



President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko meets representatives of Russian media



BATE among those providing main sporting achievements of year



INTERNATIONAL

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## Diversity of views enriches perception

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# Sovereignty always comes

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko meets representatives of

Over the past week, around a hundred reporters from Russian regional and federal media have been touring Belarus, joined by experts and bloggers. Visiting major enterprises, and sports and cultural facilities, they've been chatting with people to gain diverse impressions of the current 'flavour' of our country. The culmination of the tour was a chance to chat with the President, for over four hours, covering all manner of topics. The keynote of the meeting was Belarusian-Russian integration, with Mr. Lukashenko stressing that Russia remains a strategic partner and ally for Belarus. Nevertheless, the sovereignty and independence of our state is sacred, so the Union State should be built on equal conditions and mutual trust. Below are extracts from the President's comments on:



## Regional co-operation

Inter-regional co-operation is a guarantee of Belarus and Russia's successful partnership. Probably, you know well (especially those who aren't visiting Belarus for the first time) that the preservation of our Union is due to inter-regional collaboration, largely through the governors of the Russian Federation. If it were not for them, we wouldn't have this Union today. At least twice, we've been close to breaking relations, at the level of the federal powers and authorities of Belarus, but the regions saved our Union.

Belarus maintains sustainable trade-economic ties with almost every region of the Russian Federation, where so many production facilities are concentrated. These are the connecting link for our integration.

## Basis of integration

Belarus' stance is steadfast when it comes to integration. Together with other countries, we've initiated the formation of unions currently operating in our post-Soviet space.

We're ready to continue developing integration processes, given that all agreements are being fulfilled: either between our two sides, or between five members of the Eurasian Economic Union. As far as you can see, we don't ask too much. We must fulfil our agreements. That's all. If we don't fulfil our agreements, there will be no Union. This is an absolutely natural and justified expectation from partnership, and this partnership, as initially expected, should rely on equal conditions and mutual trust...

When we speak about equal conditions, this doesn't mean that everything should be divided in equal parts. I often say that if we take the possessions of the Belarusians and Russians and equally divide them, Belarus will be overwhelmed. We don't need so much. We want what we can earn with our hands and brains. If there are no obstacles, we'll be able to create a great deal. With Russia being a bigger country, certain assumptions are sometimes made which don't create the right approach.

## Media responsibility

It often happens that the media generates a flash point of conflict. We have responsibility for every word, written or spoken. Words have the power to destroy the world and cripple fates. Journalists can be like a firing squad. I'm not saying that

you're wilfully destructive but you can't ignore professional ethics and morals. If a pessimistic attitude is promoted, it also damages society.

## Contours of rapprochement

I wonder when we are told that the decision on the tax manoeuvre would be adopted when deeper integration would be within the Union State. Meanwhile, some directly tell us that we aren't ready for Belarus with its six regions joining Russia. I'm able to read between the lines, like you are also able to do this. I understand the hints.



It's possible to say easier: receive our oil but destroy your country and join Russia. I always ask a question: for the sake of what are such things done? Is Russia ready to accept Belarus region by region or completely? Think about the consequences. Are you ready for this? How will people in your country view such a move? People in your country and the international community. It would be an incorporation of one country by another, by hook or by crook.

We're being told that we're selling our country for oil. Some in Russia are suggesting that the move does not proceed from the great aspiration of uniting Belarusians and Russians. No. There's something different going on. However, I want to ask my friend and colleague this question. I want to hear an answer to this question from his lips.

It's no use trying to blackmail us, or bend us to your will, putting your knee on our chest. We aren't rich and certainly won't be richer if we 'break'. So, think about this integration. It should be for the sake of uniting our nations. It should be a deliberate step and a deliberate choice.

There shouldn't be any underhand dealings. I wouldn't be able to agree with anything like that. Everything should be fair and open.

## WTO

Who among EAEU states isn't a WTO member? Only Belarus. We agreed that that this is our Customs Union and we would act together, joining the WTO together. However, you violated your promise and joined the WTO, despite promising publicly not to do so. Then, Kazakhstan followed you, because it has resources which are beneficial to the West, and they were accepted. Armenia and Kyrgyzstan have long been WTO members. While we're left. We're now on the threshold of joining the organisation but I forbade members of the Government from joining the WTO without my permission. It's necessary to understand what we're joining. We're being drawn in. Now, it's easier for me. When Donald Trump came to power, the issue with the WTO was derailed and, during the G20 summit, it was said that the WTO needs reforming. I asked members of the Government: who was right?

This doesn't mean that we won't join any trade organisation but we need to figure everything out.

## Situation in Donbass

I don't want to see old people dying in Donbass. I know what's happening there, better than those present here today, even better than the Russian authorities. Why do children, the elderly, and women have to die? Men are fighting somewhere. Let them shoot at each other if they don't have brains. We, Slavic people, shouldn't fight each other. I know Ukrainians. They aren't enemies. They aren't as bad as you sometimes say. It's time to stop all this.

I'll tell you my position: everyone is afraid that NATO will become involved. I recently told Vladimir Putin that we'd soon pray to God to send NATO instead of gangs with guns. They're creating half the trouble. What if they had missiles? Aren't you surprised that NATO and the USA are withdrawing from the INF Treaty? Now, imagine for a minute, that nuclear-tipped missiles stood in Belarus, near Gomel, and near Russian Rostov? How would it be then? Do we want this? To stop this, let's take certain steps. There's no need to reproach me.

## Observation of the treaty

We need a single industrial and agricultural policy. We've already adopted these decisions. Thank God, Medvedev says that it's necessary to advance here. However, I want to ask my colleagues, the leadership of Russia: what's all this for? What would Russia like to receive from us in this particular case? I've made lots of proposals but they weren't well received. Now, Russia says that we need an agreement. What will we be doing? Which issues will we cover?

I want you to remember that sovereignty is sacred to us, as I've said before. It's comparative independence, as I don't think there are any absolutely independent countries. We're not that independent, but we are sovereign. If you're thinking about splitting Belarus into regions and merging us with Russia, as Zhirinovskiy has suggested, let me tell you that it won't ever happen. If the Russian leadership is thinking like that, it is detrimental to Russia itself.

## Belarus' ideal future

I don't see an ideal future for Belarus. Even the Russian President can't see an ideal future for Russia, while Russia has huge opportunities. You know this is because nothing ideal exists. Even in the empire of the United States. What's ideal there? Look what's happening; they have so many problems, therefore nothing ideal exists. The way the world is developing also determines how we manoeuvre to secure an ideal state of affairs for our country.

Belarus, located at a crossroads, has never had an ideal state of affairs, if you recall history. Russia won't either; it would have to accomplish a great mission.

Speaking simply, life without war is what matters. Nobody needs wars. We can cope with all else, and if we can't make some things, we'll import them.

## Neutrality in the conflict

In the conflict with Ukraine, do you, Russians, need Belarus? Do you know who suggested arranging the Normandy Four talks in Minsk? No. I didn't ask, Lord forbid. You shouldn't say anywhere that it was me. No. Merkel asked. When the place and time for the talks were being discussed, she mentioned Minsk. A person who dislikes me intensely. However, she is a wise woman. At that time, Astana was also suggested but Merkel said that Minsk was closer, being convenient for Putin, Poroshenko, Merkel and Hollande.



Maybe, you need us, here in Belarus? It's necessary to keep your head and think about the legacy we're leaving our children. We shouldn't leave this conflict to our children. Just as Azerbaijanis and Armenians can't leave the Karabakh conflict to their children. We caused it, so we should put things right, rather than leaving our children to suffer later.

### Hypocrisy

I don't play cat-and-mouse. I don't remember ever playing such a game. My family members and those whom I meet often take offence, thinking I'm too abrupt, but I believe it's better to be direct, rather than saying one thing, thinking another and doing a third thing. It's unacceptable. Meanwhile, it often happens in politics that I have to keep silence and then I feel disgusted for not having spoken up. Therefore, my principle is that it's better to speak the truth. It will be easier later, as no one will accuse you of lying.

### 'Helsinki-2' initiative

I believe it's necessary to convene such a conference soon, in order to calm down the world. I understand that Belarusians have made a proposal. If Trump mentioned such a desire on Twitter, I suppose that the Helsinki process would gather the following day. However, it's a Belarusian suggestion. I'm sometimes asked to set aside this idea but it wasn't me who spoke about it at the Munich Security Conference. This idea captured many people's imagination. I believe the world will be saved if we avoid rushing into an arms race and tomorrow's war. We're about to start shooting at each other. We need 'Helsinki-2'.

### Forthcoming meeting

We've agreed that the meeting will take place before the New Year. However, we need to know how negotiations between our two governments have proceeded during the Council of Ministers session. Only later will we, presidents, determine what to do, having studied the materials. I realise that there probably wouldn't be anything new for me or for him either but we need to wait until the end of the Council of Ministers session. Maybe, they'll settle something. So far, there's been nothing new and we need a presidential-level decision. The major issue deals with our economies and we should settle the issue of tax manoeuvre. I should do everything so that oppositionists do not say that I'm selling Belarus for a barrel of oil.

If we want to develop the Union State, we need to make worthy decisions. The interests of Belarusians and Russians should be foremost, with all the rest set aside.

It was reported that Vladimir Putin suggested holding a meeting in the Kremlin on December 25th to discuss issues. I think we'll meet and discuss them. Of course, I'll be telling him about our meeting in detail. I believe, it will be useful for him because I'm confident not all of you have attended his press conferences and not all of you have been to the Kremlin, even once. Therefore, I promise to bring my concerns to my colleague and my friend, the President of the Russian Federation. You know, whatever problems we have, we'll settle them, because we want to solve them and we're a single nation. Nothing should divide us. We lived as a single state for many years and many centuries, and I refer not only to the USSR. We shouldn't lose this; rather, we're relying on it.



## Countries in need of support

By Alexey Fedosov

### Belarus suggests long-term UN strategy for middle-income countries

Belarus' Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Valentin Rybakov, has spoken at the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting, held at the New York Headquarters. The meeting tackled problems faced by middle-income countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sus-

tainable Development: the first such UN event dedicated to this topic, with the initiative belonging to Belarus.

Mr. Rybakov emphasised the role of middle-income countries in global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Council's work in supporting these countries to implement the 2030 Agenda. The Belarusian representative stressed the importance of recognition and support of this category of countries by the UN development system. He also made

a number of observations regarding the engagement of agencies and programmes involving this category of states.

In particular, the Belarusian diplomat spoke in favour of elaborating a comprehensive UN system-wide and long-term strategy for middle-income countries. He called the strategic framework for partnership with middle-income countries (as prepared by the Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) an important step in this direction.

## Necessary to normalise relations with neighbours

### Belarus plans to develop relations with European Union, notes Alexander Lukashenko, meeting Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Germany to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Peter Dettmar

By Vladimir Khromov

The Head of State has underlined that he likes to meet foreign ambassadors, to discuss how best to develop relations. "Germany is an interesting country for us because Germans, first of all, understand us. Secondly, this is a high-tech, strong country, and we're interested in investments and technologies. We also have other interests," said Mr. Lukashenko. He encouraged the Ambassador to engage in sincere and open conversation and to forget about diplomatic formalities for a while.

"Please, tell me what Germany wants from Belarus and what it dislikes and I'll tell you what Belarus wants to gain from Germany and from the European Union. Germany is a leading country; a stronghold of the European Union — its main guardian. The European Union wouldn't exist without Germany, which is our neighbour. Our major principle is to maintain normal relations with neighbours," commented Mr. Lukashenko.

He added that Belarus can meet Germany halfway on certain questions, but not on all. "I just want to say that Germany (as Germans understand) shouldn't compel us to make a choice. Americans understand this. I've recently spoken to the US Assistant Secretary of State and he told me that they don't want to compel Belarus to choose between the East and the West. We're where we are, as has been determined by God, and they shouldn't push us from side to side. In keeping with our

national interests and the interests of our neighbours, we'll build upon our peace-loving policy. We'll never become a hotbed of tension in Europe."

The President emphasised, "We don't need any more wars. Maybe this is why Germany is always trying to settle conflicts by peaceful means, in various places. We want this too. Therefore, we'll never pose problems for the European Union, including Germany. We want the same from Germany, desiring Germany to understand us, and to take certain steps to meet us halfway."

Mr. Lukashenko called upon Germany to show greater openness in its partnership. Five years ago, our mutual trade turnover approached \$5 billion but then declined sharply. In 2017, we saw 25 percent growth, but the final sum was \$2 billion less than in 2013. The trend towards growth continues but could be greater. Therefore, the President comments, "We'd like Germany to take concrete steps to meet us halfway while understanding us. It isn't normal when we — an open country for the whole European Union, including Germany — can't trade with you."

The Head of State mentioned a few problems in trade relations between our countries, saying, "You've built a 'fence' and don't let anyone even approach. This invisible economic fence is even worse than Trump's border wall with Mexico. We'd like to finally break this fence. If the European Union is so committed to the market economy, why is it trying to fence in?"



Peter Dettmar

Peter Dettmar remarked that he'd already spent eight years in Belarus as a diplomat and stressed that 2018 has been the most productive and important for political and economic relations between Belarus and Germany.

Germany is one of Belarus' key foreign trade partners, occupying fourth place for volume of trade turnover. From January through until October, mutual trade turnover between our states almost reached \$43 billion — almost 25 percent more than in the same period of last year.

Belarus exports oil to Germany, alongside goods made from non-precious metals, timber and wood-processing items, and petrochemical produce. Meanwhile, Germany leads in supplying high-tech equipment, to help modernise Belarusian enterprises.

In the first quarter of 2018, German investments exceeded \$311 million (double that of 2017). More than three hundred enterprises with German capital are operating in Belarus and ninety representative offices of companies from the Federal Republic of Germany are registered.

After meeting the President of Belarus, Mr. Dettmar chatted with journalists, emphasising, "Regarding future development of our bilateral relations, we'll continue developing them, identifying priority areas for interaction, primarily preserving a positive investment climate in Belarus. It's vital that relations between Belarus and the EU develop constructively and successfully, as they have been doing."



# Internet included within package

Since November 1st, the consumption bundle in Belarus has included mobile communication costs and online access



By Kristina Khilko

## Quarterly updates

What do we need to live contentedly? Joachim Klöckner, a pensioner from Berlin, is the author of the *Little Minimalist*. He believes no more than fifty items are required to live comfortably, while a person who lives in Pakistan manages with just twelve items.

Meanwhile, the minimum consumption basket in Belarus includes almost two hundred goods and services, from which the minimum cost of living is calculated

Prices don't stand still, so the Government of Belarus up-

dates the consumption basket every quarter, calculating sums for eight categories of citizens, including pensioners, students, and young families.

However, the content of the virtual 'shopping trolley' is revised only once every five years, and last occurred in 2015. At that time, the list of services was expanded with mobile communications. Now, the basket also includes Internet access, at an allowance of 25 Mb per adult (50Mb per student). Few would argue that owning a mobile phone and having Internet access aren't essential. These have become indispensable to our way of

living, alongside housing utilities, apartment rent and furniture. For the average family of four, it's assumed that a two-bedroomed flat (48sq.m) is adequate. Meanwhile, it's accepted that a young family of three can manage in a 32sq.m one-bedroomed flat.

## To each their own

The minimum cost of living is an indicator for social growth dynamics, while helping in calculating state social support for those without employment or on low income, as well as allowances for when a child is born and child support payments.

As far as the content of the food basket is concerned, Belarus is meticulous, calling upon doctors and scientists to select relevant items and taking into account variations across regions and the socio-economic situation of the country. Each month, it's assumed that a Belarusian of working age is likely to eat 1.5kg of poultry, 1kg of fish and sausages, and 600g of pork. The ration also includes cereals, eggs, juices and dairy goods: forty-two types of food in all. Since November, the minimum cost of living has been recalculated, with child allowances increasing proportionally.

## Information brings benefit

By Olga Korneeva

### Possibilities for investors in Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park and Belarusian free economic zones presented in Swiss Horn

The Belarusian-Swiss Business Council session has been discussing prospects for increasing exports of goods and services from Belarus to Switzerland. Also on the agenda were preferential terms being offered at our free economic zones and at the Great Stone Industrial Park, as well as issues relating to innovation and investment activities, logistics and customs regulation of Belarusian-Swiss projects, and financial and banking instruments to promote business.

Taking part in the meeting were about forty representatives of large Belarusian and Swiss companies within the machine building complex, as well as those operating with logistics, consulting companies, and financial institutes, and management from the Great Stone Park and various free economic zones.

Representatives of Belarusian and Swiss business communities also took part in the business matchmaking event.

## Negotiations on partnership basis

### Prospects for supply of Belarusian mink to Chinese market discussed in Chinese Haining, in Zhejiang Province



The city hosts China's biggest leather and fur market. Belarus' Consul General to Shanghai, Valery Matsel, joined Consul Maxim Iosko in visiting Haining, meeting heads of Chinese specialised companies, such as Zhejiang Singer Leather Fashion, Hongda, and Furmax. The meeting was coupled with a presentation of Belarus' fur industry. Moreover, the Belarusian Republican Union of Consumer Societies (Belkoopsoyuz) drafted a commercial offer on mink fur, that was conveyed during the presentation.

Valery Matsel has met with representatives of the Haining Association of Leather Producers to discuss establishing mutually beneficial co-operation with Belarusian mink fur manufacturers. They also tackled the possibility of a visit for members of the association to local leather and fur producers in Belarus.

# Robotised BelAZ heavy-duty dump trucks are on display

By Vladimir Velikhov

## Ukrainian miners set sights on autonomously controlled BELAZ-7513R 130-tonne heavy-duty dump truck, and BELAZ-78250 wheel-loader, with Central Mining and Processing Facility already expressing interest in purchasing similar machinery

A delegation of technical specialists from Ukrainian mining enterprises, representing Metinvest, ArcelorMittal Krivoy Rog and other companies, recently visited BelAZ to discuss purchase of robotised machinery and the requirements of open pits.

The first unmanned heavy-duty dump truck based on a serial hauler with a load capacity of 130 tonnes was presented by BelAZ in 2015. The development of artificial intelligence systems and improved mass-produced vehicles has enabled the enterprise to create a new, robotised model

of its BELAZ-7513R heavy-duty dump truck. At present, two such vehicles are undergoing assembly in the Abakan section (Khakassia, Russia) of the Siberian Coal and Energy Company.

Ukrainian partners toured the production line for heavy-duty dump trucks while visiting machine-assembly workshops, viewing conveyors and the manufacture of super-heavy vehicles. A demonstration at the company's

testing area showcased the 450-tonne heavy-duty BELAZ-75710 dump truck in action.







Modern production at one of our free economic zones

# Favourable conditions foster business growth

Within seven years, Belarusian Government suggests doubling volume of external investments, with territories such as free economic zones playing key role

By Vladimir Mikhailov

## Future starts yesterday

The first free economic zones in Belarus — Minsk FEZ and Gomel-Raton — appeared twenty years ago. The country desperately needed investments to modernise industry and the agrarian sector, as well as new jobs. Time has proven the wisdom of the move, with such zones accounting for around 13 percent of industrial produce, 16 percent of Belarusian exports and 4 percent of GDP. At the President's session analysing the efficiency of FEZ work, Mr. Lukashenko noted that the situation had drastically changed over the past two decades. He underlined, "A weighty contribution has been made. However, is it comparable with the privileges given to residents? When FEZs were established, people had no work and we grasped at any straw in order not to drown. Today, another issue arises: we need highly technological pro-



ductions generating a synergetic effect for the whole economy."

Ever-growing global competition requires a changing approach. A third of China's GDP comes from free economic zones while electronic miracles are created in the US world-famous Silicon Valley. Fifteen free economic zones are successfully developing in Poland, despite EU requirements.

## Techno-parks

Two months ago, at a parliamentary session, Belarus' PM, Sergey Rumas, noted the top ten tasks for the Government for the next two years. These include the development of our business environment and the creation of comfortable conditions

for doing business. He noted the need to develop the service sphere and create an IT country, with large-scale economic digitisation, and focus on our investment climate.

"It's necessary to provide businesses with real financial support, and for us to encourage investment in private business, while creating transparent, foreseeable legislation discouraging excessive burdens and barriers. We need legislation that will guarantee stability for investors," asserted Mr. Rumas.

The major goal is to ensure rates of development for Belarus above the world average and to expand GDP within seven years to \$100 billion. Belarus wants to offer the best conditions within the EAEU for business and to raise total investments

to \$25 billion. Of course, free economic zones can be used to drive this progress.

"In order to attract companies to FEZs, several types of privileges are operating on their territory. For a decade, residents are exempt from paying profit tax and later pay only half of the tax rate," explains the Deputy Head of the Minsk FEZ Administration, Piotr Filipovich. "They also don't pay taxes for land and property. Moreover, they don't pay customs duties for the import of equipment and input VAT."

Alongside FEZs, Belarus pins special hopes on the High-Tech Park and the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park. Experts believe that only innovative projects can ensure breakthrough in Belarusian export supplies, increasing them by 50 percent.

## OPINION

Alex KREMER,  
World Bank  
Country Manager  
for Belarus:



The economy of Belarus is quickly reviving after the recession, so World Bank experts forecast that annual growth will soon reach around 3 percent. Local business looks optimistic while visits by foreign investors and delegations have significantly increased. In recent times, the country has done much to improve its business environment and investment climate. In my opinion, the best time has arrived for injections into the Belarusian economy.

## Interest in partnership

By Oleg Bogomazov

### Co-operation with Belarus in IT sphere is attractive for France

During the recent meeting in Minsk with a delegation of more than twenty heads of French companies, the French Ambassador to Belarus, Didier Canesse, underlined that favourable conditions have been created in Belarus for the development of the IT sphere,

which is of special interest for French partners. He notes that five or six French companies are already successfully functioning in Belarus and this year has seen their number increase.

Moreover, Mr. Canesse notes major prospects for Belarusian-French collaboration in the sphere of water purification and waste processing. French firms occupy leading positions in these spheres. Automobile building and international trans-

portation, distribution of industrial materials and packaging, industrial co-operation, services involving industrial enterprises, crediting and financial servicing also hold interest for the French delegation.

The French delegation met representatives of the World Bank, and leaders in the distribution of passenger cars in Belarus. They also chatted with heads of leading companies of our two states working on the



Didier Canesse (R)

Belarusian market in the area of international consulting, high technologies, industrial co-operation and banking. The

delegation also made time to tour BELAZ quarry machinery enterprise and negotiated with the plant's leadership.





# Capturing the Sun

Four years of patience yield fruit as amateur astronomer from Vitebsk, Vladislav Voronetsky, captures silhouette of International Space Station passing across Sun's disc

By Yevgenia Stasevich

The rare and wonderful shots are the result of a combination of circumstances. Firstly, the photographer thoroughly calculated the trajectory and time of the ISS passing against the background of the Sun (lasting only one second). Secondly, he selected the correct optical devices, equipment and protective filters. Thirdly, he needed a clear sky, while looking heavenwards from his site in Vitebsk's Pobedy (Victory) Square. "Just 410 kilometres separate us from the ISS. It's not far when you consider that Saturn is located almost 1.5 billion kilometres from Earth. However, the station is only visible at a particular moment, while planets can be observed for longer peri-

ods of time," explains Mr. Voronetsky.

He became fascinated with astronomical photography at school, visiting Vitebsk State University's observatory in tenth grade, and immediately falling in love with astronomy. His collection boasts shots of the Moon, Saturn and Jupiter. He has just several hundred photos yet each is unique and Vladislav can't choose which he likes best.

One photo of a flying aircraft against the background of the Moon was recognised as the 'Editor's Choice for National Geographic Russia' while, this spring, Vladislav managed to photograph the ISS passing



over the disc of the Moon. "I was shooting 25km from the city. The station was located against the background of the Moon for just 0.89 of a second. Moreover, it rose almost 30 seconds earlier than the estimated time, and I was afraid that I wouldn't have enough time to press the camera button. So, I was shooting video at 60 shots per second," he notes. At the time, the space station was situated 402km above the Earth and our fellow countryman, cosmonaut Oleg Artemiev, was on board.

## Knock on the Door presented in New York

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

**UN Headquarters hosts exhibition marking 75th anniversary of destruction of Minsk ghetto**

The Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations, Valentin Rybakov, has taken part in opening an exhibition of works by famous Belarusian artist Matvey Basov, entitled *A Knock on the Door*, dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the destruction of the Minsk ghetto.

More than twenty paintings are on display, detailing the tragic events of Belarusian history during WWII. At the opening ceremony, hosted by the UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Rybakov stressed the importance of preserving the memory of the tragedy of the Minsk ghetto and other death camps. He also asserted that we must remember the courage and heroism of those soldiers, partisans and underground fighters who fought the Nazis during WWII.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the exhibition were the heads of the permanent missions of Israel and Germany to the UN. The event was attended by representatives of non-governmental organisations of Jews and Belarusian compatriots abroad, including Savely Kaplinsky, a former child prisoner of the Minsk ghetto, and Svetlana Gebeleva, a daughter of the head of one of the first underground organisations in Minsk during the war. Also in attendance were representatives of the diplomatic corps in New York.

## ADVICE FROM DR. ZHUKOVA

# It is our sacred duty to offer support

*The Decade of Disabled People has been proclaimed but what does this mean?*

A. Savchuk, Polotsk

On 16th December 1976, the UN General Assembly declared 1981 the International Year of Disabled Persons. Then, from 1983 to 1992, we had the Decade of Disabled Persons. The objectives of this large-scale project were to raise awareness and take measures to improve the lives of those with disabilities, while ensuring equal opportunities for them in society. At the end of the decade, the UN General Assembly declared December 3rd the World Day of Disabled People. By the decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus, this day is also declared the Day of Disabled People of the Republic of Belarus.

People with disabilities may be physically limited, but they are limitless in their abilities, talents, and self-expression. Thanks to great strength of spirit and will,



these people achieve success in a variety of spheres: science, business, art and sports. In modern times, Belarus has been glorified by its Paralympic athletes. At the Paralympics, each performance is a feat. The results achieved by our Paralympic athletes have shown that their love of life and dedication can exceed that of someone without those chal-

lenges. Belarusian athletes at the Vancouver Winter Games held in March 2010 earned nine medals: two gold and seven bronze. Meanwhile, swimmer Igor Boky, aged 22, won five medals at the Paralympics in 2016, in Rio de Janeiro: four gold and one bronze.

There are about half a million people with disabilities in Bel-

arus and their social protection is a priority of state policy. The country is implementing programmes to improve their quality of life and integrate them into society. We have specialised rehabilitation institutions and are working towards a barrier-free environment, while providing social support. Those with disabilities don't want pity; rather, they ex-

pect respect, and recognition of their capabilities, and protection of their rights.

The Day of Disabled People tends to see the organisation of thematic conferences, during which there is discussion on how to further improve the standard of living for those with disabilities. Meanwhile, extra-curricular activities are organised in schools to teach children to treat the disabled with respect and warmth. The day is special not just for those living with disability but for their loved ones and those who care about problems affecting this category of citizen.

We have the opportunity to make a contribution, helping make life easier for people with disabilities. This day aims to remind us that disability should be considered not only as a limitation, but also as a situation which can inspire personal development.

**By T. Zhukova,**  
doctor of the highest category,  
Candidate of Medical Sciences





By Victor Kuklov

Our BelAZ heavy-duty dump trucks and tractors are working successfully around the globe, while people of so many nationalities are enjoying Belarusian food products. Of course, to experience the beauty of our country, it's necessary to visit. Our wild landscapes, unique wetlands and ancient forests, as well as our wealth of rivers and lakes, have to be seen to be appreciated. Meanwhile, the diversity of our flora and fauna is impressive.

A network of protected natural reserves aim to preserve these priceless riches and we've been working hard to do so since gaining our independence. In October 1994, the Law 'On Specially Protected Nature Areas' was adopted. In the 1980s, their number was fewer than sixty and they occupied just 4.3 percent of the Republic's territory; now, more than 1,200 specially protected nature reserves are operational and their area has increased considerably, being given protective certification by the state.

The law has established four categories of specially protected nature areas: a reserve, a

# Our blue-eyed beauty

Belarus is no longer perceived as a white spot on the world map. Due to a clear external and internal policy combined with peaceful integration initiatives, and our hosting of numerous international-level events — plus achievements in sport, culture and other spheres — our nation has made a name for itself.

national park, a reserved forest and a natural monument. Moreover, the national parks have become new landmarks in the environmental activity of sovereign Belarus. The Belovezhskaya Pushcha was the first to receive this status in the early 1990s. Before this, it was a hunting reserve for more than thirty years. Three more national parks appeared later: Braslav Lakes (1995), Prip'yatsky (1996) and Narochansky (1999).

Poozerie is one of the reasons why Belarus is called a 'blue-eyed' country, for its beautiful lake 'eyes' (over 10,000 in all). Braslav Poozerie is Belarus' largest lake region, boasting 267 lakes of various sizes, and seventy-four located within national parks. Each is unique in its own way but the Braslav group is one of the largest in Belarus, comprising more than thirty lakes, including the largest in the Braslav District: Drivyaty, Nespish,

Nedrovo, Potekh, Voiso, Strusto, Snudy, Voloso Severny and Voloso Yuzhny. The national park covers around 70,000 hectares — almost a third of the Braslav District, thanks to the movement of the Poozerie ice glacier, many millennia ago, leaving boulders which formed morainic hills, kames and osars. Forests account for around 67 percent of the park's territory and there are 1,900 plant species, including fifty-five registered in the Red Book of

Belarus. Moreover, over three hundred species of backboneed animals reside there, including forty-five mammals, 216 bird species, twelve amphibian species and five of reptile. The Braslav Lakes house thirty-four fish species and some lakes are home to very rare species of invertebrate. Tourism, is developing, with water, hiking and cycling tours enjoying popularity, alongside those involving bird-watching. There are comfortable places to stay and many wonderful lakeside guesthouses, some with views of the Mayak Mount. The town of Braslav is surrounded by five lakes, including the largest in the Braslav group: Drivyaty. It's no surprise that this Belarusian town is often compared with Venice.

"We didn't create nature; it's a gift from God and we should preserve it for future generations, to properly use. Everything should be preserved for the nation," underlined Alexander Lukashenko, speaking at the 4th All-Belarusian People's Assembly in December 2010.

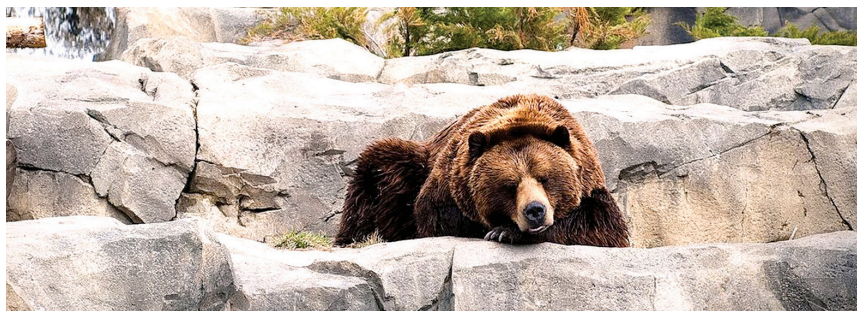
There's a small lake in the traditional Braslav necklace called 'God's eye': a talisman watching over us.

## Bear groom goes into hibernation

Bear Tristan falls asleep at Minsk Zoo — without waiting for his bride

By Inna Gorbatenko

Tristan has lived at the zoo for over a decade. Traditionally, from mid-summer, he's given a richer diet, to allow him to store fat for hibernation, being fed with bread, sweet cereals and vegetables. He especially likes watermelons. Then, in November, to inspire his sleepiness, his diet is restricted. This



In the urban environment, bears' sleep can be disturbed

year, as soon as the first frost came, Tristan went straight to sleep, in a remote corner of his enclosure.

The bear's den has everything he needs to endure the cold with comfort but, naturally, the zoo environment

isn't as tranquil as the forest. Soon, Tristan will be moved to a new den, completed just a week ago, where his bride, bear Nura, is preparing to arrive, moving to Minsk from Penza. Documents are being processed for her ship-

ping, as she needs to go through 21-day quarantine.

As for the other inhabitants of the zoo, warmth-loving animals have been moved to heated enclosures with the arrival of cold weather, filled with hay and sawdust, and aviaries have been insulated similarly. Various tropical predators have already adapted to our winters, enabling them to remain in open enclosures, which have entry to a heated room. Some animals are helped through winter naturally, of course. Predatory birds from Northern latitudes have feathers which protect them from hypothermia, and the wolves have grown their thick undercoats.





# Sustainable holiday hotspots of the world

Sustainable and ethical travel is changing the face of the tourism industry, which is worth around 7 trillion Euros

Sustainable tourism — the ability to make a positive impact on the environment, society and economy — goes hand in hand with ethical tourism according to Rashmi Verma, Indian Ministry of Tourism Secretary. She said, “The traveller nowadays is very discerning and they want the ethics part of it also maintained and looked into. A lot of focus is being given to that and they want more and more partic-

ipation of the local community, they don’t want the local people to be exploited.” She added, “responsible tourism is becoming very, very important.”

It’s something that also resonates with the Mauritian Minister for Tourism, Anil Gayan, who said, “No tourism industry can be sustainable without involving the whole community. No tourism can succeed unless it is friendly to the environment.

So we protect the environment, protect the local communities.”

Japan is experiencing an unprecedented travel boom. The country hosts the Rugby World Cup next year which will bring in an estimated 1.8 million spectators and add just under 2 billion Euros to the Japanese economy. Those visiting will also be encouraged to explore alternative destinations off the beaten track in a bid to embrace

and support sustainable and ethical travel.

And, as the Egyptian government provides new investment opportunities for its travel industry, it’s also doing what it can to encourage responsible tourism. It’s launching a new programme that will ensure that every reform they undertake in the future is consistent with the UN Sustainable Development goals.

## Companies boost their advertising spending

The robust economy and midterm elections contributed to a significant spike in ad spending this year, making 2018 the strongest year for growth since 2010, according to new advertising data

Interpublic Group’s Magna report, published annually for the past 60 years, forecasts that 2018 will see a 7.2 percent jump in global ad spending, while 2019 is projected to be the tenth year of continuous growth. Spending within the domestic market grew slightly faster, at a rate of 7.5 percent, to reach an all-time high of \$208bn. Digital ad sales are expected to pass the \$100bn for the first time.

Midterm political campaigns spent an unprecedented \$4bn in 2018, a 43 percent jump since the last election cycle in 2014. Campaigns spent an estimated \$3.1bn with local television, seeing a 28 percent jump versus the last midterms, while social and digital video also saw the first big investment from campaigns.

Facebook and Twitter represented at least \$400m in political spending, while digital video operators such as YouTube and Hulu generated around \$175m. The direct mail category received \$460m, while radio took \$150m. Spending on mobile reached \$71bn.

Other factors in the overall boost in ad spending are the strong retail sector, and tech firms upping their TV ad purchases.



## Philippine bet Catriona Gray is the new Miss Universe!

**Catriona Gray from the Philippines claimed the Miss Universe crown for 2018, beating contestants from 93 other countries**

Miss Universe 2017 Demi-Leigh Nel-Peters relinquished her crown to Catriona in Thailand. Catriona is the fourth Filipina to be hailed as Miss Universe queen after Pia Wurtzbach (2015), Gloria Diaz (1969) and Margarita Moran (1973).

Miss Venezuela Sthefany Gutiérrez finished as 2nd runner-up, while Miss South Africa

Tamaryn Green, 1st runner-up.

Catriona gracefully took the stage in her final walk clad in a red evening gown designed by Mak Tumang who also designed her dress in the preliminary.

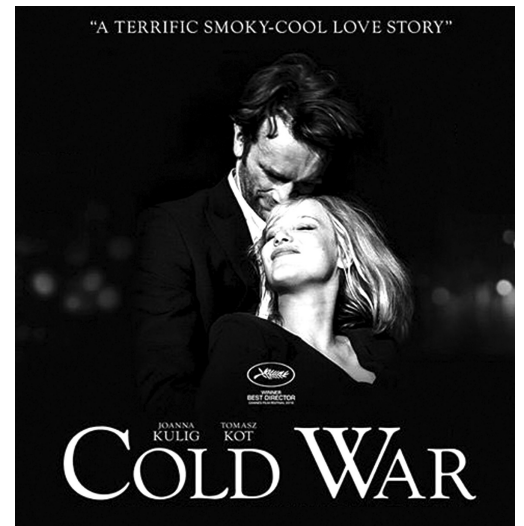
In her final word, Catriona was asked what the most important lesson she’s learned in her life. Cat answered, “I work a lot in the slums of Tondo, Manila and the life there is very... poor and it’s very sad. And I’ve always taught myself to look for the beauty in it. To look in the beauty in the faces of the chil-

dren and to be grateful. And I would bring this aspect as a Miss Universe to see situations with a silver lining and to assess where I could give something, where I could provide something as a spokesperson and this I think, if I could teach people to be grateful, we could have an amazing world where negativity could not grow and foster and children could have a smile on their faces.”

Before joining Miss Universe, Cat tried her luck in the 2016 Miss World competition, where she finished in the Top 5.

## Winners at EFAs

*Cold War* is the big winner at 2018 European Film Awards, held in Seville



*Cold War* was the big winner at the European Film Awards, picking up the prizes for Best European Film, Actress (Joanna Kulig), Director, and Screenwriter (both Pawel Pawlikowski). Best actor went to Marcello Fonte of *Dogman*, while Armando Iannucci’s *The Death of Stalin* was named Best

Director laurels from Cannes. *Cold War* is a black-and-white drama telling an impossible love story between a singer and a pianist, set in the 1950s in Poland, Berlin, Yugoslavia and Paris. *Cold War* also led all films with five nominations, continuing a strong year for the black-and-white drama — Pawlikowski, whose *Ida* won the Foreign-Language Oscar, also took home Best Director laurels from Cannes.

Ali Abbasi’s *Border* and Alice Rohrwacher’s *Happy as Lazzaro* left the ceremony empty-handed despite picking up four nominations apiece.



# Diversity of views enriches perception

Exhibition of Japanese and European engravings at National Art Museum of Belarus explores fairy-tale Yamato country

By Veniamin Mikheev

The *Yamato Country in Japanese and European Engravings of the 17th-19th Century* exhibition, from the private collection of Victor Lukyanov, comprises two sections. The first features around twenty traditional Japanese engravings from the second half of the 19th century — reflecting the diversity of Ukiyo-e art. The second is composed of works by European masters, showing their perceptions of oriental culture.

Ukiyo-e (literally translated as ‘pictures of the floating world’) was a trend in Japanese pictorial and graphic art during the Edo epoch. Showing scenes from the everyday life of the urban class, Ukiyo-e is the youngest school of classical Japanese art, filled with philosophical contemplation and emotional admiration for the beauty of this world.

The event is displaying engravings from the late Edo epoch and the early Meiji epoch — a time of cardinal reform and change. On show are traditional Ukiyo-e genres: *bijin-ga* (pictures with beauties) by Mosai Nagashima, Mizuno Toshikata, and Toyohara Kunichika; *musha-e* (warrior pictures) by Watanabe Nobukazu; landscapes by Ando Hiroshige; and scenes from Kabuki Theatre performances, by Toyohara Kunichika.

The organisers hope to raise awareness of Japanese pictorial art and its artistic traditions, of which Japan is rightly proud. Unsurprisingly, numbers of visitors to the exhibition have been buoyant. The show actually coincides with the *Japanese Autumn in Belarus* event, organised by the Japanese Embassy to Belarus and the Japanese Foundation.

The National Art Museum has an exhibition of Japanese graphic art from the 1970s also on show, allowing visitors to compare modern Japanese art with traditional.

The *Yamato Country in Japanese and European Engravings of the 17th-19th Century* exhibition allows us to compare Japanese painters’ interpretations with those of Europeans. The latter provides a documentary



Bright drawings of life from nature

the exhibition in Minsk, offering another realistic depiction of Japanese life from that period.

Edo coincided with the rule of the Tokugawa dynasty, from 1603 until 1868, and the commencement of the Meiji period, when Japan came out of self-isolation. The emperor began a process of transformation and rapprochement with the West and European technical innovations began to appear in Japan. The Japanese even began wearing European clothes and its artists began borrowing from European pictorial art traditions. Meanwhile, Japanese art began influencing European artists. The Meiji period lasted until 1912, bringing much inter-penetration and mutual influence of cultures.

Speaking about what attracts him to Japanese engravings from the late 19th century, collector Victor Lukyanov tells us, “This period was very interesting in the history of Japan, as reflected in the work of painters. Engravings became multi-coloured and gave a fuller representation of the country’s everyday life. The exhibition showcases almost all the traditional genres of Ukiyo-e: pictures with beauties are called *bijin-ga*, while those depicting warriors are *musha-e*, landscapes are *fukeiga*, and portraits of popular actors are *yakusha-e*.”

age an optimistic outlook. One such work is on show in Minsk.

**What encouraged you to start collecting Japanese engravings?**

Alongside working for a company with Japanese roots, I visited Japan in 2014, for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Iosif Goshkevich, our countryman, born in the Rechitsa District.

He was unique person with wide knowledge of theology, natural sciences and linguistics and wrote the first Japanese-Russian dictionary, compiled with the help of Japanese Tachibana Kosai.

Goshkevich was the first Consul of the Russian Empire in Japan, launching the mission for Russia. The anniversary of his birth is included on UNESCO’s Memorable Dates Calendar, and is widely celebrated in Japan. This has facilitated the expansion of knowledge among the Japanese about our countryman who, undoubtedly, deserves respect.

After my trip to Japan, I became deeply interested in Japanese culture, which is so very diverse, combining various trends, which harmoniously co-exist. In Japan, almost everything is infused with love for nature and contemplation of natural phenomena. Hanami, for example, is the act of admiring cherry trees blossom. It’s a common depiction in Japanese engravings.

The National Art Museum lacks its own collection of Japanese engravings but, after the closing of the current event, Victor Lukyanov is donating an exhibit to the museum, in honour of the forthcoming jubilee, celebrated next year.



CULTURE



By Tatiana Orlova

Choreographer Valentin Yelizariiev is a People's Artist of the USSR and a People's Artist of Belarus, and is an academician of two prestigious academies. He's a laureate of the State Award, and a member of the Council of Europe for Culture, having staged ballets abroad. Despite his busy schedule, he's been a juror for international competitions and still trains tomorrow's ballet dancers, at the Belarusian State Academy of Music.

When he headed the Opera and Ballet Theatre, he had less free time but now has more opportunity to relax. However, he's actually quite a private person, so rarely gives interviews, and his answers tend to be brief at press conferences. Nevertheless, he recently worked with Doctor of Art History Yulia Churko to publish the book *Ballet is Art of Thought*, and here chats with us.

### Playing field

Aristotle said, "Dance embodies invisible thought." Ballet has many rivals for our attention: from the computer to sports. Dance isn't among most people's foremost interests, despite it addressing all manner of human themes. A particular English choreographer agrees with Aristotle, saying, "We are absolutely right when we consider not only our life, but the whole Universe as a dance." I'm convinced that ballet combines with philosophy. The British media once wrote: 'Mr. Yelizariiev's troupe didn't disappoint, following the famous Leningrad school, whose traditions go back to the great years of the 19th century Russian ballet. The Belarusians' repertoire is charming, demonstrating that only devotional service to real art brings success. Mr. Yelizariiev's creativity is not tied to the past or to stereotypes. He creates works consistent with modern times and his performances are always original and brilliant'.

### About Maya Plisetskaya

The first performance choreographed by Yelizariiev as a young man, newly graduated from the conservatory, was *Carmen Suite*, as selected by the theatre. Yelizariiev's choreography has always been alternative and his *Carmen* was no exception, becoming a transcultural masterpiece in the vein of Faust, Don Juan, and Hamlet. The lead role was played magically by Maya Plisetskaya, whose performance was so captivating that academician Piotr Kapitsa said that, in the Middle Ages, she would have been burnt at the stake! It was considered to be one of best performances of her entire career. The world-famous ballerina later advised young Anastasia Volochkova, also playing Carmen, to raise her leg 'like a gun' but, of course, it would have been impossible for Anastasia to reproduce Ms. Plisetskaya's style, whose rendition was used as a model for subsequent interpretations in various art forms and, above all, in choreography. The ballerina then invited



# Yelizariiev's magical firebird

## Ballet, three muses and a prima tutu



Valentin Yelizariiev



Yelizariiev to create choreography for a documentary based on Turgenev's *Spring Torrents*.

### World created by Yelizariiev

The *Creation of the World* appeared in 1976 and remained for some time in the repertoire. In interviews with Belarusian journalists, famous ballet masters called it 'an event in the cultural life of all Europe'.

In fact, this is my favourite ballet, evoking feelings that the ancient Greeks called catharsis. The work moves towards a sense of frightening catastrophe, taking

on a tragic tone in the second half, as if warning us of danger. Nostradamus gave his predictions for the end of the fourth millennium, so we hope we can sleep in peace, but the ballet's power cannot be ignored.

It's been said that, rehearsing the first half, the artistes were not originally told how the play would finish. The ballet is remarkable in featuring an 'everyman' in Adam, rather than an aristocrat, as so many ballets do. Moreover, we truly feel that we understand his thoughts and motivations, all through the expres-

sion of dance. While there is a train of thought that civilisation is growing 'more stupid' (scientists exploring the brains of several pharaoh dynasties believe brain capacity gradually decreased by almost 14 percent) we see Adam growing in wisdom.

### Prima tutu

There was once a popular brand of cigarettes called 'Prima' but the word is associated with ballet, of course. Ballet tells of love and the defiance of constraint. It tends to be extremely sensual, while showing that a life

## DIRECT SPEECH

"Models are good but muses are better. I have three: my wife, daughter and... choreography. Women in ballet work so very hard."

of labour leaves not enough time for love and a full sexual life.

I have three muses: my wife, daughter and... choreography. Woman engenders all life, and the theme of love for her is key in my ballets. Both weak and strong, defenceless or armed to the teeth, but always beautiful, women rightfully reign on the choreographic scene. Of course, I love to watch ballerinas perform. My female characters (Carmen, Eve, Nele, Phrygia, Juliet, and Rogneda) are worthy of worship.

Women work hard in ballet and I love them, with respect and regret. Ballet is very hard on the feet, since only a thin wedge at the point of satin slippers protects dancers' toes. They spend hours wearing those ballet shoes, and it takes its toll.

**You've never been fascinated by light topics. Why is that?**

Because there are so many serious ones to explore.



# Game soothes the soul

BATE among those providing main sporting achievements of year

By Alexey Khvostov

Having confidently defeated Greek PAOK (whose budget is ten times more than the Borisov team) in an away match, our champion squad has ended the season to victorious fanfare. With a well-deserved holiday now scheduled, the team will meet again in 2019 to prepare for Europa League play-off matches, with the first held on February 14th.

For BATE, this will be the third attempt at seizing acclaim in the Europa League. Previous 'campaigns' ended ingloriously, although BATE played well. In February 2011, they drew against French PSG at home, in the freezing cold — 2:2. Then drew again in the away match — 0:0. However, due to France scoring in their away matches, their team was chosen to go through to the next round, rather than BATE. In February 2013, BATE drew against Fenerbahçe, at home — 0:0, and lost 0:1 in the away match.

The end of the season was breathtaking for BATE, with head coach Alexey Baga pushing his players to take a different approach, since there was nothing to lose. This resulted in some truly amazing moments of fast sprinting, as if the devil was behind them! Playing Chelsea in Borisov, they gave them plenty of surprises, making fans recall the days of when the team was coached by Victor Goncharenko (now with CSKA, and pitting his wits against such teams as Real). Alexey Baga is his worthy successor: the coach has charisma, knowledge and subtle understanding of the game, though he lacks the same experience as Goncharenko.

PAOK was 'punished' by BATE. The Belarusian players failed to forgive the Greeks resentment and shameful defeat at home — 1:4; as a result, BATE pulled off almost the same score in the away match, despite having Nikolay Signevich sent off. This year, he's shown growing confidence in his abilities

and managed to break a string of bad luck, scoring regularly, to claim vital goals. The team even entrusted him with the penalty earned by Igor Stasevich, showing their belief that Nikolay would do what was needed.

In the match against PAOK, BATE appeared truly confident. Leaving Mikhail Gordeichuk and Alexander Hleb in reserve, the coaching staff prepared excellent tactical manoeuvres. If PAOK from the first minutes had went to attack the gates of Borisov squad, forcing them to fight back furiously, then the appearance of these two guys in the middle of the second half would have been probably strategic, bringing fresh legs and amazing passing skills. However, the match was developing differently but BATE proved to be ready for that.

Following a rest over the festive period, our footballers will return to the pitch in February and we're certain that they'll bring excitement to the winter days, for which we are grateful.



BATE ends season with beautiful and important victory

## BATE to face Arsenal

**BATE Borisov, in the 1/16 finals of the Europa League, are to meet London Arsenal, following a draw at UEFA Headquarters in Swiss Nyon**

Alexey Baga's squad will play its first match, at home, on February 14th, and a return away match on February 20th in the British capital, hoping to reach the 1/8 finals.

### The remaining pairs of the Europa League 1/16 finals:

Viktoria (Czech Plzeň)	—	Dinamo (Croatian Zagreb)
Brugge (Belgium)	—	Red Bull Salzburg (Austria)
Rapid (Austrian Vienna)	—	Inter (Italian Milan)
Slavia (Czech Prague)	—	Genk (Belgium)
Krasnodar (Russia)	—	Bayer (German Leverkusen)
Zurich (Switzerland)	—	Napoli (Italy)
Malmö (Sweden)	—	Chelsea (British London)
Shakhtar (Ukrainian Donetsk)	—	Eintracht (German Frankfurt)
Celtic (Scottish Glasgow)	—	Valencia (Spain)
Rennes (France)	—	Real Betis (Spanish Seville)
Olympiakos (Greek Piraeus)	—	Dynamo (Ukrainian Kiev)
Lazio (Italian Rome)	—	Sevilla (Spain)
Fenerbahçe (Turkish Istanbul)	—	Zenit (Russian St. Petersburg)
Sporting (Portuguese Lisbon)	—	Villarreal (Spain)
Galatasaray (Turkish Istanbul)	—	Benfica (Portuguese Lisbon)

SPORT



Arina Sobolenko — Best Tennis Player of the Year

## The best in various nominations named

By Svetlana Savelieva

### Republican Centre for Olympic Tennis Training sums up results of 2018

20-year-old Arina Sobolenko has been named the 'Best Tennis Player of the Year'. She started the season in 78th position but has soared to 13th place. In the autumn, Arina jumped to a record 11th in the world rankings, having won debut titles at WTA tournaments: in August, in New Haven, and in Wuhan in September. The WTA are now calling Belarus' number one seed 'Newcomer of the Year'.

Interestingly, Arina's coach Dmitry Tursunov was awarded the title of 'Trainer of the Year'.

Ilya Ivashko has been named 'Best Tennis Player of Belarus' for 2018, having also made significant progress in world rankings, climbing from 230th to 92nd place. Ivashko is the third Belarusian tennis player in history and the first in eleven years to break into the top 100 ATP ratings. Our last representative in the top 100 — Max Mirnyi — left the list in October 2007. In 2018, Ilya reached the semi-final of the ATP tournament in Marseille and the 1/8 final of the Masters in Toronto.

Belarusian tennis legend Max Mirnyi, aged 41, has retired this year and won awards 'For Contribution to Tennis Development' and 'Sports Longevity'.

## Everything according to plan

By Denis Komarov

**Representatives of Russian media visit sports facilities for 2nd European Games, with journalists hearing about major facilities designated for forthcoming competitions in June 2019: Minsk-Arena and Dinamo Stadium**

The Sports and Tourism Minister of Belarus, Sergey Kovalchuk, attended the event with the Director of the 2nd European Games Directorate 2019 Foundation, Georgy Katulin.

Answering Russian journalists on Belarus' goal in organising the 2nd European Games, Mr. Kovalchuk underlined the country's desire to show our country to best advantage. He explained, "Minsk has already hosted several large international events but the forthcoming Games offer a chance for all unfamiliar with our country to learn more."

Mr. Kovalchuk notes that most visitors to the 2014 IIHF World Championships were from Russia, and a similar inflow is expected in 2019.

As to the number of medals Belarusian athletes are aiming for, he stressed that it's hoped

they'll do as well as they did at the 1st European Games in Baku, when we earned forty-three medals. "The Belarusian team pins special hopes on athletes in martial arts, rhythmic gymnastics, beach football and 3x3 basketball," noted Mr. Kovalchuk.

The Director of the Foundation, Georgy Katulin, told journalists that accommodation is being extended, since four thousand athletes will be taking part. "Also, there will be a dedicated polyclinic and an extended public transport timetable, to facilitate movement around the city," he noted. Electric transport is being launched more widely and there will be various trained specialists on hand, boasting experience of organising the Olympiad in Sochi and the 1st European Games in Baku.



The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
December 20  
2018

11





New Year illuminations lit in Minsk

## Mood of the week

### EXHIBITIONS

#### NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street  
Until 30<sup>th</sup> December. *Universe of Yezep Drozdovich* Until 7<sup>th</sup> January. *Aleksander Szturman (1869–1944). Traveling Artist* Until 12<sup>th</sup> January. *Faithful to Belarus* Until 13<sup>th</sup> January. *Latvia is 100: History, Art, Traditions* Until 13<sup>th</sup> January. *Naked Feelings. Sacred Meaning* Until 3<sup>rd</sup> February. *Contemporaries from 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Centenary of Belarusian Portrait* Until 1<sup>st</sup> March. *Collection of Singer Lidia Ruslanova*

#### NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street  
Until 3<sup>rd</sup> January. *Savva Sivko (1888-1978): Photographer of Lyubcha District. Dedication to His 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday* Until 8<sup>th</sup> January. *Art of Chocolate*

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 15<sup>th</sup> January. *Pencil and Brush* Until 20<sup>th</sup> January. *ESTAMP* Until 31<sup>st</sup> January. *Maly Trostenets: exhibition-chronicles of large-scale massacre* Until 1<sup>st</sup> February. *Shop with Cites* Until 7<sup>th</sup> April. *Fantasy Land*

#### VANKOVICH'S HOUSE

33a Internatsionalnaya Street  
Until 23<sup>rd</sup> January. *Grass*

#### GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM

8 Pobediteley Avenue  
Until 27<sup>th</sup>. January. *We Are Coming To You, Belarus*

#### OUTLETO TRADING CENTRE

44 Zhukov Avenue  
Until 1st January. *Tropics* exhibition of exotic animals Until 10th January. Exhibition of Aquarium Fish: *Aquaforum-2018*

#### MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square  
Until 13<sup>th</sup> January. *Pharmacy in Old Mansion: History of 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century Pharmacy in Minsk*

#### LIBRA

37 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 31<sup>st</sup> January. *Somewhere to the West of Minsk: Daily Life of Western Belarus*

#### GALLERIA MINSK

9 Pobediteley Avenue  
Until 13<sup>th</sup> January. *Museum of Fir-Tree Toys*

#### NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

3 Nekrasov Street  
Until 19<sup>th</sup> January. Photo-project: *When Fir-Trees Were Tall* Until 26<sup>th</sup> January. *Winter Mood*

### THEATRES

#### BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square  
20.12. *Salomé* 21.12. *Gala-concert of World Opera Stars* 22.12. *Swan Lake* 26-31.12. *Gala-concert of Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus Stars* 28-30.12. *The Nutcracker, or Another Christmas Story*

#### THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue  
20.12. *Wolves and Sheep* 23-25.12. *The Nutcracker* 14.12. *Pygmalion* 27.12. *Robbery at Midnight* 28 and 29.12. *Mixed Feelings*

#### YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street  
22.12. *Jeweller's Jubilee* 23.12. *Tolerance* 26.12. *Kolyady Night* 27.12. *Two Souls* 28.12. *Pinsk Gentry* 29.12. *School of Tax-Payers* 30.12. *Local Cabaret*

#### BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street  
26-30.12. *New Year Travel to Paris*

#### YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street  
20.12. *Night on the Eve of Christmas* 21.12. *Stars on Roof* 26 and 27.12. *Until New Year Remain...* 30.12. *How Letter Y Saves Kolyady*

#### MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street  
20.12. *OblomOFF* 21.12. *Fourth Planet* 22.12. *Viva Commedia!* 23.12. *Ideal Husband* 26.12. *Inn-Keeper / He and She* 27.12. *Lady for a Day* 28.12. *How to Become Rich* 29.12. *Taming of the Shrew* 30.12. *Dangerous Liaisons*

#### BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE

3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street  
27-30.12. *Snow Queen*

#### MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street  
20.12. *Blue Cameo* 22.12. *Cleopatra* 23.12. *Hello, I'm Charlie's Aunt* 28.12. *Wedding in Malinovka* 29.12. *Thousand and One Night* 30.12. *The Bat* 31.12. *New Year in Blue Light Style*

#### MODERN ART THEATRE

5 Oktyabrskaya Street  
25.12. *House Upside Down* 27 and 31.12. *Oscar* 28.12. *House Upside Down 2*

#### CHAMBER DRAMA THEATRE

5 Frunze Street  
21.12. *Man as a Present* 24.12. *Corporate Night* 27-29.12. *Her New Year Wish*