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Old realistic history is brightly reflected in dreamlike watercolours

National Art Museum of Belarus presents
Poetry of Ruins fascinating exhibition

Authorities intend to act in line with Constitution

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, stresses the importance of preserving peace and a comfortable life for citizens and orients Government bodies towards supporting order, in strict compliance with laws, speaking at session on public security provision

By Alexey Fedosov

“Today, we are able to preserve peace and accord in our country; we’re unafraid of anything or anyone,” the President underlined. “We’ll discuss the entire spectrum of information and measures which have been taken as part of our anti-terrorism efforts, and will draw corresponding conclusions. I reiterate that we’ll act in compliance with the law, without threatening anyone,” noted Mr. Lukashenko.

The Head of State said that a decision had been made to hold an open session. “I adhere to the view that we shouldn’t conceal anything from anyone. We should discuss issues concerning our people and, of course, concerning us, in an honest and open way,” he said.

In this context, Mr. Lukashenko disavowed the opinion popular in certain circles that the authorities threaten people when they anticipate unwanted events. “Some people hold crazy opinions. I want to tell these people that the Government isn’t afraid of anyone. This especially pertains to the President. We pursue an honest and sincere policy,” asserted



On Nezavisimosti Avenue, in Minsk

the Head of State.

The President emphasised that the authorities have protected the country from being looted and torn apart. “We haven’t given away assets, although certain people within and, especially, outside the country want to lay their hands on them. We’re committed to the policy we promised to pursue during the presidential election,” noted Mr. Lukashenko. “Nev-

ertheless, it’s unpleasant to hear that we’re threatening someone. I want to stress that we don’t and will not threaten anyone. We’ll strictly observe the laws and the Constitution of the country.”

“We aren’t trying to silence anyone, but any violations of the law will be severely punished,” underlined the Head of State.

The President remarked that

peace and order are being maintained in the country, and people feel safe. “It doesn’t come easily. If we disturb this order, tomorrow, the situation will be the same as that being faced by our neighbours. If some people want it to be so (maybe, there are a few), they should understand that we will, though I’m not threatening anyone, call them to order,” Mr. Lukashenko declared.

Acute discussion of urgent measures aiming to improve the situation

By Svetlana Isaenok

The House of Representatives is discussing the liberalisation of criminal and administrative penalties for economic crimes. Natalia Guyvik, the Chair of the Standing Committee for Legislation, commented upon the interest in the subject, “For two decades, we have applied a tough legal policy in respect of such offenses. However, the situation has changed. Citizens have become more law-abiding. The time has come for humanisation of the criminal law policy in the field of economic crimes.”

According to deputies, they are often contacted by their constituents with a request for help with issues of businesses and regulatory structures. Controversy arises between those running a business and those who’ve been working for a long time. Ms. Guyvik notes that standards of mod-



VITALY GIL

ern legislation fail to reflect the role of entrepreneurship in the state’s economic security.

The business community has joined the discussion of this important topic. At the recent round table meeting, businessmen shared their thoughts and ideas about changing the existing Criminal Code and the Administrative Code. The Committee on Legislation has two main objectives at present: on the one hand, to strengthen the fight against eco-

omic crimes and on the other hand, to create favourable conditions for business — changing legislation and thus improving the investment climate. Several rounds of negotiations are needed to decide how exactly to achieve this.

Scientists, lawyers, representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Investigative Committee of the General Prosecutor’s Office, the State Control Committee and other interested bodies have submitted

their proposals to the deputies. Each of them have their own view on the problem and different changes are proposed. The practice tax evasion and other important topics were also debated. The power unit and businessmen often disagree: the figures and statistics of one side did not always convince the other party, while experience did not always agree with the theoretical predictions.

Each of the businessmen present also had their own topics. However, as Ms. Guyvik said at the start of the meeting, figures — rather than statistics — should be decisive.

Maxim Misko, the Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee concluded, “Our main task is to hear the main message of the President on how to develop entrepreneurial initiative.” Given that the conversation of government officials and businessmen was interested and business-like, there is no doubt any obstacles to this development will be overcome.

NATO welcomes Lukashenko’s initiative to invite alliance observers to ‘Zapad-2017’ exercise

By Vladimir Mikhailov

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation has not received an invitation to send observers to monitor ‘Zapad-2017’ Belarusian-Russian army exercise for now but welcomes the statement made by the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, who mentions the intention to make the army exercise as transparent as possible, BELTA learned from NATO’s press service

“We haven’t received invitations to these exercises as yet but, as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has said previously, the Alliance will welcome the opportunity and expects to use the NATO-Russia Council to conduct briefings on the exercise,” notes NATO’s press service.

Receiving a report on the organisation of ‘Zapad-2017’, which is a strategic Belarusian-Russian army exercise, Mr. Lukashenko stated that these manoeuvres will be purely defensive and NATO representatives will be able to monitor the exercise.

Previously, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated at a press conference in Brussels that ‘every country, including Russia, has the right to stage an army exercise, provided it is done in compliance with international norms’. In his words, NATO will welcome Russia’s invitation for Alliance observers to monitor the exercise and hopes that the exercise will not lead to an escalation of tensions in the region.

According to Mr. Stoltenberg’s report, in 2016, NATO countries staged 107 international army exercises and took part in 139 national manoeuvres.

Tackling co-operation and peace-keeping processes

The evening of March 23rd saw President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, telephoning his Ukrainian counterpart, Petro Poroshenko

The two heads of state discussed the current agenda of Belarusian-Ukrainian relations, including trade-economic collaboration and the expansion of interregional contacts.

The two leaders also talked over interaction in the international arena, alongside the peace-keeping process in Ukraine, including Belarus’ assistance in the earliest possible resolution of the conflict.

Dialogue with PACE in the context of developing relations with European structures

President Lukashenko meets Andrea Rigoni, the Rapporteur on Belarus of the Political Affairs and Democracy Committee, of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, stressing need to continue dialogue with European structures

By Vladimir Khromov

“We maintain dialogue on all issues which raise concerns in Europe and in Belarus. We aren’t hiding behind a fence; we’re talking to each other. This is significant, as truth is born of dialogue, and we’ll see this truth emerge in our relations,” noted



During the meeting between Alexander Lukashenko and Andrea Rigoni

Mr. Lukashenko. “It’s very important that you understand the situation in Belarus today and how difficult it is, sometimes, to act in Belarus, even on the principles of the developed democracy of the European Union. It’s not that easy.”

The President commented that Europe has been living with its cur-

rent political system for several centuries, while Belarus is a new state. He emphasised, “Belarus is too young to operate at your level. It’s important to realise that every state has its specific features; therefore, all issues relating to politics, diplomacy and democracy should be viewed through the specific prism of each state, including ours.”

Alexander Lukashenko thanked Andrea Rigoni for the constructive position towards Belarus and for his resolution to promote the development of Belarus’ interaction with European bodies. “There aren’t many such politicians today. All pursue goals. You have a noble goal. You help to reconcile the positions of

even the most antagonistic forces,” the Head of State stressed. “In spite of disagreements on certain political issues that exist between us and the European Union, you’ve been doing your best to add positive dynamics to our relations. I’m grateful to you for that.”

On meeting the Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, Mr. Rigoni noted significant progress in relations between Belarus and the Council of Europe. He said, “I’d like to say that, over the past two and a half years, we’ve managed to achieve a lot more than we have in the past decade. When we talk to each other calmly, we compare our issues and can build relations built upon trust, which is as it should be.”

On the behalf of the PACE, he thanked Belarus for its work in promoting co-operation. Mr. Rigoni took note of some positive steps that have helped bring Belarus and the PACE closer, such as PACE observers monitoring the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2015 and 2016 and the positive attitude towards the Belarusian Parliament in Strasbourg. He added that he is set to present a draft report on Belarus at a meeting of the PACE Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy in April 2017. It is expected that the report will be approved at the PACE meeting in June 2017.

Accelerating forward with Oman

By Alexey Fedosov

Priorities of Belarus-Oman co-operation discussed during Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei’s visit to Oman

Mr. Makei has held talks with Oman’s Deputy Prime Minister for Relations and International Co-operation Affairs, Sayyid Asaad bin Tariq al-Said, who is the Sultan’s Special Representative. The Belarusian official handed over the letter of the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, addressed to Sultan of Oman Qaboos bin Said, with an assessment of the current state of Belarusian-Omani relations, and prospects.

The Belarusian Foreign Minister emphasised the need to promptly form an intergovernmental mechanism of co-operation between Belarus and Oman in the format of a joint committee, and to sign a corresponding bilateral agreement. The Deputy prime Minister said that Oman will undertake necessary steps in the near future.



Office of the Honorary Consul of Belarus opens in Sultanate of Oman

Mr. Makei also met with Yusuf bin Alawi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, to discuss bilateral relations regarding politics, economics and investment, alongside education, science and culture.

Meanwhile, his meeting with representatives of major Omani businesses allowed him to present information on Belarus’ economic potential, inviting Omani businesses to jointly implement investment projects in Belarus. An agreement was

reached to exchange delegations of Belarusian and Omani experts, with the aim of implementing co-operative ventures in areas of interest to both sides.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Belarusian Ministry of Sports and Tourism and the Oman Ministry of Tourism during the meeting with Oman’s Minister of Tourism, Ahmed bin Nasser Al Mahrizi, laying foundations for expanding contacts in the tourist sphere.

Problem requires co-ordinated action

By Alexander Pimenov

Belarus calls on UN states to improve co-ordination of efforts in combating human trafficking

During participation in the UN Security Council’s open debate on ‘Trafficking in Persons in Conflict Situations’, Belarus’ Deputy Foreign Minister, Valentin Rybakov, made a call to improve co-ordination of efforts in combating human trafficking.

In his speech, the diplomat stressed that the problem of human trafficking should not become a prerogative of the UN Security Council, to avoid duplication of functions of main UN bodies. The Belarusian diplomat noted that human trafficking is a transnational crime and that all member states should participate in fighting it. Therefore, the UN General Assembly, as the only main UN body with universal representa-

tion, should remain the main forum for developing and co-ordinating efforts on this issue.

Mr. Rybakov took part in a special, high-level event on ‘Root Causes of Trafficking in Persons: Key Role of the Family for Protection and Prevention’. The event was organised at the initiative of Belarus by the Group of Friends of the Family, together with partners from international and American non-governmental organisations.

Mr. Rybakov expressed his hope that the next review of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, to be held this autumn as part of the UN General Assembly, will help establish new, innovative partnerships between UN member states and international non-governmental organisations, as well as civil society, offering a comprehensive solution to this problem and ensuring a worthy place for family life in this process.

Kronospan as example of responsible investments

By Vasily Kharitonov

The company is investing additional funds into timber processing in Belarus

During his working trip to the Mogilev Region, Alexander Lukashenko was made familiar with the investment projects already implemented or being prepared for implementation in Belarus: those for processing timber, including for export. In 2017 and 2018 alone, Kronospan intends to invest an extra \$211 million in its enterprises in Belarus, creating about 120 new jobs.

The director of Kronospan OSB, Tomasz Janczak, informed the Belarusian Head of State about the company's willingness to work directly with Belarusian state-run timber harvesting enterprises. The aim is to gain the necessary volume of timber, as close to manufacturing sites as possible, and to minimise transportation costs. "We're ready to sign long-term contracts with forestry enterprises," noted Mr. Janczak.

Mr. Lukashenko stated that such co-operation is possible but that the investor must take into account state interests. "If you prove yourselves to be decent people, we'll let you rent more such land. It's profitable for us because we have huge forested territory and we can't keep up with optimal levels of timber felling in some places," asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

The use of Belarusian machinery and vehicles to harvest timber was discussed. "It would be my pleasure to support you if you take into account our state interests," stressed Mr. Lukashenko.

During the tour of the enterprise, the Head of State was made familiar with modern technological processes being used and toured an exhibition of products made by the company. He chatted with workers from Kronochem Ltd. and Kronospan OSB and noted his wish that more such companies operated in Belarus. He said, "It's easy for me to talk to you. I'd like the critics who attacked me for deciding in favour of modernising woodworking enterprises to hear this."



BELTA

Kronospan timber processing enterprise focuses on production automation

The decision was partially due to the need to effectively utilise available forest resources, as Mr. Lukashenko recalled. Foreign investors have provided funding to modernise woodworking enterprises. "I've come here to see how foreigners work in Belarus and what benefits we gain from this," said the President.

The Head of State once again underscored his readiness to consider proposals relating to leasing forests for timber harvesting. "You're

Government, opening five major manufacturing lines, in Mogilev and Smorgon, by 2012-2016, making particleboard, laminated particleboard, medium-density fibreboard (MDF), impregnated paper, and floorboards.

Between 2010 and 2016, Kronospan invested over 919 million Euros in Belarusian operations, creating 1,017 jobs, with an average salary in excess of \$650. At present, Kronospan enterprises account for up to 30 percent of the annual output

situation and try to meet investors halfway," stated Mr. Lukashenko.

The President remarked that favourable conditions have been created for investors in Belarus. "I don't know what else to do to prove, once again, that favourable conditions have been created for investors here. We have a stable society; Belarus is a calm and quiet country. Our government isn't the worst government; we're only human, so we sometimes make mistakes. We haven't ruined

come. We'll agree on taxes if they come to Belarus. If reduced taxes are still too large, initially, we'll come to an agreement. We often do so. Safety and calm are the main things," the President is convinced. The state is also ready to create necessary conditions for the development of small enterprises. "We'll help you by reducing taxes. Tomorrow, you'll hire 10-20 employees and offer good salaries. When you're a success, you'll pay the same taxes as others," assured Mr. Lukashenko.

The owner of Kronospan Group, Peter Kaindl, admits that Belarus has created the most favourable conditions for the development of his enterprise in Belarus. Accordingly, his company has boosted the volume of its investments, to exceed the \$150 million initially agreed, with 150 jobs created. This year, its investments should exceed \$1 billion, with more than a thousand jobs created since 2010.

His company has suggested the Belarusian Government to set up a decorative paper factory in Shklov. Mr. Kaindl comments, "Belarus has raw materials and highly-qualified workers while the Government creates ideal economic conditions. Belarus also has an ideal location for the organisation of logistics. The stability in the country is also important."

I don't know what else to do to prove, once again, that favourable conditions have been created for investors here. We have a stable society; Belarus is a calm and quiet country. Our government isn't the worst government; we're only human, so we sometimes make mistakes. We haven't ruined the country. Security and stability rely on how the Government conducts itself.

free to rent lands, starting small. Show me how you're going to work. Road and forest restoration is part of the deal. If investors undertake these obligations, they're welcome to work here and lease certain forest territory," he noted. "There's one more condition. Timber harvesters and timber transportation vehicles have to be Belarusian made. Belarusian enterprises make all of them. We'll make sure the machinery operates effectively and well."

In 2010, Kronospan signed an investment contract with the Belarusian

of the Belarusian woodworking industry and up to 21 percent of the industry's exports.

Citing Kronospan as an example, the Head of State emphasised that investors in Belarus have access to various privileges. In particular, when the company imported German equipment, it paid no import duties or VAT, saving around \$100 million.

"If they work honestly, as your enterprise has done, I promise that we'll support them in any field. Members of the Government, ministers, and I will analyse the

the country. Security and stability rely on how the Government conducts itself," the Head of State accented.

Mr. Lukashenko added that no corruption problems exist in Belarus, and that 'one-off incidents' are immediately detected and acted upon. Foreign investors admit that this sphere has been brought to order, enabling them to come to the country.

Belarus is attractive to investors due to its highly qualified staff and high quality, affordable resources. "If there are raw materials and a workforce, investors will

Best bank for fifth time

By Vladimir Khromov

Leading international financial magazine, *Global Finance*, names Belarus-bank JSC best on Belarusian market for fifth time, as displayed on its website

Global Finance magazine recently released its rating of best banks, including those in Central and Eastern Europe. Winners were decided by the editors of *Global Finance* after extensive consultations with corporate financial executives, bankers and banking consultants, and analysts worldwide. In selecting these top banks, *Global Finance* considered such factors as growth in assets, profitability, geographic reach, strategic relationships, new business development and innovative products.

Global Finance compiles rankings for a number of branches of the economy, including the banking sector. "The *Global Finance* award is a recognised and reliable proof of excellence. It's a great honour for the bank to receive such an award, that attests to its leading position on the financial market of Belarus," stresses the Minsk bank.

Global Finance publishes the ranking of the best banks across various categories annually.

Free trade as element of co-operation

Germany supports Belarus' desire to join WTO, notes German Minister of State for Europe, Michael Roth, speaking at forum for '25 Years of Public and Diplomatic Relations between Belarus and Germany: Retrospective and Prospects'

"Open borders and fair free trade are the best instruments of globalisation. There's no need to create walls or new forms of isolation. We're confident in this, and the same is true of trade. I'd be happy if Belarus joined the WTO. We need economic co-operation, and fair trade, and the WTO is a powerful instrument in achieving this," Mr. Roth stressed.

The German Minister of State for Europe emphasised the importance of political contacts for further development of dialogue between Belarus and Germany. "Personal contacts are also crucial for reliable and trustworthy relations, with young people playing a central role. I'm looking forward to meeting Belarusian students, to talk about our common future in Europe," he said.

According to Michael Roth, Germany is eager to continue liaising with Belarus. "We're ready not only to continue but to strengthen our ties," he asserts.

Efficient, appropriate and well-thought-out actions required



Machinery at work in the fields of Lidsky Sovkhoz agro-enterprise, in the Grodno Region

By Vladimir Mikhailov

President requests feasibility study for nitrogen fertiliser production in the country

During his working trip to the Grodno Region, the Head of State remarked that nitrogen fertilisers are always in demand, both in Belarus and abroad. Therefore, such an enterprise would be very useful. The President was informed that the project would cost about \$1 billion, with various financing options under consideration. Mr. Lukashenko has asked that location be considered, with logistical opportunities, availability of workforce, and other important aspects taken into consideration. "Does it make sense to open a second enterprise

of this kind near Grodno? Such enterprises should be located in various corners of Belarus, but it's not the main concern," noted the Head of State. "Think where to set up this modern enterprise."

The President heard about progress in the spring sowing campaign in the region. The Head of State was assured that all resources, including technical tools, are available for farming. Mr. Lukashenko was shown Belarusian-made machines for the application of mineral and organic fertilisers, a range of ploughs, and the first self-propelled sprayer in Belarus, made by Lidagroprommash JSC.

During the President's working trip, he inspected renovations of the Minsk-Grodno motorway and urged

a rational approach, saying, "You must be wise and thrifty."

The state creates favourable conditions for developing business and attracting foreign investors, Mr. Lukashenko noted, chatting with employees of Arvibelagro meat-processing enterprise, in the Lida District, established by Lithuanian investors.

The Head of State heard about the status of poultry farming and progress in attracting foreign investments, creating new jobs and implementing cutting-edge import substitution technologies. Mr. Lukashenko also toured the poultry meat processing facility.

According to Arvibelagro management, Belarus has created excellent condi-

tions for doing business, and the investor plans on further expansion.

"We really need such new jobs. It's good that these people, who aren't strangers to us, have come, viewing Belarus not as an alien country. We'll help you in the same way that we help all private companies with whom we reach agreements, coming to launch production," underlined the Head of State.

Arvibelagro specialises in turkey farming and turkey meat production. The investment project envisages manufacture of ready-to-cook food. Among potential sales markets are countries of the European Union, the Russian Federation and also the domestic market of Belarus.

Other important topics in focus

Mr. Lukashenko remarked to Arvibelagro employees that the Internet has become a battleground, since information sharing cannot be fully controlled, saying, "Information wars are an element of hybrid wars. Those who counter this war will survive. It's very important, and we learned to do it several years ago."

The Head of State clarified his instruction regarding finding jobs for unemployed Belarusians by May 1st, underlining that it's necessary to continue creating jobs at existing enterprises, as well as at new ones. Moreover, people should be taught new professions if necessary. He does not wish to see anyone lose their job without authorisation from municipal government agencies. He stressed, "People should not be fired for the sake of raising salaries [for the rest]. Where will these people go to? Decisions need to be made."

Where several people are dismissed by an enterprise, the management needs to find alternative employment for them. Mr. Lukashenko also asked about salaries in the Grodno Region and once again reminded of his instruction to raise the country's average salary to the equivalent of \$500.

A memorial complex will soon be created at Kuropaty, as Mr. Lukashenko commented. "I've given

instructions to create a compact memorial; not a gigantic one like Brest Fortress. A tender is in progress and we'll make it, possibly, like a small chapel." He added that it's inadmissible to exploit the issue for political ends, and spoke about recent events relating to a scandal triggered by plans to build a business centre in Kuropaty. He believes that the problem was artificially blown out of proportion. "A memorial will be built there, as a public place for remembering those who perished," noted Mr. Lukashenko.

The period of visa-free stay in Belarus may be extended. "If five days are not enough, we'll extend this period. Why should we be afraid? Belarus is an open country with an open economy, and people should come here in an open way. It does no harm to anyone," Mr. Lukashenko is convinced. The Head of State emphasises that visa-free entry aims to attract business communities from abroad.

He remarked that security issues remain under control. A special list of people forbidden to enter Belarus and Russia has been compiled to prevent their arrival. Speaking of Belarus' tourism appeal, the Head of State stressed that our countryside and people are our main treasures, with many coming to enjoy peace and quiet on rural estates, which offer comfortable conditions.

Convenient for everyone

By Alexander Pimenov

China to provide technical and economic assistance for social infrastructure construction at Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park

Construction of social facilities is launching in June, as discussed at a meeting between Belarus'

Deputy Prime Minister, Anatoly Kalinin, and the General Representative of China Merchants Group in Central Asia and the Baltic Region, the Chief Executive Officer of the Industrial Park Development Company, Hu Zheng.

Looking at results so far at the Great Stone Industrial Park, the parties have discussed plans and strategic

goals for 2017. Mr. Kalinin asserts that the Park has all the necessary infrastructure to attract investors, saying, "I'd like to note that we've fulfilled all the tasks set forth by the President of Belarus concerning the development of the Industrial Park and construction of engineering infrastructure. However, we still need to do more to attract investments

and residents to our Park."

Hu Zheng notes that an agreement has been reached with the Chinese Government to govern China's technical and economic assistance in constructing social facilities within the Park, including a polyclinic, 144 apartments, an innovations commercialisation centre and public transport facilities. A joint design institute



Representatives of Chinese company

is also planned, to develop project documents for Park residents. It's hoped that for-

mal procedures on the creation of the institute will be complete by late April 2017.

Daring to swim with Vikings on 'dragons'

Blue lakes, clean air, pristine forests... Belarus attracts tourists with its natural resources and opportunities to improve health.

By Yelena Karlina

Fall in love with Minsk

The Business and Cultural Complex of the Belarusian Embassy to Moscow recently hosted a presentation of Belarus' tourist potential, with representatives of all six regions attending. "We're developing tourism," explains the Minister-Counsellor of the Belarusian Embassy to Russia, Yuri Yaroshevich. "In February, the Presidential Decree on the five-day visa-free regime for citizens of eighty countries came into force; earlier, we launched free access to the Belovezhskaya Pushcha and to Avgustovsky Canal, thinking, primarily, of Russian tourists."

Svetlana Demeshko, the Deputy Head of the Department of Tourism at Minsk's City Executive Committee, notes of the Belarusian capital's hospitality, "Minsk is a special city, with many sights. Among them is the National Library building — the famous 'diamond' on Nezavisimosti Avenue. It tops various ratings as the most beautiful and unusual building. This year, we're celebrating a major jubilee: 950 years, with celebrations scheduled for 9th and 10th of September. We invite all Russians to come and fall in love with our city."

Minsk is focusing on three main areas of tourism. Ms. Demeshko explains, "Event tourism, such as attendance of concerts by famous groups and festivals. Medical tourism, which particularly appeals to Russians seeking not only to improve their health at sanatoriums but to undergo complex operations, including plastic surgery. And, the welcoming of politicians, state officials and businessmen as part of business tourism."

Tasting history

New approaches are being made, such as staff at the Park-Museum of Interactive History, at Sula in the



Drakkar sailing along 'Varangians to the Greeks' route



Polotsk residents wear national costume to welcome tourists

Stolbtsy District, welcoming guests with swords. "We offer a glass of samogon moonshine on the sharp blade, as is produced locally," explains Director Andrey Zapol'sky, promising that tourists will remember such tours. "Rather than 'lecturing', we offer a taste of history. After

walking through the park, we take guests to a Neolithic site, visiting a Viking pier and armoury workshop. We walk through the Gothic quarter, telling stories of paganism, and then sail part of the 'Varangians to the Greeks' route, on a true 'drakkar' — a Viking dragon boat."

DIRECT SPEECH

Anna MUKHA,
Head of the Tourism Services Quality Department at Belarus' Ministry of Sports and Tourism:

We believe that more guests will arrive. I began working in this field twenty years ago, when we didn't even have videos or presentations. Now, we employ a great deal of creativity and our number of professionals is ever growing. We're trying to find an echo in the soul of each guest, especially Russians, and we're developing new excursion routes.

Agro-estates invite all for a welcome day

On Sunday, May 21st, agro-estate villages will welcome everyone free of charge

More than a month has passed since the visa-free five-day regime was introduced and the number of foreign guests in Belarus has increased: 4,500 people have arrived in the Republic. Five days are not enough to fully recuperate at a sanatorium but are enough to see some of the sights. Tourists are coming from

Germany, France, Italy, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and Estonia.

The popularity of domestic tourism is increasing. According to data from the National Statistical Committee of Belarus, around 80,000 Belarusians annually travel within the Republic.

Meanwhile, Russians are delighted with Belarusian villages, enjoying traditional holidaying, in old wooden houses near the forest or on



Nanosy agro-estate in the Myadel District

an estate where they may fish in the lake, and taste national Belarusian dishes. More than 2,000 agro-estates

are operating at present, where you can taste fresh butter, lie in a hayloft, and go horse riding.

ROUTES

Visiting historical places and the Golden Ring

Tourism business representatives from various cities and regions have praised the opportunities in their regions

● "Mogilev is the closest regional city to the Belarusian capital. Before the revolution, Emperor Nikolay II and his family lived here permanently. Key decisions affecting the country's politics were taken here. We've organised a route to places associated with the Romanov family," explains Yelena Karpenko, the Director of Mogilevoblturist.

● **The Grodno Region** was the first to open up to European tourists and, last October, it abolished visas for those wishing to visit the Avgustovsky Canal. The region is a true treasure, having three UNESCO Heritage List sites: Mir Castle Complex; the Struve Arc; and part of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha.

"Our region fuses cultures and religions. Judaism, Orthodoxy and Catholicism have coexisted here for many centuries. Representatives of all religions have left their monuments: Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, and synagogues," explains Matvey Tsvirko, of the Grodno Regional Executive Committee. "In addition to cultural and historical leisure, we offer extreme tourism — such as skydiving and kayaking along the picturesque Avgustovsky Canal. Our guests can also enjoy a week-long cycling tour, as excellent infrastructure has been developed in the region."

● **The Vitebsk Region** has its own attractions. In Polotsk, there's a memorial to the geographical centre of Europe, and local museum and theatres display a variety of national costumes. Vitebsk itself is a festival city, with many Russians drawn to its *Slavianski Bazaar*; this year, it'll be held in mid-July.

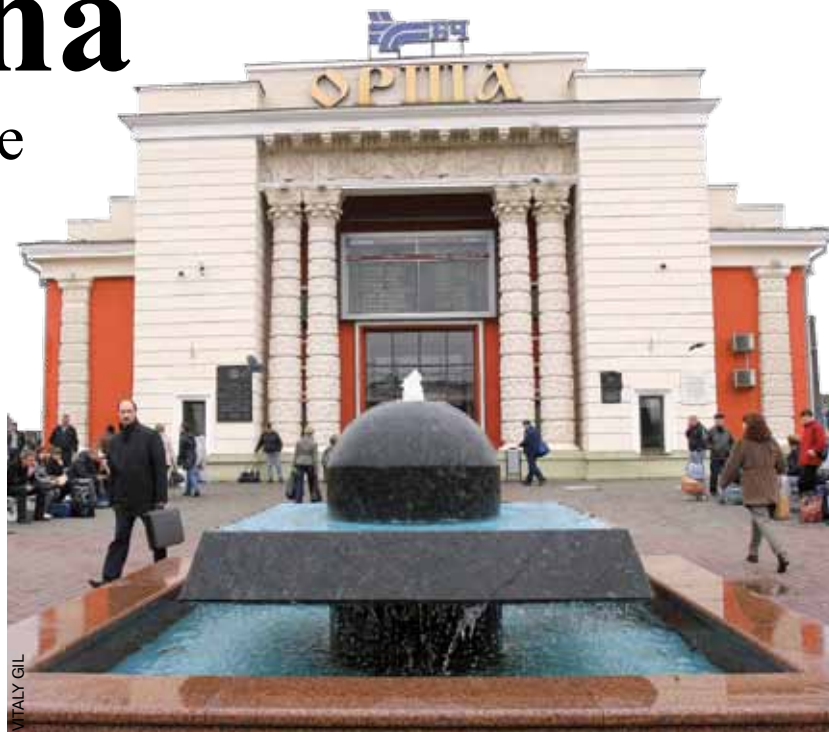
● **The Gomel Region** is famous for its Golden Ring: Turov, Krasny Bereg, Chechersk, Vetka, Gomel, Loev, Rechitsa, Yurovichi and Mozyr. These are beautiful cities with a long history, ancient architecture and much local flavour.

● **The Brest Region's** major attractions are the Belovezhskaya Pushcha, the city of Brest and Brest Fortress. Moreover, the city is abundant in sports facilities: ice rinks, swimming pools and various complexes in most districts. There are also many local spas.

● **The Minsk Region** has around 670 of the sights listed among Belarus' historical-cultural treasures. Among them are Nesvizh Palace-and-Park Ensemble, Khatyn, and the Tyshkevichs' mansion. Nature lovers love Narochanskies Lakes, Minsk Sea, and the Silichi and Logoisk ski centres.

All roads leading to Orsha

Ancient city on the River Dnieper, which is joined by the Orshitsa River, is almost ten centuries old, its name deriving from the word 'rust', because of rusty water



Railway station in Orsha



'1067' memorial sign on the site of ancient citadel

are often there, purchasing linen souvenirs at affordable prices. The world's largest flax mill operates in Orsha.

the foundation of the Kuteinskaya Laura, which housed a centre of Belarusian book printing in the 17th century.

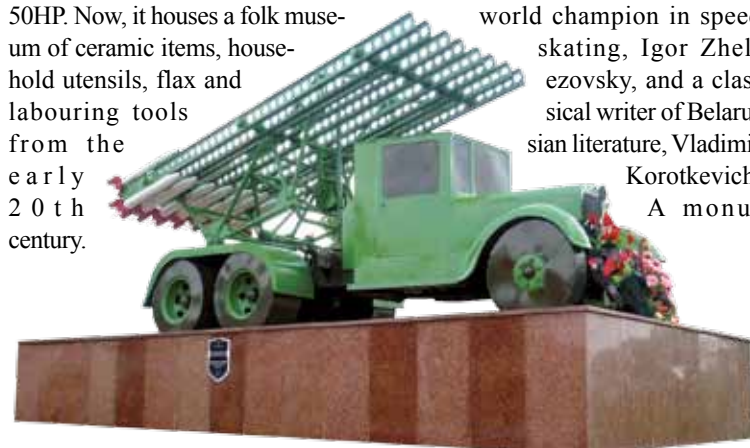
Turning the watermill's wheel

The red-brick mill, in pseudo-Gothic style, with elements of pseudo-Russian style, is eye-catching. It stands on a man-made canal, which once enabled its engine to produce 50HP. Now, it houses a folk museum of ceramic items, household utensils, flax and labouring tools from the early 20th century.

The most famous book is Spiridon Sobol's ABC, which spread all over the world. Recently, a marble monument was unveiled to honour him, showing a title page of the unique book.

However, not only Spiridon Sobol has made Orsha famous.

Residents of the city include multi world champion in speed skating, Igor Zheliezovsky, and a classical writer of Belarusian literature, Vladimir Korotkevich. A monu-



Monument to 'Katyusha', which fired its first salvo on enemies

An 11th century citadel is located across the road, where the city's life began. It is much painted and photographed.

ment now stands on the bank of the Dnieper River, on the site of the burnt house where the writer was born.

Reading our ABC

Orsha is a city of monasteries and churches. Its residents love St. Ilya's Church, which is 500 years old and is home to the Orsha icon of the Mother of God. According to legend, it miraculously appeared during

Remembering legendary 'Katyusha'

Orsha entered the history of the Great Patriotic War for first firing a multiple rocket launcher, called 'Katyusha', on July 14th, 1941. Captain Flerov's squadron destroyed several German trains running to Moscow, with its help.

Twenty-five years later, a memorial sign, 'For Our Soviet Motherland!' appeared on the site, honouring the legendary weapon.



Balloons from four countries rise over Orsha

By Olga Kruchenkova

Seeing eastern gates of Belarus

Orsha is a large transport hub for the Russia-Europe-Ukraine route. It's no wonder that, on the way to Moscow, during the 1812 Patriotic War, Napoleon chose to quarter there. He appointed Marie-Henri Beyle (the great writer Stendhal) as the commandant of the city.

Orsha's railway station opened in 1871 and is registered on the List of Historical and Cultural Treasures. Meanwhile, two monuments dedicated to the 'railway' are located nearby: one to Soviet

Union Hero Konstantin Zaslouov, who commanded a partisan brigade, and a local locomotive depot for several years before the war, and the second to the legendary P-36 Soviet locomotive.

Dropping to Jesuits

The Jesuit Collegium was founded by the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha, in 1612. Children (regardless of their origin) were taught grammar in the monastery school. Af-

ter 230 years, the building of the Collegium was given to house a city prison, which closed only in 1990.

Today, the Baroque style building has been restored and returned to its intended purpose, as a cultural and educational centre. It now houses a café, which is popular with residents and tourists, as well as a children's library, a museum complex, an art gallery and a house of crafts.

Tourists



Restored building of Jesuit Collegium in Orsha



View of Houses of Parliament, from Westminster Bridge, where the tragedy took place

London terrorist 'acted alone' in attack, police say

Westminster terrorist acted alone when he killed four people and injured 50 others in his desperate jihadi attack on Westminster Bridge, police have confirmed

In a statement, Metropolitan Police deputy assistant commissioner Neil Basu said the public may never truly know why Khalid Masood committed the horrific act of terror.

He said, "We must all accept that there is a possibility we will never understand why he did this. That understand-

ing may have died with him."

Masood's grotesque lone wolf attack on the heart of London lasted only 82 seconds, but left chaos and suffering in its wake.

Mr. Basu added, "We still believe that Masood acted alone on the day and there is no information or intelligence to suggest there are further at-

tacks planned.

"Even if he acted alone in the preparation, we need to establish with absolute clarity why he did these unspeakable acts to bring reassurance to Londoners, and to provide answers and closure for the families of those killed and the victims and survivors of this atrocity.

"Nevertheless, we are determined to understand if Masood was a lone actor inspired by terrorist propaganda or if others have encouraged, supported or directed him.

Four people, including a police officer, were killed and Masood was shot dead by officers.

Remembering Brussels victims one year on

Families of the dead, survivors and officials have joined together in Brussels — to remember the victims of the city's terror attacks, one year on

Sarah Esmael Fazal, whose sister was killed, broke down in tears as she addressed those gathered at the main remembrance ceremony, close to the EU institutions.

"Please make sure that all these beautiful souls have not left us for nothing. Let's promise to take care of each other as Sabrina would have wished," she said.

The King and Queen of Belgium, who attended, took time to speak to emergency workers, the victims and their families.

Those touched by terror elsewhere — Paris, Nice, Turkey and beyond — were also invited to the ceremony.

"Dear families, with countless victims around the world, you share these deep wounds, caused by deadly madness," King Philippe told those gathered.

The terror that came to Brussels last year was the worst in Belgian history.

It was just before 8am local time that two suicide bombers blew themselves up at Zaventem Airport, the explosions tearing through the check-in area in the terminal building.

Then, just over an hour later, close to the main EU institutions in the heart of the city, a third bomber struck on a train at Maelbeek metro station.

Thirty-two people were killed in all, more than 300 injured.

A minute's silence was held on Wednesday at the airport, at the exact time the attacks happened. There was also a remembrance ceremony at the metro station.

Jonathan Selemani, whose girlfriend was killed at Maelbeek, joined the commemorations. "It was difficult at first, we thought whether to come or not. But I think for her we have to be strong, we really have to be strong and face our fears. And I believe we did this as a family today, it was all respectful."



Reality of the worst drought since 1945

Millions of people in over a dozen countries in the Horn of Africa and southern Africa are facing the peak effect of severe drought that hit the regions resulting in famine

Worst among the countries are Somalia, South Sudan, and Nigeria in West Africa who are part of the more than 20 million people estimated by the United Nations to be facing severe famine and starvation in the world.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) warned that Somalia is at risk of its third famine in 25 years after the previous crisis in 2011 that killed about 260,000 people.

The Horn of Africa is facing its third consecutive year of drought causing thirst and hunger, decimating livestock, destroying



livelihoods, spreading disease and triggering large scale population movements.

Somalia's neighbour Kenya is also facing drought in half of the country — 23 of its 47 counties

nationwide. United Nations humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien described the crisis to the Security Council as the largest since the second world war in 1945, and an amount of \$4.4 billion is needed 'to avert a catastrophe' in Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria and Yemen in the Arabian Peninsula.

For the other drought-ridden countries including Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) launched an appeal last

year for emergency aid estimated at \$109m to cover 23 million people. The UN humanitarian chief Stephen O'Brien clearly stated after a visit that the famine in South Sudan is man-made due to the three-year civil war in the world's newest country which is facing a worse situation.

According to the UN, 6.2 million people in Somalia need humanitarian assistance and protection, including 2.9 million who are at risk of famine and require immediate help.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Realistic history reflected in dreamlike watercolours

National Art Museum of Belarus presents *Poetry of Ruins* exhibition of watercolours, by prominent Lithuanian painter Romanas Borisovas

By Veniamin Mikheev

Romanas Borisovas is a graduate of the Design Department of Vilnius' Academy of Arts. He graduated from the Academy in 1973 and was taught design by professors Vladas Drėma, Albinas Puris, Feliksas Daukantas, Arvedas Kybrancas, Juozas Burneika and others. However, in 1988, Romanas gave up design to turn to art, experimenting with pictorial painting and the difficult medium of watercolours. His knowledge of architecture — received from his family and the Academy — inspired him to take up the theme of the architectural heritage of Small Lithuania and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Over 29 years of artistry, Romanas created over seven hundred watercolours, organising thirty-seven exhibitions in Lithuania and thirty-six abroad — in Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Poland, the USA, the UK and Russia. He received the Ludwig Rhesa Prize for his artistic work.

Painters Alfonsas Keturka (1919-1995), Edmundas Čekanauskas (1930-2010), Henrikas Bogdanas and Arūnas Paslaitis explored a similar theme. Without doubt, Romanas Borisovas' artistry is a landmark for Lithuanian art.

Unsurprisingly, the exhibition opening at the National Art Museum gathered a significant crowd from the creative community: artists, art critics, writers and historians. The museum's Director, Vladimir Prokoptsov, stated at the ceremony that the national museums of Lithuania and



Works on museum display attract with their historical authenticity



Belarus have long collaborated: they organise various themed exhibitions, and share experience of artwork restoration. This exhibition is the result of long co-operation.

"In Lithuania, we have a new Napoleon Orda in Romanas Borisovas," says Mr. Prokoptsov, with confidence. "His presented work will be placed in the museum's permanent exhibition."

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lithuania to Belarus, Andrius Pulokas, says

that the exhibition would perhaps never have been organised in Minsk without intensive dialogue between the artist, the Ministry of Culture of Belarus, the National Museum and Embassy staff. He notes that cultural and artistic relations between our two neighbouring countries will bring our two nations closer, aiding in the resolution of various problems.

Radziwills and the Il-yinichs. It's just great!"

Among Ms. Gavrilova's favourites are *Gates of Lyubcha Castle* (2016), *Nowy Zahorow: Church Ruins* (2012), *Portal of the Bernardine Church in Vilnius* (2005), *Ruins of the Church in Pobeten* (2010) and *Labyrinth of Old Vilnius Courtyards*

(2009). Each has strong emotional impact, and impeccable composition, with a striking colour palette. Importantly, they all reflect the author's passion for his subject.

Speaking of his artistic plans, Mr. Borisovas noted that — after the show — he'd like to introduce his work to residents of the Lithuanian seaside, presenting the exhibition at Palanga Museum. However, Palanga will have to wait, as the exhibition is heading from Minsk to Mir in late March, before going to Lithuania.

Date worthy of UNESCO attention

Belarus and Poland plan joint events marking 150th anniversary of birth of Belarusian and Polish painter Ferdynand Ruszczyc, being celebrated in 2020

By Olga Korneeva

Proposals regarding collaboration have been discussed during a meeting between the Belarusian Deputy Culture Minister, Vasily Chernik, and Polish Deputy Minister of Culture and National Heritage, Pawel Lewandowski.

According to Mr. Chernik, Belarus is ready for fruitful co-operation with Poland's Ferdy-

nand Ruszczyc Foundation. He noted that plans have been made to renovate the artist's estate in the Volozhin District and the family cemetery, by 2020. The renovated estate will have an educational centre, exhibition halls, and an art cafe. There are also plans to release an album of Ferdynand Ruszczyc's works.

Such a jubilee deserves to be celebrated at UNESCO level,

so Belarus has invited Poland to jointly promote this initiative. Mr. Chernik believes that Belarusian and Polish cultural institutions maintain fruitful interaction. He cited as an example exhibitions prepared jointly with the National Art Museum of Belarus. He also praises the activities of the Belarusian Culture Centre in Poland.

Mr. Lewandowski believes



Audiences sure to be delighted by F. Ruszczyc's exhibition

it's important to step up our cultural collaboration and notes that Poland is eager to provide assistance with the renovation of Fer-

dynand Ruszczyc's manor. Mr. Lewandowski has proposed several projects of interest to Belarus and Poland

Naviband: 'We have no plans to dance with wolves'

Representatives of Belarus share their views on why our countrymen rarely win musical competitions and what they plan to do to conquer audiences

By Irina Mustafina

Finals of the international musical contest will be held on May 13th in the capital of Ukraine, with two semi-finals scheduled for May 9th and 11th. Belarus selected its heroes back in January: folk group *Naviband*, performing *Story of My Life*, as chosen by our local audience and professional jury.

Singing in native language

The band has three musicians and two vocalists: Ksenia Zhuk and Artem Lukyanenko. We met during rehearsals.

What makes you want to take part in Eurovision?

Artem: *In our country, we've been known for a long time. Every two years, the Lira National Award is organised and we've already received it, as well as performing at the 'Slavianski Bazaar'. We now have the chance to storm the European stage. We've given concerts in small clubs but, this time, we'll perform at a large stadium, with global TV broadcasts. We're quite nervous! After all, Europeans will finally learn about our talented Belarusian youth.*

This contest is not only musical but...

...political. However, there's no sense in dwelling on that. Sports and beauty contests are also inseparable from politics. We'll simply sing.

In what language?

Belarusian. We did consider rewriting the chorus in English but later decided to leave it as it is. If anyone wishes, the song translation is available on the Internet.

The more extravagant the

artist, the more chance of winning. Should we expect dancing with wolves or skaters with a Stradivarius violin?

Artem: *Nothing outrageous; our concept is a magical forest theme, with wizards. People are tired of showing off. None of our Belarusian colleagues who've participated in 'Eurovision' have seen success, and nobody is surprised. Belarus' last performance was in bad taste, I'm sorry to say. We prepared a good*

'show' but the song was weak — despite Sasha Ivanov [singer IVAN] doing his best and producer Victor Drobyshev investing a great deal of time.

Grishkovets crowns the album

Belarus' Eurovision results include two 'golds' from the Junior Eurovision Song Contest. The best result among adult artists is only sixth place, thanks to Dmitry Koldun. What's the problem?

MT REFERENCE:

Naviband was founded in 2013, releasing its first album, *Catch*, within a year. In 2016, the band took part in the national selection round for *Eurovision*, with its *This Land* song, taking fourth place in the finals. During the *Eurovision* 2017 selection round, the band was fifth by audience vote but the jury gave it the highest score, ensuring victory.

Artem: *We're better prepared for the junior competition. We have experienced teachers and many music schools. I want to believe that we'll be able to join the top three.*

Not so long ago, you recorded the Lullaby song, jointly with famous Russian writer Yevgeny Grishkovets...

We met by chance. A year ago, we had a concert in a Gomel bar. Yevgeny then toured the city. He came to the bar to relax in the evening and saw our performance. He listened to our song and then approached us, saying, "Guys, you're a ray of light!" We loved his words so much that we even called our third album 'Illumination'. The idea was born to prepare something jointly. Ksyusha wrote the lyrics and we recorded the song at Oleg Nesterov's Moscow studio. We're now working on the second track.

Has he congratulated you on your victory?

Ksenia: *We sent him a photo from the finals of the national selection round, of us holding a statuette and a diploma on stage. Mr. Grishkovets isn't fond of competitions but he was happy for us, even promising to watch our semi-final performance at home.*

Donating digital copies of Skaryna's book heritage

By Alexander Pimenov

Digital copies of Francysk Skaryna's editions to be donated by British Library to National Library of Belarus

The Chief Executive of the British Library, Roly Keating, recently met the Director of the National Library of Belarus, Roman Motulsky, in London. According to the Deputy Director of the National Library of Belarus, Alexander Su-

sha, who attended the meeting, the British Library has organised its first event featuring Belarusians, marking the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing.

The two parties have signed a memorandum on mutual understanding between Belarus' National Library and the British Library Board. The same day, the British Library hosted an anniversary conference, presenting a facsimile edition of Francysk Skaryna's book

legacy and hosting a ceremony for its donation to the British Library. The Belarusian delegation toured the British Library's unique collection of Belarusian books.

Another important event was a conference dedicated to the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing, attended by Slavists, staff of the two libraries, Belarusian diplomats, the general public, and journalists. During the conference, a multi-volume reproduction of



Skaryna's book legacy was presented to the British Library, which holds several precious editions by the Belarusian first printer, released in Vilnius and Prague.

The Chief Executive of the British Library, Roly Keating, has promised to donate high-quality digital copies of these editions to Belarus' National Library.

Lack of sensation in Stockholm

Igor Kriushenko's debut as head coach of Belarus' national football team has fallen a little flat, with the squad losing to Sweden, in Stockholm. This was the national team's fifth match in the 2018 FIFA World Cup qualification round.

By Igor Svitov

The Swedes went straight on the attack, escalating pressure close to the Belarusians' net from the first minutes. Nevertheless, the first half saw only one goal from the Scandinavians, following a penalty kick.

The second half began with a ridiculous goal, as goalkeeper Andrey Gorbunov failed to catch a slow ball, which passed between his legs, rolling into the net. The Scandinavians followed up with a third goal, which Gorbunov again failed to save, leaving his net to grab a high pass. A header from Berg was scissor-kicked by Yegor Filipenko straight into the net, which the referee whistled without hesitation as a goal (although video replay is not convincing that the ball completely crossed the line).

Only ten minutes after this, the head coach of the Belarusian national team, Igor Kriushenko, began to replace players. This

didn't help significantly to improve the game while the change in the Swedish team yielded fruit four minutes later. As soon as Isaac

Theelin appeared on the pitch, he used a pass from Oscar Hiljemark to score, leaving Sweden with a four goal victory.



Moment from Sweden-Belarus match



National boxing team at Minsk airport

Growing up in the boxing ring

Two medals won by Belarusian boxers at European U22 Boxing Championships

By Alexey Grishin

Drawing conclusions from the lack of medals at the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, the Belarusian Boxing Federation has set course to prepare for the Tokyo-2022 Games. The European Championship (U-22) — recently hosted by Romanian Braila — has demonstrated the ability of our young boxers, on whom hopes are pinned to revive the lost renown of Belarusian boxing.

The Chairman of the Belarusian Boxing Federation, famous former boxer Dmitry Tikhomolov, believes that there is every reason to be hopeful. He praises silver-medallist Victor Deshkevich (75kg) who he believes could have taken gold were it not for

his hand injury, which prevented him from boxing in the finals. Bronze went to Gleb Sinkevich (81kg): another pleasing result, giving reason for optimism in the future. Yevgeny Karmilchik, Ilyas Odinayev, Maxim Kozlov, Ilya Kulinenko, Mikhail Basyakov and Yevgeny Shabelnik also look promising. Our main boxing hope, Dmitry Asanov, appeared to do his best but failed to win a medal. Although his undefeated British rival at the competition enjoys regular competitive practice in the World Series of Boxing, more was expected from the Belarusian.

The forthcoming European Championship will be followed by the World Boxing Championship in German Hamburg, this August.

Melitina Stanyuta: 'I'm now the 'old lady' of the team, so I've decided to leave'

Belarusian gymnast explains why she's unexpectedly ending her career

By Kirill Karin

Give up this guy, girl

One of the strongest gymnasts in the world came to the sport quite by accident. "At the age of three, my mother took me to a figure skating club but a woman stopped her near the sports complex, suggesting that she take me to the calisthenics gymnastic club. This was my first coach: Svetlana Burdzevitskaya," she comments.

Those times were not sweet. Instead of playing in the sandbox, she had to spend time balancing between two chairs, often for ten minutes at a time.

"Audiences fail to see how hard we work. Many injuries also occur; I've often taken a beating from a rope or a club, in my eye or on my nose. I tent to leave training with bruises. One day, an elderly woman approached me on the bus, saying with sympathy, "Give up this guy. He's beating you and it's painful to look at you."

Fans' turn

You didn't give up though. Do

people recognise you on the street now?

Minskers do but they seldom approach me for an autograph. Belarusians are very reserved, unlike residents of Italy, Spain or Japan. In Bilbao, a crowd of fans was waiting for us and I felt they'd tear us up into souvenirs. We put our coats on the guards to let them 'be eaten' while we ran to the bus through the back door. Through the glass, fans recognised us and, unbelievably, lay down under the wheels!

You have all sort of medals, except Olympic...

I was training for the Rio Games as if for the last battle. It seemed I'd perform everything without a single mistake, even after being woken up at night. My coach was convinced that I was prepared better than my rivals. However, a ridiculous mistake in the exercise with the clubs was fatal. Nobody is immune to accidents.

Why did you decide to leave the team?

I'm 23 and am already the 'old lady' on the national team. I've been thinking over my decision for a long



Melitina Stanyuta: moment of victory

time. I thought of taking a rest and then coming back. However, I have no longer had the strength to train for eight hours daily.

What will you do?

I'm focusing on pleasant things — developing my jewellery brand and my jewellery store. I've not given up gymnastics — taking part in master classes in Belarus and abroad. Last year, I performed with the orchestra for the first time at the Yuri Bashmet Festival. I'm trying to

catch up. Formally, I've visited half the world but most of the time was spent in training and performing. I've seen much through a bus window... A hundred roads are in front of me now: I can choose any!

Magic dressing room

You've probably inherited your star genes from your great-grandmother: People's Artist of the USSR Stefania Stanyuta...

My great-grandmother per-

formed at the Yanka Kupala National Theatre for over eighty years. Her apartment was a fabulous place for me: a magic chest of masks and make-up. She once dreamed of becoming a ballerina and could sit on a string at the age of 70!

Don't you wish to perform on stage?

I would then be immediately compared with my great-grandmother. I'm glad that the family name of Stanyuta is now associated not only with the theatre but with sports. I've managed to make my own contribution.

MT REFERENCE:

Melitina Stanyuta was born on November 15th, 1993, in Minsk. She is an Honoured Master of Sports of Belarus, and a multi-winner of World and European championships, as well as the 2015 European Games. She is the Universiade-2015 champion.

Dance of the week



Minsk's Dinamo Sports Complex hosts exhibition of pedigree horses

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 16th April. *The Radziwills: the Fates of the Country and the Family* Until 17th April. Roman Sustov's graphics: *Arrival* Until 17th April. 100th Anniversary of Sergey Selikhanov (1917-1976) Until 23rd April. *Polish Landscape. Franciszek Mazurek: Pictorial Art*

BELARUSIAN STATE MUSEUM OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY

8 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 16th April. *Army Changes*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st March. *Captured Moments* Until 1st May. *Vladimir Akulov: Moments of Life* Until 30th June. Exhibition of wax figures: *Miraculous Travel*

YAKUB KOLAS STATE LITERARY MUSEUM

5 Akademicheskaya Street
Until 30th September 2017. *In Waves of Endless Movement: Along Kolas' Automobile Paths*

BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS

23 Nezavisimosti Avenue
30-31.03, 01-02, 05.04. Show of Giant Fountains. Amazing City

NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street
Until 26th March. *Road to Life Tree* Until 9th April. *Vladimir Mulyavin: Heritage of Great Maestro* Until 9th April. *MirRazh* Until 9th April. *Belarus' Documentary Heritage from 16th-19th Century: Archives of St. Trinity Monastery* Until 16th April. Interactive exhibition: *Anatomy of Miracle* Until 1st June 2017. *From Romanian Dinary to Belarusian Rouble*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN FOLK ART IN RAUBICHI

Raubichi village
Until 30th April. *Wedding of Western Polesie*

CENTRAL BOTANICAL GARDEN OF BELARUS' NAS

Kalinin Square
Until 30th April. *Lemon Tree Nursery; Colours and Songs of Tropics*

UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE ART GALLERY

1 Oktyabrskaya Square
Until 13th April. *Valentin Yelizariyev: Report from Present*

MUSEUM OF BELARUS' MINIATURES

25 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Museum of Miniatures of Belarusian Sights permanent exhibition

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
30.03. The Magic Flute 31.03. Little Prince 01.04. Miraculous Music 01 and 02.04. The Sleeping Beauty 03.04. Festive Concert 04.04. Aida 05.04. Sonnets. Small Death. Six Dances; Spring Voices 06.04. Eugene Onegin

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
30.03. Buratino.by; The Bat 31.03. Ladies in Law 01.04. Anchutka; Hot Mothers 02.04. Anchutka; Ladies in Law 04.04. My Wife is a Liar 05.04. Swan Lake 06.04. Yunona and Avos

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street
30.03. Not Mine 31.03. Pan Tadeusz 01 and 02.04. Paulinka 02.04. Office 03.04. Confession Time 04.04. The Seagull 05.04. School of Taxpayers 06.04. Evening

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
30.03. Woe from Wit 31.03. Truth is Good but Happiness is Better 01.04. The Magical Rings of Almanzor; Circle of Love 02.04. Viva Commedia 04.04. Innkeeper 05.04. Testosterone 06.04. Taming of the Shrew

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
30.03. Robbery at Midnight 31.03. Nobody Ever Said Life Would Be Easy 01.04. #13 02.04. Seventh Planet; #13 03.04. The Same Place Next Year 04.04. The Battlefield 05.04. Abduction of Yelena 06.04. Mechanical Man

MODERN ARTS THEATRE

5 Oktyabrskaya Street
31.03. Time to Pair 01.04. Night of Stand-up Comedy 02.04. Simply Karlsson

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
30.03. The Sea Wolf; Mr. Joke 31.03. Love of People 01.04. A Two Dogs' Tale; Feint-Kruaze 02.04. Game without Rules and with Unknown Purpose 04.04. Grandfather 05.04. The Broken Nest 06.04. Three Giselles

BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE

20 Engels Street
30 and 31.03. Christmas Story 01.04. Little Red Riding Hood 02.04. Mysterious Hippopotamus

MINSK CONCERT HALL

5 Oktyabrskaya Street
31.03. Adventures of Rabbit Pif 02.04. Puppet's Patrol: Team Heads to Help