that the world around us is becoming increasingly changeable and

unpredictable,” asserted Donald Tusk, President of the European Council.

EU leaders discussed the EU’s next strategic agenda for the period of 2019-2024. They exchanged views on the challenges and priorities for the EU. The discussions in Sibiu were based on the leaders’ agenda note prepared by President Tusk and were divided in two parts: one on the external dimensions and one on the internal dimensions.

“The result of this discussion

will come in June, when we will adopt the EU’s priorities for the next five years, also known as the strategic agenda,” added Mr. Tusk.

The strategic agenda will be used to plan the work of the European Council and form the basis for the work programmes of the other EU institutions. As the summit took place on Europe Day, the heads of state or government adopted the Sibiu Declaration as a sign of their unity and confidence in the future of the

EU.

At a press conference after the sitting, EC President Jean-Claude Juncker conceded that it was the easiest European Council he has ever attended. Praising the Romanian Presidency and especially the President of the country, Klaus Iohannis for the preparation of the event ‘in the best possible way’, he referred to another reason as well — that ‘there was no urgent decision to take’ and that this meeting was a trial run for the June session.

**Fake news can cause ‘irreversible damage’**

**Fake news that generates headlines can push down a company’s stock price and set off a public relations nightmare that is, in many cases, irreversible**

Now, many companies are striking back, hiring third-party firms with an army of human monitors and the latest artificial intelligence to trawl social and traditional media in search of viral posts that could send shares into a downward spiral.

“Containing the spread of disinformation, especially for a brand or public figure under attack, is a race against time,” said Jean-Claude Goldenstein, founder of Creopoint, which tracks disinformation in social media. “It takes preparation to put out specific fires in their tracks, way before they grow into wildfire and cause irreversible damage.”

Social media has also been blamed for a dip in tourism in France, after ‘yellow jacket’ protests by social activists were magnified in videos shared on YouTube that gave the impression the destruction was more widespread than previously believed. “It already impacted potential customers who usually come to France,” said Diego Diaz, the Head of SNCF International. “The violence and fires were exaggerated.” He also noted that while the protests affected tourism and train ticket cancellations, the company was also negatively affected by false claims that train travel was free for those wearing yellow jackets.



# Artificial intelligence to kill developing world growth

**Artificial intelligence (AI) could displace millions of jobs in the future, damaging growth in developing regions such as Africa, says Ian Goldin, Professor of Globalisation and Development at Oxford University**

Perhaps the most important question a research group at Oxford University has looked at is whether AI will pose a threat — or provide new opportunities — for developing regions such as Africa.

Optimists say that such places could use rapidly advancing AI systems to boost productivity

and leapfrog ahead. But many are becoming increasingly concerned that AI will, in fact, block the traditional growth path by replacing low-wage jobs with robots.

As Kai-Fu Lee, a Beijing-based venture capitalist who invests in artificial intelligence, says AI is potentially the most revolutionary technology to emerge this century. It is also, along with the associated technologies of machine learning and robotics, advancing at breakneck speed.

Already AI has the capacity to replace many work tasks that

are rules-based and repetitive, and which do not require great dexterity or empathy.

In developed economies, for instance, robots have replaced well over half of the jobs in the car and related industries in recent decades. Automated systems are already getting higher customer satisfaction ratings than people in call centres, threatening a key source of jobs in many countries.

Similarly, AI enabled systems are leading to significant job losses in back-office administrative functions in banking, health, insurance, accounting.

# Ford in criminal probe over emissions

**A criminal investigation opened into the way Ford tests the emissions of its vehicles**

The US Department of Justice took action after Ford alerted the US Environmental Protection Agency to potential problems in February.

Ford said the issue did not involve the use of defeat devices, which were at the centre of the emissions scandal involving Volkswagen in 2015. VW was found to have used software that could cheat emissions tests.

Emissions testing in the US has two parts: testing on the road and computer modelling. The modelling generates mileage and emissions data submitted to regulators.

Ford employees raised concerns about the computer modelling and, in particular, the figures Ford engineers used for road load, which involves the weight of the vehicle and other data.

“We are fully co-operating with all government agencies. Because this matter is still in the preliminary stages, we cannot predict the outcome, and we



cannot provide assurance that it will not have a material adverse effect on us,” Ford said in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Ford has commissioned outside experts to investigate its testing procedure, a process which is expected to last several months.

Regulators have been paying closer attention to emissions testing since the scandal involving Volkswagen emerged in 2015.

**Materials prepared with aid of information agencies**





At National Art Museum's exhibition halls

# Fearlessness and heroism reflected in vibrant, eloquent images

At the National Art Museum, significant space is given to works dedicated to the heroism of soldiers during the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War



Artist Svyatoslav Fedorenko and exposition of his works

By Veniamin Mikhhev

The exhibition features paintings, drawings, sculptures and decorative-and applied arts. Most of them are from the museum's collection, depicting the events and victory in the Great Patriotic War. On June 22nd, 1941, Belarus became the centre of military events and, in late August, the entire territory of the Republic was occupied by the Germans. However, in 1942, the Belarusian headquarters of the partisan movement was created at the Headquarters of Supreme Command in Moscow. No wonder Belarus was called a 'partisan state'. It was only in July 1944 that the country was liberated from the Nazi invaders. This is a tragic chronology of that harsh and heroic time.

The fate of Belarusian art is closely connected with the course of military events. Some artists went to the front, some were evacuated, others joined the guerrilla movement. The collection of the pre-war State

Picture Gallery (the predecessor of the National Art Museum of Belarus) couldn't be evacuated in time and, as a result, most pieces were looted or destroyed during the bombing and subsequent fires.

Despite the harsh living conditions, Belarusian artists continued to work during the war. They found other ways to reflect reality in small sketches, drawings from the front, posters, cartoons and portraits. After the liberation of Belarus, many visited the scenes of important military events to create images of our war heroes.

The heyday of the military theme in Belarusian art was the late 1940s-1960s. The museum's permanent exhibition includes paintings, drawings, sculptures and pieces of decorative-and-applied arts dedicated to the protection of the Brest Fortress, the liberation of Minsk and images of soldiers who died during the war. Among them are Father Minay (Minay Shmyrev), Nikolay Gastello, Lev Dovator, Alexey Danu-

kalov, Konstantin Zaslonov, Piotr Kalinin, Piotr Kupriyanov, Yelena Mazanik, Mikhail Silnitsky and Grandfather Talash (Vasil Talash). The deeds of these heroes inspired the artists.

The exhibition also showcases works by Zair Azgur, Anatoly Anikeichik, Ivan Akhremchik, Andrey Bembel, Gavriil Vashchenko, Valentin Volkov, Alexey Glebov, Viktor Gromyko, Alexander Grube, Lev Gumilevsky, Mai Dantsig, Yevgeny Zaitsev, Arlen Kashkurevich, Raisa Kudrevich, Pavel Maslenikov, Georgy Poplavsky, Mikhail Savitsky, Sergey Selikhanov, Vladimir Stelmashonok, Vitaly Tsvirka and Leonid Shchemelev. In addition, the present exhibition features works by Belarusian artists who have not previously been represented as part of the permanent show, but who also depicted an artistic chronicle of the war.

The genres of the works at the exhibition vary, including portraits, landscapes and thematic paintings. For several decades, artists have been creating allegorical and metaphorical compositions, emotionally and dramatically conveying the tragic and tense atmosphere of

the war. Among them are Leonid Osedovsky's *Ballad of the Mother*, Vitaly Tsvirko's *Unconquered*, Yevgeny Zaitsev's *Stand to Death*, Algerd Malishevsky's *We Will Return*, Natan Voronov's *To the Memory of a Fellow Soldier*, Vitebsk Gates and *Partisan Madonna*, Viktor Gromyko's *1941: Over Pripyat*, Leonid Shchemelev's *My Birth*, Gavriil Vashchenko's *Breakthrough*, Ivan Rei's *Thank You, Mother!* and Vasily Sumarev's *Song of Guerrillas*.

These and other works about the war became a requiem for fearlessness and self-sacrifice, heroism and tragedy. This is one of the reasons why no-one who sees the current exhibition leaves untouched by its poignancy.

However, the theme of war, as a social but also a cultural phenomenon, does not necessarily always require the pathos of artistic language. It has always been close to the eternal problems of good and evil, happiness and suffering, life and death, loyalty and betrayal — in short, everything that is a solid foundation for creativity of any kind. An innovative interpretation of the topic in Belarusian art is seen today as a result of the search for the most relevant concepts, free creative rethinking of the traditional embodiments of the theme of war. This will largely depend on the professional skills and intellectual experience of a new generation of artists.

Undoubtedly, the war was a part of the biography of the older generation of artists. Many of their works have become epic stories — often built on the specifics of real situations. However, the farther away these events become, more often artists turn to imaginative interpretation:



A work by Leonid Shchemelev

psychological, romantic or lyrical. The war began to acquire a 'human' face. New artists not only reflected real circumstances and actions of their characters but sought associations, conveyed emotions, yearned, rejoiced — expressing all these things on canvas. It naturally opened an opportunity for artists to pass on their intimate thoughts and feelings.

In the 21st century, the military-patriotic genre is being further developed. However, the difference is that, earlier, the war was described from first-hand experience and artists purely focused on their own memories. Now, they 'read' the topic through associations — shifting it to historical issues, the courage of people in the fight against the enemy and depicting the joy of the Victory.

Nikolay Opiok, who heads a studio of military artists at the Defence Ministry, says, "Our task is not to lose the best that was achieved by our predecessors. We have no taboo topics, it all depends on the abilities and courage of an artist. If someone seeks to delve into history, they should not search for exclusively spectacular moments. It is fundamental to show not only victories but also defeats, joy and pain, our strength, courage and bravery. It is necessary to be honest with history and modernity."

This is the modern creative view of that unforgettable time. True, an artist bears moral responsibility primarily for themselves and their own conscience for what they present to the public. The higher the bar of this responsibility, the more truthful their work.

CULTURE

The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
May 16  
2019

9





Organ duet of Yuri Gabrus and Varvara Tsaryuk believe music beautifies

# Truly organic duet

## Elite art organists speak of their concerts and restless fans

By Kristina Glushko

Piano, violin, saxophone, cymbals... The list of popular musical instruments is huge, but what about the organ? Immense in size and shrouded in mystery, the instrument has the power to captivate, exerting its own hypnotic trance. Our *MT* reporter reveals its secrets, chatting to Belarus' only organ duet musicians.

### Music sounds

No matter how much you love pop music or hip-hop, the power of classical rhythms cannot be denied. Popular modern songs rarely arouse goosebumps or move us to deep contemplation. Meeting Yuri Gabrus and Varvara Tsaryuk, it's clear that music is their life. Their recent performance of Sviridov's romance, inspired by Pushkin's novel *Blizzard*, was magical. The haunting melody of the organ enveloped audiences in a veil, stilling them like a mother's lullaby. I was fascinated to watch the musicians' hands moving over one another, like the stems of a vine, while their backs had perfect posture, swaying to the beat of the music. As the registers changed, gentle melodies became thrilling rhythms, like a true blizzard.

Sviridov wrote the composition for a whole orchestra, with violin, cello, flute, and trumpet. If you close your eyes and immerse

yourself in the melody, you can imagine being at a major concert, with dozens of musicians playing. No wonder Mozart called the organ 'the king of instruments': it can eclipse everything with its power.

### Dreams come true

Varvara is 26 and her partner Yuri is 38 — but they look a decade younger. The couple joke, "Music makes us younger." Varvara adds, "I dreamed of playing the organ from childhood, as soon as I heard it in St. Sophia's Cathedral. At the music school I attended, there was an organ and I always thought I'd play it one day. As I learnt later, it actually needed repair, and didn't work, so my dream remained unrealised. It wasn't until I joined the Conservatory that I began playing."

Yuri's path was thornier, as he first took a diploma to become a chemist. He's both an organist and a choral singer but never originally planned to study music professionally.

"I fell in love with the organ when my mother received a record for her birthday, of Baroque arias, featuring the organ at the Dome Cathedral. I listened to it every day for a year and was full of admiration. The instrument bewitched me. All organs are different, depending on where and when they're made, and the number of sets and manuals [keyboards —

editor], which create a vast range of tone. I love this variety. Importantly, the instrument can tackle all styles and genres. The first pieces were composed for the organ in the 14th century and new compositions continue to be written."

It might seem amazing, as we tend to think of the piano as having more status, but Yuri tells us, "Pianists tend to play works from the era of Beethoven to Shostakovich. Do you know a popular modern piano composer? Meanwhile, the organ has always been a focus for mainstream musicians — from Bach and Handel, to Ciurlionis and Yanchenko."

### Capricious giant

Yuri and Varvara play for the Philharmonic but, since there is no official organist position, they play only until 2pm, when they transform into a unique duet, rehearsing their concert programme until late in the evening.

They met in the chamber choir at the Philharmonic and although there are only a handful of concert organists in the country, having two in a single orchestra is unnecessary. Accordingly, it was logical to create a duet.

Minsk has three true organs: one at the Philharmonic hall, one at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Roch, and another at the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A fourth instrument may

soon be restored in the Upper Town. At present, the duo rehearse on an electronic organ, which differs from the usual instrument in having speakers rather than pipes.

Yuri tells us, "The organ is capricious, being susceptible to changes in temperature, so it needs to be adjusted often. It also needs a large room, with good acoustics, without carpets or soft chairs. Ideally, you play in a white, empty, rectangular room without carpets..." With a mischievous smile, he adds, "And with no one wearing clothes, since they also absorb sound."

Most people think of the organ as being an accompaniment for a choir at divine services, but Varvara emphasises that all their concerts are 'sell-outs'. "Most often, we play at the Red Roman Catholic Church and gather a full house of three hundred people. Both the older generation and those aged 18-20 come, including fashionable bearded hipsters and IT specialists. Organ music is even viewed as rather an elite taste. Most fans like its power and volume, and how the instrument looks. In fact, very religious people don't tend to go to organ concerts, thinking the instrument is suited only to playing psalms."

Yuri adds that top organists tour worldwide, like Cameron Carpenter. "If you see this American artist, you'll be shocked. He looks like a rock star, with strong

muscles and shaved temples. He has thousands of fans, filling stadiums, so we can hardly say organ playing is endangered. It's not 'pop art' but it remains relevant."

Unfortunately, there are no organ makers in the country and those wishing to buy an instrument need to order from abroad. "The cost is so huge that I'm afraid to say it aloud. Meanwhile, an electronic version is about 5,000 Euros, excluding delivery," notes Yuri.

### Journalist changes profession

I can't leave without hearing the organ play something, and they invite me to try for myself. "Just don't step on the pedals," Varvara urges, and I look down to see a whole keyboard for the feet. These create low register sounds by pressing with your heel or toes. To ensure a light touch, dance shoes are recommended.

I recall my piano lessons and press some keys. Fortunately, Yuri has lowered the volume, as my first notes are rather awkward. It only takes a few minutes to feel more comfortable though and I'm suddenly a 'queen' of organ music, at least for the first five bars of Beethoven's *To Eliza*. I'm happy to have tried, anyway!

I'm unlikely to gather full houses like our organ duet, but their devoted fans are always ready to attend.



# Ready to show our kind hearts

Belarus must look its best during the 2nd European Games — noted President Alexander Lukashenko on visiting the Student Village, which will accommodate participants of the forthcoming competition



Student Village ready to welcome guests

By Olga Korneeva

The Head of State was shown the facility’s readiness for the Games. He was appraised of the conditions for the accommodation of the participants and the organisation of catering services for athletes. One of the President’s main requirements had been to use as many domestic products in the catering and accommodation as possible.

Mr. Lukashenko had insisted that all the facilities built for the 2nd European Games must be used effectively when the event is over. The Student Village compound consists of nine halls of residence, able to accommodate over 9,800 people.

The compound will be used as the Athletes’ Village during the 2nd European Games and will accommodate the official sporting delegations — a total of about 6,000 people.

The Head of State believes that Belarus will hold a successful Games at a high standard and will soon be happy to host larger competitions such as the UEFA European Football Championship (although we need a spacious national stadium for this, which our Chinese partners have already promised to build, along with a world-class swimming pool).

Mr. Lukashenko believes the number of sports grounds is not as important as the spirit and mood of people during

such events. “Our Games should be heartwarming. We want all people in Belarus to enjoy it and know that it was them who won the right to host this tournament and who have done much to make it succeed. Warm-heartedness is in the mentality of our people, it’s in their genes. We will show this kindness to all who come to our Games,” he stressed.

As far as the preparation of Minsk for the upcoming sports event is concerned, the President said that Minsk is the ideal city for living and this is what guests should see.

# Athlete’s village awaits its guests

By Vladislav Sychevich

Members of the Republican Organising Committee meet to consider catering for the 2nd European Games participants

The Student Village in Malinovka has been turned into a true sporting complex, with the final touches being added to the buildings. Thanks to the builders, the rooms at the hostel resemble a three-star hotel. This area will be used as the Athletes’ Village during the 2nd European Games, accommodating members of official delegations and the athletes who are taking part in the event. After familiarising himself with the reconstruction of the Student Village, the Prime Minister was full of praise for the builders’ work.

On September 1st, students will also be able to evaluate a new facility that has appeared in the Student Village — a pavilion where catering for the athletes’ will be based. Two hundred and sixty people worked without a day off, enabling a food court for 2,000 to appear in just a few months, on an empty site. The façade is made of sandwich panels with stained glass. For a full fortnight, the athletes’ food hall will be working day and night. The kitchen is in the ice rink of the Specialised Children’s and Youth Figure Skating School of the Olympic Reserve, situated near to the student campus. The site, at 2,000sq.m, was divided into working zones with the help of partitions. These are equipped with ovens for cooking food, cold-stor-



age chambers and cupboards. Furthermore, all the necessary communications and air conditioning systems have also been installed. The logistics of food delivery has been thought out to the last detail, with a crossway connection linking the kitchen to the food pavilion.

The menu for the Games participants primarily consists of Belarusian products. Imported ingredients will be used only if similar products aren’t manufactured in our country. The Directorate used a thorough approach when choosing food suppliers. In organising nutrition for the athletes, the task is to meet international standards. Moreover, around 900 personnel, who will be involved in the catering, have already been carefully selected.

Chatting to journalists, the PM commented that everything is ready to welcome the athletes, “In record time, a food court has been built. Within three and a half months two facilities have been created, enabling us to provide food for up to 2,000 athletes daily. We’ve visited several hostels where the sportsmen will be staying and made sure that all the rooms have been refurbished, with new furniture installed. For those who are tall, extra-long beds have been prepared and, overall, the rooms follow all the requirements for accommodation for the European Games participants.”

# Track and field athletes announced to struggle for ten sets of medals

By Svetlana Savelieva

Athletics teams participating in 2nd European Games in Minsk named

Taking part in the competitions at the Dinamo National Olympic Stadium will be teams from 24 countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia (those athletes cleared to compete by the International Association of Athletics Federations), Slovenia, Switzerland, Slovakia, Turkey and Ukraine.

The total number of athletes will be 504.

Athletics competitions at the 2nd European Games will be held in a new format — Dynamic New Athletics — DNA. The European Athletic Association has approved changes to the competition programme to hold nine types of medal events (individual and relay). A 10th, additional, set of medals will be awarded based on the overall result in the team competition.

The DNA format envisages competitions between mixed participating teams, where all teams will be divided into groups, starting with the qualifying round.

# Uncompromising battle

Yevgeny Tikhontsov ranked 1st in his category in the updated IWF ratings

By Natalya Yemelyanova

The International Weightlifting Federation has updated the Olympic ranking of athletes participating in the selection for the Games in Tokyo 2020. Belarusian Yevgeny Tikhontsov heads the under 96kg weight category, having previously held second place. Andrey Aryamnov, from Belarus, ranks fifth in his weight category, losing two places. The data was updated after the completion of the continental forums. Overall, Belarusian



Yevgeny Tikhontsov (96kg), Vadim Likhorad (73kg), Piotr Asaenok (81kg), Andrey Aryamnov (109kg), Eduard Zezyulin (over 109kg), Igor Lozko (81kg), Genady Laptev (61kg), Vadim Streltsov (96kg) and Maxim Mudrevsky (89kg) will compete for a place at the Games.

In the women’s competition, Darya Naumova (76kg), Lyudmila Psyshchanitsa (55kg), Suzanna Volodko (64kg), Anastasia Mikhalenko (71kg) and Dina Sazanovets (76kg) are hoping for an Olympic place.

In total, 478 women and 564 men will compete for Olympic qualification.





Yekaterina Poluyanova named Cycling Miss — 2019 at International Grand Prix Minsk Track Cycling Competition

EXHIBITIONS

**NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS**  
20 Lenin Street  
Until 21<sup>st</sup> June. *Two Worlds of Russian Icon Painting: 17<sup>th</sup> century monuments from Russian Icon Museum (Moscow)*  
Until 30<sup>th</sup> June. *Salvador Dali*  
Until 8<sup>th</sup> July. *Travelling Along Rhine*

**NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM**  
12 Karl Marx Street  
Until 30<sup>th</sup> May. Exhibition of party dresses: *Invitation to the Ball*

**PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS**  
11 Sovetskaya Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> August. *Killed Strongmen of Belarusian Land*

**NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS**  
3 Nekrasov Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> June. *Disclaimer, or All Characters Are Invented*

**NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS**  
47 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 9<sup>th</sup> June. *Knight's Affair*

**CAT MUSEUM**  
23 Internatsionalnaya Street  
Until 31<sup>st</sup> May. *Cat and Spring Flowers*

**VILNIUS GALLERY**  
55 Kalinovsky Street  
Until 27<sup>th</sup> May. *Sacred Spring*  
Until 10<sup>th</sup> August. *Yakub Kolas and Vilho*

**MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY**  
15 Svobody Square  
Until 15<sup>th</sup> September. *European Martial Arts. From Volcano's Smithy to Mars' Arts*

**MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY**  
12 K. Marx Street  
Until 1<sup>st</sup> September. *Dangerous Beauty*

**FIRST RSDRP SESSION HOUSE-MUSEUM**  
31a Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 7<sup>th</sup> July. *Miraculous World Under Microscope*

**YAKUB KOLAS MUSEUM**  
5 Akademicheskaya Street  
Until 16<sup>th</sup> May. *Divine Light Everywhere*  
Until 5<sup>th</sup> June. *Legends of Sun Stone*

**TROITSKY SUBURBS**  
7A Bogdanovich Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> August. *Live Singing Birds*

**HIGH PLACE**  
2A Gertsen Street  
Until 26<sup>th</sup> May. *Interference*

THEATRES

**BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE**  
1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square  
16.05. Festive Concert  
17.05. Aida  
19.05. The Nutcracker  
20.05. Bohemia  
21.05. Orr and Ora / Masterpieces of Russian Music  
22.05. Traviata  
23.05. Laurencia

**MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE**  
5 Volodarsky Street  
18.05. Bridal Shower  
19.05. Oscar and Pink Lady  
21.05. Dangerous Ties

**THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS**  
13 Pobediteley Avenue  
16.05. Who Laughs Last  
17.05. Battlefield  
18.05. Abduction of Yelena  
19.05. Casting / The Same Place Next Year  
20 and 21.05. In Search on True Self  
22 and 23.05. Mixed Feelings

**YOUTH THEATRE**  
17 Kozlov Street  
16.05. About Fedot — Archer  
17.05. Playing Happy Family / A Man from Podolsk  
23.05. Sasha, Take Garbage Away

**YANKA KUPALA THEATRE**  
7 Engels Street  
16.05. Love as Militarism / Seagull  
17.05. Jeweller's Jubilee  
18.05. Tolerance  
19.05. ART  
21.05. Harvest / School of Taxpayers  
22.05. Night  
23.05. Black Lady of Nesvizh

**BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE**  
3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street  
22.05. Trouble of Tender Heart  
23.05. Last Ardent Lover

**MUSICAL THEATRE**  
44 Myasnikov Street  
16.05. Life and Death of Yanka Kupala  
18.05. Wedding in Malinovka  
19.05. Silva  
20.05. Casanova  
21.05. Stranger's Letter  
22.05. Gypsy Baron  
23.05. A Thousand and One Night

**CHAMBER DRAMA THEATRE**  
5 Frunze Street  
16.05. Veronica Decides to Die  
22.05. Featherhead  
23.05. Corporate

**YOUNG SPECTATORS' THEATRE**  
26 Engels Street  
16.05. Because of Dead Souls  
17.05. Savage Hunt of King Stakh  
23.05. Belarusian Vaudevilles