

# Presidents discussed prospects for integration



Alexander Lukashenko joins CIS Council of Heads of State and Supreme Eurasian Economic Council session in Sochi

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Arina Sobolenko and Maria Sharapova with deserved trophies of the tournament

## Arina Sobolenko in worthy company of Maria Sharapova

Belarusian tennis player reaches the finals of the tennis tournament in Chinese Tianjin, with a prize pool of \$426,000, where she lost to Maria Sharapova after a tough struggle

Arina reached the finals of the WTA tournament after claiming four victories. The decisive match against former world No. 1 Sharapova began well for Arina, who took a lead of 4:1. However, Sharapova began to play harder, equalising the score and

seizing the first set — 7:5. Arina began the second set brilliantly — 5:1 — but the experienced Russian tennis player battled on and, as in the first game, turned the tide to leave the score at 6:5. Sobolenko managed to bring the game into a tie-break, where

Sharapova won 10:8. The match lasted 2 hours 7 minutes, with Maria Sharapova winning her first title after returning to the court following doping disqualification. She now boasts thirty-six victorious WTA tournaments.

Despite her defeat in the finals of the tournament in Tianjin, Arina Sobolenko, aged 19, has entered the top 100 for the first time, being now ranked 76th by the Women's Tennis Association: her greatest achievement to date.





Oktay Asadov

## Parliamentary dimension truly requires big efforts

Belarus is eager to strengthen the parliamentary dimension of the CIS and other integration structures, notes Alexander Lukashenko, meeting the Chairman of the National Assembly of Azerbaijan, Oktay Asadov

By Alexey Fedosov

Alexander Lukashenko notes that the media tend to interpret his statements regarding the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly in various ways. He is adamant that the structure must be strengthened, and asserts that 'we know how to do so'.

Mr. Lukashenko believes that the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly should have control over adopted decisions of heads of state and heads of governments, saying, "We must gain closer contact with departments, in this

particular case with the CIS."

The Head of State remarked that he's familiar with the work of MPs. "I'm aware of the capabilities of parliaments. Yes, many people will say that parliaments in Belarus and Azerbaijan don't play as big a role as parliaments do in the West. This is good. Being a legislative branch of power, parliament has its functions and obligations. It's the supreme law-making body, so it should make laws to regulate society. It should also solve other issues, in accordance with the Constitution," stressed the President of Belarus.

Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that Belarus and Azerbaijan are co-operating in various fields and maintain warm relations. "We trust each other absolutely. We've set up joint ventures and trade with third countries. We're branching out into markets in the south and the east, together with you. We'll pursue the same policy regarding economics. Our trade is on the rise, as is our military-technical collaboration. It's increasingly vibrant. We don't conceal it from anyone," noted the President of Belarus.

The Head of State recalled

that, during the CIS Summit in Sochi, he had the opportunity to talk to Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev, in various formats, and spent much time discussing their relationship. "You may be surprised: together with the President of Armenia, the three of us shared many jokes. It's common practice, helping solve various problems," explained Mr. Lukashenko.

The President remarked that the sides are building relations taking into account the interests of Belarusian and Azerbaijani people and in order to promote

their wellbeing. "You can count on us in this regard. You aren't strangers to us; you're our brothers. We used to live in one country. It doesn't matter that you're Muslims and we're Christians," stressed Mr. Lukashenko.

The Head of State asked the Speaker to convey warm words to the President of Azerbaijan for co-operation on behalf of Belarus. "We'll follow the course that we've determined. I'm convinced that our MPs will find their place in the implementation of this roadmap," added Mr. Lukashenko.



Carriages able to seat 290, with 23 of these being of first class

## Double-deck trains on rails

By Yulia Matuzova

**Double-decker arrives in Minsk, to cover route to and from Vilnius, launching in December**

The train has made a test trip and, from December 10th, will run regularly between the capitals of our two countries. The Lithuanian Railways train was manufactured by Czech Skoda Vagonka and can travel at up to 120kmh. Its three carriages can seat 290 passengers, with twenty-three in first class. Paulius Grubinskas, Deputy Head of the Representative Office of Lithuanian Railways in Belarus, notes that there are special places for oversized luggage, bikes and

prams and that passengers can charge their laptop and other gadgets, and access Wi-Fi. Two carriages are equipped with a mobile platform and there are places for wheelchair fixation, while major information inside carriages is also presented in Braille.

From December 10th, the double-deckers will be running from Lithuania, replacing single-deck trains, while Stadler trains with five carriages will run from Belarus. Prices will remain unchanged for second class travel, while those wishing to travel in first class will pay 29 Euros. However, these twenty-three seats are extremely comfortable and passengers will be offered meals.

## Exact calculations

Preparation for the 2019 population census is in full swing, with a pilot census held in Molodechno District as a general rehearsal for the event, influencing the technology as well as the number and quality of questions

By Oleg Bogomazov

Inna Medvedeva, Chair of the National Statistical Committee explains that Molodechno District was chosen because it represents a typical area of the country, "We can conduct the census of both the urban and rural population, as well as those who are currently in specialised institutions, enabling us to work out the format of the census form and the technology for information collection."

The innovations of the 2019 census include complete lack of paper document collection, the application of PC tablets for automation of data input and connection of a controlled network system. This will ensure high quality in the completed census forms. The Head of the National Statistical Committee of Belarus reminded us that the President had set out the task of maximising the use of existing records during the population census.

"Information from the population register, the Social Protection Fund and other records available in the country will be download into the census forms, reducing the time needed to complete them," explained Ms. Medvedeva.

Another innovation will be a



Rehearsal of population census in a particular area

questionnaire covering agriculture. According to Ms. Medvedeva, agricultural census have been conducted previously.

"The data will enable the National Statistical Committee to improve the assessment of gross agricultural output. The questions

suggested are very easy: regarding the land used for agricultural crops, the presence of cattle, brushwood, etc. The data will be used only for calculating statistical figures. No tax control measures will be made using the results of the census," she added.



# Presidents discussed prospects for integration. The conversation was sometimes rather critical upon the initiative of the President of Belarus



Alexander Lukashenko, Vladimir Putin and Nursultan Nazarbayev — participants of the meeting in Sochi

By Vasily Kharitonov

At the CIS Summit, the President underlined that the Commonwealth of Independent States needs concrete action, primarily in the economic sphere. “We’ve a good foundation to make it happen, having a free trade zone agreement. In line with the document, enabling equal terms of access to government procurement contracts is one of the next steps. Last year, five countries signed a protocol on rules and procedures regulating government procurement contracts. Work is currently underway to implement the document. However, the heads of state of Kazakhstan, Moldova, and Ukraine are yet to sign this document. It means that, once again, we’ll face exemptions,” stated Mr. Lukashenko.

The President raised another important issue: promoting free trade in services. “Everyone knows perfectly well that work on the relevant agreement is in progress. Experts get together, take the old text,

## WORD-FOR-WORD

Alexander LUKASHENKO, the President of Belarus:

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shuffle the paragraphs, and forward the document for consideration. The situation is repeated two or three months later. Things have been going on like that for years. The project has no co-ordinator, while the CIS Executive Committee isn’t up to the task,” stressed Mr. Lukashenko.

The Head of State urged participants of the session to pay close attention to these problems, since trade and economics represent

the foundation of all relations.

Mr. Lukashenko also tackled the activity of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, noting its lack of efficiency. “Maybe, we should give up on this structure, if it doesn’t work. Although we suggested giving it concrete powers and passed certain model laws, none of them, for example, in Belarus, have formed the basis of national legislation. It has

never happened,” accentuated the President of Belarus. He believes that these issues should be tackled thoroughly, lamenting that even the most urgent issues fail to be discussed at presidential level.

During the session the CIS Heads of State discussed in detail the further development of collaboration, in political, economic, cultural-humanitarian and other key avenues. The presidents adopted a state-



● The CIS Council of Heads of State has decided to establish a joint aerospace defence system by 2025. Work will follow major guidelines approved by the presidents, adjusting the joint CIS air defence system to tasks of aerospace defence.

● The CIS Heads of State have adopted a statement to support the institute of family and traditional family values. The presidents stressed the necessity of working together to settle problems connected with violation of children’s rights, as well as relating to crimes against children. The document states support from the international community in promoting gender equality and in observing a balance between work and family.



● Major guidelines for the implementation of the EAEU digital agenda until 2025 have been approved. The appendix of the document specifies, in particular, digital traceability in the movement of goods and services, digital trade, transport corridors and industrial co-operation.

● The CIS Heads of State have approved the budget for the Eurasian Economic Union for 2018, exceeding 8.1 billion Russian Roubles. More than 7.7 billion Russian Roubles are allocated to cover the expenses of the Eurasian Economic Commission, with around 362 million Russian Roubles given to the EAEU Court. Belarus is contributing almost 370 million Russian Roubles.

ment in support of the institution of family and traditional family values, alongside conventions on co-operation in the sphere of research and peaceful use of space. In the humanitarian area, decisions were made to declare 2019 as the Year of Books in the CIS. Meanwhile, 2020 will be the Year of the 75th Anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. Decisions were also adopted regarding the implementation of the *Cultural Capitals of the CIS* inter-state programme: in Armenia for 2018, in Belarus for 2019 and in Kazakhstan for 2020.

As ever, security issues, including counter-acting new challenges and threats, in the region and

worldwide, was high on the agenda. The leaders discussed ways to improve the work of the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly, helping it adjust to modern realities. A range of organisational issues were under consideration, with various documents signed.

The session of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council tackled issues in the spheres of informatisation, customs regulation, competition, natural monopolies and industrial co-operation.

One of the key topics was the discussion of the EAEU digital agenda until 2025. The Heads of State discussed major areas of the EAEU’s international activity, including harmonisation of legislation in the sphere of regulating natural monopolies. Interaction was also discussed for the use of satellite data, providing space and geo-information services from remote Earth sensing. After the session, a package of documents was signed, strengthening interaction in various directions.

## ON THE SIDELINES OF THE SUMMIT

Alexander Lukashenko met with the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in Sochi. The Head of State noted Belarus’ intention to advance relations with Uzbekistan across all areas, saying, “You can rest assured that we’ll act fast. As fast as partners in Uzbekistan can keep up with us.” Shavkat Mirziyoyev noted his country’s desire to open an embassy in Belarus, to support bilateral co-operation, and invited Mr. Lukashenko to pay an official visit to Uzbekistan in 2018.



Shavkat Mirziyoyev



## New Rouble is better than two old ones

Last July, Belarusians stopped being ‘millionaires’, with four zeroes disappearing from national currency banknotes. Our *MT* reporter considers the advantages and disadvantages brought by this event.

By Anna Kurak

### Save your money

“Look for coins, I don’t have any change,” declares the assistant in a Minsk department store, refusing to take a paper banknote from me. Then she explains, “Everyone comes to the shop with paper money. They say it’s uncomfortable carrying coins. People bought money boxes and are now saving the coins.”

It’s no surprise, since last July the wallets of Belarusians (the first after the collapse of the USSR) began to literally ring and become much heavier. There have been no coins in the country since 1992. It appears that Belarusians prefer the rustle of paper banknotes to the heavy metal — a habit developed over decades. They now leave their coins at home, while the shelves of souvenir shops are full of money boxes in the shape of pigs, frogs and cats...

“Before denomination, money boxes were not sold at all but now they are one of the most popular goods on sale. People are not only buying them as presents for children. Adults are also purchasing them with nostalgia for their childhood,” notes Olga Spakhich, a seller in the souvenir pavilion.

### When a minus becomes a plus

Many Belarusians were afraid that, after denomination, prices in the country would increase sharply, while the move to a new monetary dimension would only disguise the increase temporarily. So even six months later, people were still adding four zeroes to the new sums in their heads. However, accord-

ing to the official statistics, in 2016, inflation didn’t even reach its expected level: with a forecast of 12 percent, inflation stood at 11.8. It’s easier to see real growth comparing the price of public transport for instance. Over the year, the price has increased by only

year (around 1.9-2 Belarusian Roubles per Dollar). There are no longer queues at currency exchange offices and no one monitors the exchange rate as attentively as they did previously.

Denomination has brought one more advantage which may seem un-

counterfeit against eight million original banknotes). This is relatively little. In international practice, there is alarm when there are more than three hundred counterfeit banknotes for each million originals. The new money has confirmed its reliability. However, US Dollars, Euros and Russian Roubles are more often counterfeited in the country.

Financiers call such a phenomenon the ‘ef-

fect of low numbers’. It happens when a person doesn’t attach importance to small sums and doesn’t understand their real purchasing value. It’s not yet clear whether this is a good or bad thing.

They often try to misrepresent foreign currency units as Belarusian ones. They use Kazakh Tenge, Ukrainians Hryvnia, etc. and these often find their way to the wallets of the unscrupulous. At the end of the previous year, a woman in the Gomel Region managed to pay in a shop with a souvenir Russian 100-Rouble banknote, released by the Olympic Games in Sochi.

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• The new Belarusian money isn’t in fact very new. It was manufactured in 2008. While it was lying in storage it slightly acidified and became darker. This is quite natural. They aren’t going to print or mint any new money at the present but the issue will be reconsidered in a couple of years.

• Faulty money can sometimes cause embarrassment. People may have coins with defects of form and colour or banknotes which have only part of the drawing. Moreover, bank systems don’t recognise these as fakes and they are considered ‘normal’ from the point of view of authenticity. Such money with a ‘twist’ arouses special interest amongst collectors, so if you manage to find a faulty banknote, don’t be in a hurry to exchange it for a new one. It might make you a true fortune one day.

noticeable to an ordinary person. The total number of banknotes in circulation has reduced around 5-fold. The National Bank explains, “The expenses of banks and enterprises for the service of cash (encashment, transportation, the reduction of number of loads for ATMs, etc.) have also proportionally fallen 5-fold. State expenditure on cash circulation has also reduced, which was one of the main goals of denomination.”

### Five facts about BYN

• Since January 1st, 2017, residents of Belarus have completely moved to the new money. They have already got rid of around 97 percent of banknotes of the older (2000) series. The old banknotes are destroyed in a special way: they are crushed, pressed and sent to a secret storage facility. Old banknotes can’t be burnt, since they are made of paper which produce poisonous and toxic substances during burning.

• Over one year only 24 counterfeit banknotes of the national currency have been revealed in Belarus (i.e. one

5-10 percent depending on the type of transport (bus, metro or mini-bus), showing no great rise in prices.

The cutting of zeroes has brought a range of positive outcomes. The first is that it has become easier to calculate money. Of course, having millions in one’s pocket feels great but it was not efficient to use them for payment. Moreover, if an average budget for a family included a six or seven-digit number, imagine what the state budget looked like. Belarusian money caused bewilderment amongst foreigners.

After denomination, the exchange rate of the Belarusian Rouble has stabilised, though some experts forecast the reverse. The price of the US Dollar hasn’t changed in over a

### Reverse side of the coin

The cutting of four zeroes has considerably changed the attitude of Belarusians towards money. Research has showed that yesterday’s ‘millionaires’ are now happy to dismiss



## Encrypted money

By Vladislav Kuletsky

**Belarusian developers launch new cryptocurrency — Taler (TLR), to conduct online financial transactions, though legislation is still required to govern this sphere**

Taler, like other cryptocurrencies, uses Blockchain technology. The algorithm according to which new money is ‘released’ is borrowed from bitcoin. According to an anonymous source, the integrity of the system is ensured by the ‘computer-integrated capacities of Taler users’. The total emission of coins is restricted to 23,333,333.

According to its developers, the first transactions via crypto-Taler took place on September 13th and its wider introduction ‘will help stabilise the financial system and reduce the level of inflation’.

Its developers are keen to see relevant legislation in place, so are postponing their official presentation until the President’s ‘HTP 2.0’ decree appears.

If everything goes to plan, the creators of the cryptocurrency would like to see Taler’s exchange rate linked to the world currency market. Of course, if there will be people who would buy and sell money using ordinary money.

The developers assert, “We’re not a financial pyramid and earning money on Taler isn’t our goal or priority. We’re not ‘owners’ of currency. After its launch, it will lead its own, absolutely independent, life.”

The creators are keen to see the system come into wide usage, and are ready for co-operation with the state. “We plan to officially and gratuitously donate a considerable sum of Talers to the National Bank, enabling it to have leverage on the exchange rate via its interventions, if the regulator is interested. However, it would be nice if our country would acquire its own cryptocurrency reserves.”

The National Bank of Belarus is yet to comment.





## Innovations and developments demonstrated at *Energy Expo*

Minsk hosts *Energy Expo* exhibition of technology and equipment as part of 22nd Belarusian Energy and Ecology Forum — featuring an electric car, energy-saving plants and LED technology

By Victor Kharkov

Developments in the spheres of energy, ecology, energy saving and electrical engineering have been presented by Belarusian and foreign producers, including energy-saving devices and those for air purification, as well as electric cars.

What have Belarusian developers been achieving in the spheres of energy and ecology? The major exhibit was an experimental model of a Belarusian electric car. This environmentally-friendly vehicle — silent, and without air pollution — is to launch into production in Belarus in 2018. Electric buses are already running on Minsk streets, and there are plans for an electric bike, scooter



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At *Energy Expo* exhibition of technology and equipment

and gyro-scooter, helping make our cities cleaner and quieter. On show, also, was a model of a mobile vacuum cleaner, able to be carried into courtyards, and designed to work under any weather conditions. A prototype is to be presented later this year.

The National Academy of Sciences has been exploring LED technology to grow various crops,

in greenhouses, using optimal lighting regimes for each plant, to aid growth. The exhibition also presented a model of a biogas complex to produce electricity, for use by agricultural enterprises, as well as housing and communal organisations.

The Institute of Power Engineering, of the Academy of Sciences, demonstrated its charcoal-production device (perfect for the pharma-

ceutical, metallurgy, food and chemical industries). Using wood waste, it is environmentally-friendly and is able to create charcoal quickly.

Oil-absorbing materials based on peat were on display, designed to collect oil spilled on any surface and 'hold it', to eliminate emergency spills on water, soil, industrial sites and equipment. Also demonstrated were absorbents for wastewater

treatment, using heavy and non-ferrous metal ions to clean gas emissions from toxic substances.

University achievements were demonstrated at the exhibition, with the Belarusian University of Informatics and Radioelectronics showing its software-controlled power source and an energy-saving automatic charger, for any type of battery. Meanwhile, the Belarusian State University presented a high-temperature three-zone thermal imager and ultrasonic counters for gas, liquid and thermal energy. Its Turbosphere attracted the most attention among energy-saving devices, allowing efficient use of gas pressure drops in the gas-transport system.

Air purification at enterprises is another important environmental issue, as *Energy Expo* recognised, presenting a biochemical absorption device. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection brought samples of the latest Belarusian minerals to be mined: amber and basalt, alongside products made from basalt tuffs: glass, threads and ceramics.

Famous world brands — such as Siemens, ABB, Schneider, and Dow Chemical — presented their achievements, with the exhibition welcoming guests from sixteen countries, including China, the USA, Germany, Russia and Poland.

## Just a minute — it's coming soon

By Yulia Matuzova

New electronic display boards begin working at Minsk bus stops

Another batch of electronic display boards is being installed in Minsk, at public transport stops, enabling people to learn (with an accuracy of up to a minute) of the arrival of the next bus or trolley bus in Dzerzhinsky, Partizan-

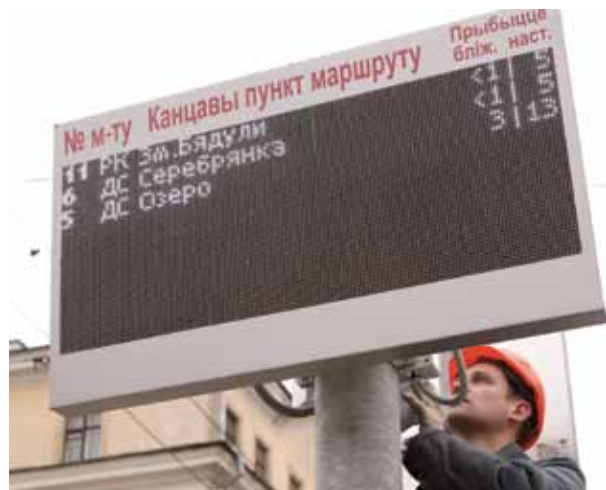
sky and Pushkin avenues, in Pritysky Street, as well as at the public transport stops 'Romanovskaya Sloboda' and 'Gorodskoy Val' (in Nemiga Street).

The batch includes 65 LED display boards, produced by Minsktrans enterprise. "Sixty-two display boards have been installed already, with 28 of these working in normal mode," explained Minsktrans' chief

engineer, Ivan Zhuk.

LED display tables are produced at the Power Utilities Services — a branch of Minsktrans enterprise — from imported and domestic components, while the monitors are made by the Repair-Mechanical Plant.

The city has now more than 2,000 public transport stops and electronic display boards are primarily displayed in the most popular



LED display at tram stop

places. When a public transport stop is chosen, they take into account whether the passenger inflow is big,

whether it is used by foreigners and whether trade, sport facilities and metro stations are located nearby.

## 'Ni Hao' stands for 'hello'

By Yulia Matuzova

Information for passengers also available in Chinese at Minsk Airport

"This is due to the increase in the flow of passengers from China — including those travelling not for transit," explains Minsk National Airport spokesperson Romina Samatkhonova. Previously, board information was only available in Russian and English.



# It's better to solve problems peacefully

12th International Law Olympiad *Youth for Peace* held in Minsk, with International MITSO University bringing together eleven teams from seven countries: the UK, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus

By Yelizaveta Artsueva

The *Youth for Peace* International Law Olympiad is among the top three prestigious European contests in international law. "The Olympiad is very important for our university," notes the Vice-Rector for Education and International Ties of the International MITSO University, Yelena Dovgan. "Unfortunately, problems of international humanitarian law will be acute for many years to come. Accordingly, it's vital to attract young people's attention. Students who come for the Olympiad will soon be making decisions to try and ensure peaceful settling of disputes. It will become their duty to maintain international law and security."

The Olympiad always simulates



Participants of the *Youth for Peace* Olympiad look to the future with optimism

a situation of military conflict, requiring participants to tackle all stages: from reasons of origin to settlement.

"We spent six months training for the Olympiad," note students from the International MITSO University team. As is traditional, tasks are made as relevant as possible, and are connected with some artistic work. The 12th International Law Olympiad *Youth for Peace* drew on the cult-classic by J.R.R. Tolkien: *The Lord of the Rings*. Despite scenarios being invented, the questions faced by the students were absolutely real, currently existing in the world, including elements of conflicts in Ukraine, in the Middle East and Africa.

"This year, we encouraged senior pupils to look at international humanitarian law, inviting them to attend

lectures by our experts," notes Ms. Dovgan. "English is the leading language of our Olympiad and participants' level of language knowledge is rising, so there are no difficulties."

An evening celebrating national cultures gave participants the opportunity to learn more about each other.

"Alongside its educational goal, the Olympiad has another, which is important — social," underlines jury member David Turns, a senior lecturer in the international law of armed conflict, at the Academy of Defence, in the United Kingdom. "Students from various countries have the opportunity to gather in one place under the aegis of a single event, to share their opinions and to solve set tasks. The importance is clear if we look at the modern situation regarding inter-

national conflicts. We may suppose that a great deal could be solved if people interacted more and the level of educational was higher in the sphere of international humanitarian law." The importance of interaction between representatives of various countries was also mentioned by students from the UK, who noted how pleasant it is to meet new people. "The Olympiad gives us the opportunity to receive new knowledge and to view international humanitarian law from various angles, including those of people from other states."

The team from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, won the 12th International Law Olympiad *Youth for Peace* for the second time.

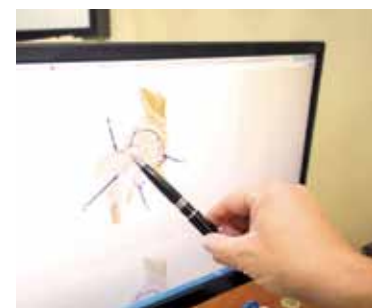
## Hip treatment methods

By Veronika Ulasevich

**Specialists at the Republican Scientific-Practical Centre of Traumatology and Orthopaedics have mastered unique surgery methods applied during the treatment of cervical hip fractures among elderly patients**

It's hard to believe but, after the surgery, patients can stand on their feet and walk within several hours. During the pilot project of the Republican Scientific-Practical Centre, patients with cervical hip fracture are immediately taken to the hospital's adult traumatology department where they are provided the necessary surgical help using the latest methods.

"We prepare such patients for operative treatment very quickly. We try to operate on them within a day after they are admitted to the hospital. As far as other operations are concerned, in recent times we have been mastering technologies connected with stem cells and are actively working to solve problems in the sphere of child's scoliosis,"



notes consultant traumatologist-orthopaedist and leading research officer at the adult traumatology laboratory, Oleg Korzun. "We are focussing especially on the pathology of the spine. Today we use methods of vertebral fixation from the front with the help of plates, as well as replacing vertebrae with titanium or mesh implants."

# Chizhovka — Arena with a capital letter

By Alexander Zhibul

**Chizhovka-Arena Sport Complex is the embodiment of the latest in technological developments. In its multi-functionality and complexity of technical performance, equipment and infrastructure, it is perfect for top level sporting events, training and entertainment. It's planned to host judo and karate competitions here during the 2nd European Games in June 2019.**

The Head of the PR and Media Department, Alexander Abdulkhakov, is laconic in saying that, "The structure of the complex is comprised of two arenas: Big and Small," Alongside sporting events it often hosts concerts — able to seat 9,000 spectators. It currently has an ice-rink



Chizhovka-Arena ready to welcome guests and participants of competitions

but in November it will be melted and the venue will be re-equipped with a tennis court to host the finals of the Federation Tennis Cup.

The organisers say that they need four days to turn the ice arena into a temple of martial arts for the 2nd European Games. In total, 72,000 tonnes of clean water are poured over the Big Arena. In summer it

is drained and technical works are conducted. It's more problematic to restore the ice; the process takes up to seven days and includes freezing of the slab, with water being pumped from a special device.

This year, Chizhovka-Arena has already welcomed around 15 international competitions, including tournaments in volleyball, tennis and hand-

ball. Recently the Arena's universal hall hosted an international boxing tournament in memory of Vladimir Botvinnik, featuring more than 100 athletes from eight countries. Moreover, the sports complex boasts a training gym, halls for crossfit, eastern martial arts, billiard, fitness and press conferences. Undoubtedly, Mr. Abdulkhakov is right when he stresses,

"The Arena is new, so there are no major problems. Each year periodic servicing is conducted and in summer the cooling equipment undergoes preventive maintenance. In 2014, it hosted the IIHF World Championship and this testifies to the high level of this facility."

Today the area around the complex has around 15 public catering facilities for those keen on sport. It's planned to increase their number by the 2nd European Games. At present, the Arena is in 'normal' mode, with young hockey players mastering the ice and competitions being held. The complex will undergo a serious test within the next eighteen months when thousands of fans will come for the sports event. "As soon as we receive a list of concrete requirements we'll immediately address everything properly," Mr. Abdulkhakov notes.



# Economy needs working hands

The news that our country plans to reduce the number of students accepted in universities and, at the same time increase enrolment in professional educational institutions is very pleasing. The problem is so acute that within a couple of years it would be impossible to tackle it. A great deal of work lies ahead to bring order to the system of preparation of vocational personnel and it won't be easy.

It would be nice if the clearly structured system that existed in the USSR was restored. At that time, huge attention was paid to working specialities while universal workers — Jack-of-all-trades (prepared by the system of vocational education) were greatly appreciated. Moreover, the staff policy was such that executive positions were primarily occupied by people who have trod the path from the 'plough to the machine tool'. It's a wise pathway because such a person (if appointed to an executive position) has a clear idea of the production process

We have the complex problem of vocational orientation. The slogan 'A person is nothing without higher education!' has led us to a sorry situation. According to statistical data, in recent years, Belarus has become one of the top countries for the number of students and graduates of universities per capita. But where are the breakthroughs in the economy and science? There are none and they won't appear unless we remember that a labourer — a worker, a specialist in mechanisation — stands at the root of the success of any state. There was time when we chased world experiences and didn't notice how our own developments were copied by others. For example, a classical Soviet scheme is currently operating in Germany and other EU states — around 20-30 percent of alumni enter universities while the remaining become students of very good professional-technical col-



Vocational education enjoys popularity

leges. The level of development in Western Europe confirms the success of such division.

This leads to another problem — the material-technical base of our colleges and technical schools. In times of high-tech production, the level of workers' preparation should compare with the level of university graduates. At the same time, the workshops of many technical schools have only out-

of-date equipment. As a result, an employer must re-train young specialists directly at their place of work. Thus, state money spent on their education and preparation, is spent in vain. This is an inadmissible situation. For renewal of the material-technical base a clear and efficient scheme of public private partnership should be formed in the sphere of vocational training. To make graduates of col-

leges popular on the market and to provide them with work we need a scheme of efficient interaction between various ministries and departments, primarily between the Education Ministry and the Economy Ministry.

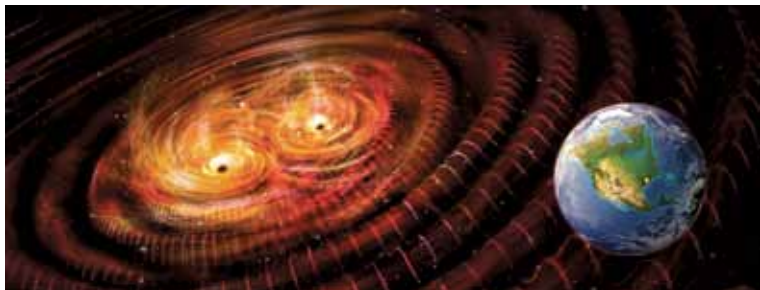
A time-tested scheme to prepare specialists used to exist in the USSR. This was facilitated by the now almost obsolete system of vocational training facilities and all

passed this internship. This was extremely important and professional vocational orientation helped many schoolchildren determine their place in life. At that time, the thinking was that to achieve success and respect one shouldn't necessarily have a higher education diploma. We now have twice as many university graduates compared to those who have completed a professional technical education.

It appears that everyone wants to govern and there's no one to work. Even if technical schools had been equipped with super-modern equipment they wouldn't have enough students as a scornful and sometimes derogatory attitude towards working specialists exists in the mass consciousness. TV influences young people by showing films and programmes where a successful person must be wealthy but no one shows the formula for success which is unchanged: in reality, businessmen work extremely hard and often start their careers at the bottom of the ladder.

It's necessary to educate people from childhood that success is a goal in life but it's impossible without hard work. Only when such professions as carpenters, bricklayers and locksmiths are respected in the mass consciousness will the system of education finally be balanced and the wheels of the economy will turn in the necessary direction.

**Valentina Leonenko,**  
Candidate of Historical Sciences,  
Associate Professor



By Andrey Mukovozchik

**What is 'teleportation'? It is when a refrigerator for instance, is in front of you one moment and then suddenly appears in the next apartment. Is it possible to transfer 'non-material' information so quickly?**

Academician and Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences Sergey Kilin says, "According to accepted quantum theory, there can be pairs

of quantum-dependent (entangled) elementary particles — they spread out from each other as if they know the nature of their 'other halves'. Until now, under normal conditions it was possible to prove this only over very small distances. For example, 10 years ago, a group of scientists studying under Professor Zeilinger from the University of Vienna showed this phenomenon over 140km between two telescopes on the surface of the Earth. It is impossible to find a larger distance in a line-of-sight range on the Earth,

## Entering teleport destinations

but in optical fibres, the quantum dependence between photons disappears because of dispersion and double refraction."

The idea could be very useful and extremely modern. Belarusian scientists have been dedicating their efforts to the issue in the Centre of Quantum Optics and Quantum Informatics of the B. I. Stepanov Institute of Physics of NAS. "BSU Professor Sergey Kilin, who was awarded the Francysk Skaryna Medal, continues, "In 2007, workers at the centre created a system of quantum key distribution in optical fibre based on temporal coding of light pulses, the first in the CIS, and also developed a quantum generator of random numbers, essentially new methods of reception and measurement of entangled conditions of

optical fields." In other words, the first CIS installation for quantum cryptography in optical fibre was created in our laboratory, led by the academician. Now, together with our Russian colleagues, we are working on the project 'on the realisation of quantum key distribution in outer space'.

In the meantime, Austrian scientists have developed co-operation with the Chinese Academy of Sciences for checking the phenomenon of entanglement over large distances, it was decided to transfer the experiments to outer space. Almost one year ago, China developed and launched 'the satellite of quantum science Micius' and prepared three ground stations for the experiment: Nanshan in the city district of Urumqi, Delinga in the province of Qing-

hai and the observatory Gaomeigu in the district of Lijiang. If the Chinese team manage to improve the ultrabright space source of double-photon entangled conditions and to increase the efficiency of the high-precision mechanism of reception, indication and tracing, then during usage of the existing configuration (satellite and three ground stations), already soon we may receive similar results at a distance of about 2,400km — the distance between Lijiang and Urumqi. The outstanding success of the Chinese scientists gives rise to tempting prospects not only for practical quantum communications, but also for fundamental experiments on quantum optics over distances not available on Earth. Belarusian scientists are also moving their research in this direction.





## California wildfires have killed 40 people while dozens are still missing

Firefighters made significant progress on two of the biggest wildfires raging across Northern California, but officials cautioned that they still face major challenges

The winds that bedeviled firefighters remained mostly calm, allowing them to go back on the offense after a day of new evacuations. Officials said they strengthened containment lines on the massive Tubbs and Atlas fires, which

by last Sunday evening were 60 percent and 65 percent contained, respectively.

No longer are authorities emphasising the risk of potential devastation to more homes, 303 of which have already been destroyed

by the blaze. Instead, they're pleading for patience while they mop up the fire's hot spots and have crews repair roads and clear out scorched debris and fallen trees.

Firefighters have shifted their focus to the 48,000-acre Nuns fire,

moving more than a dozen fixed-wing aircraft from the Atlas fire to fight that blaze.

"We have some areas out there that are just fighting us, they are bucking us," said Cal Fire incident commander Bret Gouvea.



## Bananarama are back

**British pop group Bananarama are back together after 30 years, to tour US for the first time**

The British female pop music vocal group formed in London in 1981 by friends Sara Dallin, Siobhan Fahey and Keren Woodward.

Their success on both pop and dance charts have earned them a listing in The Guinness Book of Records as the all-female group

with the most chart entries in the world. They are considered as the prototype and precursor of girl bands like the Spice Girls.

The ladies think they are more appreciated today. Even with the huge success, they didn't feel appreciated at the time.

The group are set to tour the US in February, with a number of UK dates in November already sold out.

## Tesla to recall 11,000 Model X vehicles

**Electric carmaker Tesla Inc. is recalling 11,000 Model X sport utility vehicles worldwide due to a faulty locking mechanism in their rear seats that raises the risk of the seats falling forward in a crash**

Tesla said a small number of cables in the second row fold-flat seats in some Model X vehicles, manufactured between October 28th, 2016 and August 16th, 2017, may need to be adjusted to fix the issue. The com-

pany, which is led by Elon Musk, said about 3 percent of the recalled vehicles may have the issue, which was detected during internal testing. Tesla said it had not received reports of any issues or accidents related to the problem. Palo Alto, California-based Tesla had recalled 2,700 Model X SUVs in the United States in April 2016 due to a faulty locking hinge in the third-row seats. Tesla's shares were little changed at \$355.64 in extended trading.



## G7 met to agree on more pressure vs North Korea

**Group of Seven finance leaders agreed to co-operate in taking appropriate action against North Korean attempts to avert UN sanctions, a senior Japanese Finance Ministry official said**

It is rare for G7 finance leaders to disclose the fact they met on the sidelines of a G20 gathering, which was a show of resolve among the advanced economies to boost pressure on North Korea in the wake of its recent provocations, said Masatsugu Asakawa, Vice Finance Minister for International Affairs. "The G7 agreed to strengthen co-operation, including by steps to counter North Korean attempts to avert United Nations sanctions," he told reporters after attending the G7 gathering and a Group of 20 finance leaders' dinner meeting.

## China September imports blow past expectations as economy remains in high gear

**China's import and export growth accelerated in September, suggesting the world's second-biggest economy is still expanding at a healthy pace despite widespread forecasts of an eventual slowdown**

The data also suggested further improvement in the global economy, with business activity and demand having picked up markedly this year in Europe and the United States. The upbeat readings will be welcome news for Beijing ahead of a twice-a-decade Communist Party Congress, at which President Xi Jinping is expected to tighten his grip on power.

## EU 'to plan' for Brexit trade talks with UK despite deadlock

**The European Union is preparing to offer the United Kingdom a glimmer of light that the green light could be given in December for talks to move on to future trade relations, according to an internal draft document**

The draft, submitted by European Council President Donald Tusk to leaders of the 27 other EU governments, suggests that countries should begin internal preparations now over a transition and future trade — with a view to authorising negotiators to open talks with the UK by the end of the year.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



## Art of conducting artistic dialogue

### Works by early 20th century German painters on show at National Art Museum

By Veniamin Mikheev

Works by two German painters from the first half of the 20th century — Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz — are on display for the first time, at an exhibition at the National Art Museum of Belarus.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Peter Dettmar, notes that the *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* exhibition and *Face Art — Face Future* communicative programme are encouraging international artistic dialogue.

The exhibition is running until early December, in collaboration with the Ernst Barlach Society (Hamburg) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, under the patronage of Peter Dettmar. The event features more than 200 sculptures, drawings and engravings from the collection of the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (ifa) in Stuttgart, from the Ernst Barlach Museums in Ratzeburg and Wedel, and from private collections in Germany. It features works created during key stages in the painters' creative careers, from 1890-1945.

“Art is a deeply humanistic engagement: a test of the purity of heart and soul,” declared Ernst Barlach. It was a sentiment he adhered to throughout his career, aiming to capture the spiritual and aesthetic values of the common man, his courage and determination. Barlach explores personal integrity, alongside the universal themes of love and hate, right and wrong, life and death.

Käthe Kollwitz's art captures the notion of human destiny, exploring such themes as war, hate,



Organisers hope for dialogue

struggle, love, freedom, need and death. Her work demonstrates tremendous power and depth, depicting the inner essence of life rather than purely ‘real’ scenes. We see her compassion through the clear, expressive language of her art.



Both artists were eager to change the world through art, warning humanity against the perils of war, while spreading reverence for peace. This perspective remains topical. The *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* exhibition is a platform for discussing Europe's past and its future, our desire for peaceful coexistence.

**Heike Stockhaus, curator of the *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* exhibition:**

*This exhibition is unusual in that it demonstrates more than just the art of Germany. It launches dialogue with young people, sharing ideas about the future.*

Such dialogue is the major goal of the *Face Art — Face Future* educational project, which accompanies the exhibition. Since



Next year, the *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* exhibition and *Face Art — Face Future* programme will be presented at the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg and at the National Art Museum of Ukraine (in Kiev). Video works by the ambassadors of the exhibitions, in Minsk, St. Petersburg and Kiev, will go on display the same year (in autumn) at exhibition venues in major German cities.

The Ernst Barlach Society was founded in Hamburg in July 1946, studying Barlach's legacy of art and literature, and managing two museums, in Ratzeburg and Wedel. It organises exhibitions of Ernst Barlach's works, as well as by modern and contemporary artists, in Germany and abroad. In 1991, the Ernst Barlach Society in Hamburg established an award named after Ernst Barlach, given for outstanding achievements in the field of modern art. Since 2009, the Ernst Barlach Society has managed museum education and art communication projects, creating around a hundred young museum ambassadors, and drawing attention to matters of culture and society finding reflection in art.

the opening of the exhibition at the National Art Museum, two dozen young people have been taking intensive courses in art mediation and in the creation of video-projects, working with contemporary multimedia artists. They are ambassadors of the exhibition.

**Anna Karpenko, co-ordinator of the *Face Art — Face Future* project in the Republic of Belarus:**

*Over the course of five Saturdays, a group of art-mediators will be working inside the museum, conducting exhibitions during the school holidays. The second group will create video-art across these five Saturdays, for presentation at a separate exhibition in November.*

## Painter in image of dreamer and philosopher

By Alexander Pimenov

**Minsk's Belart Gallery hosts watercolour exhibition by Mikhail Nekhaichik**

Mikhail Nekhaichik was born in 1959, in Mozyr. He graduated from an art school in Minsk, and from the Belarusian Theatre and Art Institute (now, the Belarusian Academy of Arts) and has been creating thematic compositions, landscapes, portraits and still-life

works ever since. He has taken part in artistic exhibitions since 1984, held in Gomel, Minsk, Moscow and Warsaw, and is also a member of the Belarusian Union of Artists.

He works in Belarus and Russia and, in one interview, noted that creativity has no borders. “They say that one can't be in two places simultaneously, but I manage. I live in a big city and it's necessary to move from one

part to the other. It doesn't matter whether it's Minsk, Moscow or Bryansk.”

The painter is close in spirit to classical realistic art, endeavouring to achieve scale, poeticism and philosophical meaning, via compositional structure and colour.

“I try to make my works spiritually deep,” he explains, having long come to the conclusion that winter best embodies the breath of time and contemplations about

difficulties of existence. He invites us to enter this season of the year through his works.

Graceful lines, sharp drawings, and majestic monochromes bring monumentalism and drama to his works. His depictions of nature are elevated, inspiring meditation, a desire for silence and tranquillity. Even when churches are not portrayed, we feel a sanctity in his works.

His canvases inspire our grief

and optimism, sadness and joy, being truthful and expressive. Mikhail Nekhaichik is a dreamer and a philosopher, energetic and goal-oriented, obsessed with ‘creative fervour’. He is always busy, even opening his own gallery in 2014, in the Russian city of Novozybkov. His aim? The promotion of contemporary pictorial art and strengthening of friendship between the nations of Belarus and Russia.



# Secrets of creative longevity of outstanding and famous pianist

## Famous pianist Tatiana Starchenko tells us about the new philharmonic season, her music, life and cuisine

By Irina Svirko

The *Musical Saloon* is one of the most successful and long-term projects of the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society. It has been taking place for more than 15 years and enjoys invariable success. The concerts are always a special event. Famous pianist Tatiana Starchenko, author and Hostess of the *Musical Saloon*, producer, anchorwoman and performer of many programmes, creates the unique atmosphere.

**What do you think is the secret of longevity of the *Musical Saloon*?**

*I could say, because I am its artistic director. And it would be true, because all the musical ideas are mine. However, ideas arise because you know who can turn them into reality. In this respect, the 'Musical Saloon' is unique. My artistes are the best soloists of the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society, singers of the Bolshoi Theatre, soloists of orchestras, famous dramatic actors and foreign artistes. To each new programme I invite those with whom I have a strong friendship, those who*

*I admire, not only their talent and professionalism, but also their human qualities. In general, it is a source of great happiness to make what you want, and work with excellent musicians and friends. I think any head of a creative collective would only envy me.*

**The concerts of the *Musical Saloon* always have a new theme, something special. For many years you have been full of ideas, inventing ways to bring them to life to entrance the spectators, and at the same time, perform as an equal with the other soloists. How do you nourish your creativity?**

*Sometimes, there are moments when my resources come to an end. After all, behind these seemingly calm events, on the stage there is a great deal of hard work. Each month you are facing the conditions of a premiere and a huge amount of stress. However, thank God, there is also the love of the audience which gives us inspiration. The main thing that feeds creativity is being on the stage, and of course, my kind and understanding family who help me to see things in perspective.*



Hostess of the *Musical Saloon* — pianist T. Starchenko

**Some may ask what is difficult about a *Musical Saloon*: people gather together, sing, play and it is an easy, pleasant pastime...**

*It may appear so to those who have never visited our concerts. The 'Musical Saloon' showcases different music and a broad spectrum of genres: instrumental, chamber, choral, theatrical, soloists. As a matter of fact, it is a*

*philharmonic society within a philharmonic society.*

**And you always have a full-house.**

*The spectators understand it is a bit of luck to get into our concerts. After all, during the concert you hear things which you won't hear anywhere else. It is important, and it works. I don't have any illusions that everyone is delighted with what I do, but the*

*reality is that people come to us.*

**What is your target audience?**

*They are all different. For us, it's not true when people say that you have your own audience. We have a lot of programmes, and I know, for whom and what each is suitable. For example, the premier concert 'Terra Incognita' of magnificent modern chamber music which has not been performed in our country previously, will be interesting to the intellectual and thinking public. I understand that someone who has never been in a philharmonic society, might decide to come along too, having seen our poster 'Music by Isaac Schwartz'. This composer wrote a good deal for cinema. 'The White Sun of the Desert', 'The Straw Hat', 'The Station Master', 'Zhenya, Zhenechka and 'Katyusha', dozens of his wonderful melodies are widely known. But at the end of his life, Schwartz created a fantastic thing — his concerto for orchestra 'Yellow Stars', the largest symphonic work. We also introduce such spectators to extracts from it. There are many other programmes which can be interesting for such an audience. As a rule, people come to see us again and again.*

**In the *Musical Saloon* you are an excellent hostess. I've heard that you are a good hostess at home too, have culinary skills and like to cook.**

*I won't deny it. Cookery*

*is part of life, the taste of life. I adore all the cheesecakes, baked puddings, cabbage soup-borsches, potato pancakes, gravy. Returning from different countries, I like to experiment with dishes of foreign cuisine. I am never too lazy to bake pies. I believe that a woman whose house does not smell of pies should remember that it's a smell of family, cosiness and happiness.*

**And what about calories, which everyone counts. Do you eat pies or look after your figure?**

*Certainly, I eat them with pleasure. In general, I think that people pay too much attention to conversations about diets. Tasty, well-prepared food has always been a source of health. I think, that when it comes to a healthy way of life, it is necessary to speak about enthusiasm for work, mobility, danger of excesses, but not about what we should or shouldn't eat.*

**However, a busy kitchen also means mountains of dirty dishes. What about the hands of a pianist which should be protected?**

*There are, of course, moments when after the guests have gone I say to my husband that my finger-tips have become absolutely dried up. But with several good creams, the problem is easily solved, the next day everything is all right. In general, the most important thing both in the kitchen, in music, and in life is to work cheerfully and take pleasure in the process.*

## Hello, Matchmakers!

By Tatiana Khoroshilova

**Famous TV series now shot in Belarus**

After a five-year break, shooting of the continuation of the cult comedy saga — *Matchmakers* — has begun in Belarus.

16 episodes will be filmed and the premiere of the seventh season is scheduled for Q3 2018. The plot will cover four years and the audience will see what is happening to the characters in this time.

The major media holding of the country — Belarusian TV and Radio Company — provides assistance in the process. Favourite characters — Valyukha, Ivan, Olga Nikolaevna, San Sanych and Zhenya — return for the fans; they are performed by Russia's People's Artistes: Tatiana

Kravchenko, Fiodor Dobronravov, Lyudmila Artemyeva, Alexander Feklistov, Anna Koshmal.

Among the locations is a large trading-entertaining centre in the Gorky Park; some scenes were shot in the centre of Minsk, at the golf club and at BelAZ. The film crew also worked in Zhodino and Logosk, in the Oginski estate in Zalesie. In a change from previous seasons, *Matchmakers* will feature city life more often. Fans will see what Ivan Budko's son looked like in his youth (performed by Fiodor Dobronravov's son Victor). In addition, they'll watch San Sanych (Alexander Feklistov) plunge into the world of fantasy — imagining himself and his wife Olga (Lyudmila Artemyeva) in a 19th century entourage. Meanwhile, Zhenechka will get married...

On completion of the sixth season, film director Andrey Yakovlev promised this would be the last, as the crew believed their forces were exhausted. However, they were mistaken and the lovers of the series are greatly anticipating the sequel.

Speaking of why *Matchmakers-7* is being shot in Belarus, director Mikhail Savin explains, "In Belarus, everything is very nice: there are interesting places and many wonderful people. Everything here is homely. Wherever we go in the country, we are warmly welcomed. Smiling faces are everywhere and the actors really appreciate this. Interestingly, *Matchmakers*' crew have 'discovered' the Oginski renovated estate — using it as a location. In Zalesie, a team of 50 people were on site."

"There are now few estates of



A moment during the film shoot

the kind," Mr. Feklistov adds. "Such age-old pine, linden and maple are rarely found in such a good state of preservation."

According to Mr. Dobronravov, one of the secrets of the film's success is that warm relationships have developed within the team. Filmmakers gathered 10 years ago to

work on this project continue working together today.

"In Belarus, the atmosphere is amazing," continues Mr. Feklistov. "It's great that we're together again." There was no need to study aristocratic manners for shooting in the Oginski estate in Zalesie: everything was taught at the institute.



# Shot from rear-guard to avant-garde

## Handball is most dynamically progressive sport in country

By Sergey Kanashits

While footballers have long been paid well, appearing to grin from their financial paradise, at those below, handball has been quietly growing its following. Children's handball has revived, with new life breathed into Minsk's SKA. Meanwhile, HC Brest Meshkov has been launched into orbit, joining the celestial constellations. Initially, steps were timid and uncertain but handball's power has steady grown. We can say that it now wields a strong fist.

Since 2013, the national team — led by Yuri Shevtsov — hasn't missed a single world or European championship. The forthcoming continental championship, being hosted by Croatia in January, will see Belarus' national team play, having achieved first place in its group, confidently beating experienced teams from Serbia, Poland and Romania.

Comparing this with our performance in other sports, our handball team is doing a magnificent job. It will now face France, Norway and Austria, the former two both finalists at the recent World Championship. We might imagine that coach Shevtsov's team would be nervous, but they're presenting brave faces, announcing their intention of showing their very best. The heads of the Handball Federation are similarly stoic, asserting that our Belarusian team may yet surprise everyone.

It's much cheaper to run a handball club than a football club, while the return is much greater. If we can raise another three or



Brest Meshkov handballers in key positions

four strong teams (featuring graduates of children's schools and colleges), Belarus could win world and European champion-

ships within five years, defeating Spain and France. As regards the Luxembourg team, our victory would be doubtless.

## World forum has finished and preparations for new one have begun

By Semen Bondarev

**Belarusian women's volleyball team ranked seventh in final standings of European Championship, hosted by Azerbaijan**

Piotr Khilko's trainees lost the quarter finals but have demonstrated their best performance in the history of Belarus' participation in top continental tournaments, reaching seventh place (eighth place was the previous best position occupied by our team, in 1993 and 1995).

This year, the European Championship winner was Serbia (going on to success after defeating our team in the quarter finals). In the decisive match, the Balkan volleyballers confidently beat the Netherlands — 3:1. Bronze went to Turkey.

The next European Championship — scheduled for 2019 — will feature the Belarusian team without need for preliminary selection. The event will be hosted jointly, by Turkey, Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

# Being ranked lower than Luxembourg in the rating is obviously no honour

By Kirill Pletnev

**The President of Panama has announced October 11th as a holiday for his county, its national team having, for the first time, reached the finals of the World Championship. Iceland is also celebrating, with its 300,000 population delighted. In the last match, a hat-trick by Lionel Messi gave the Argentinean team a place at the 2018 event, being hosted by Russia. Meanwhile, Cristiano Ronaldo will be also playing at the World Championship, leading the European champions from Portugal.**

Twenty-three of the future thirty-two finalists for the Rus-



FIFA WORLD CUP  
RUSSIA 2018

sian championship are now decided. Sadly, the tournament has never been to Belarus. Of course, the USA (for the first time in thirty-two years) and Chile (as South American champions) have also failed to qualify for the 2018 event but it's no real consolation.

In the last match of the qualifying tournament, Belarus lost to France, 1:2 in the crowded Stade de France. Meanwhile, the French squad went on to join the World Championship.

Our players did their best, scoring in the away match once but failing to do more. The difference in Belarusian and French football was evident in all respects. The head coach of the French team, Didier Deschamps, could have proposed three or, even,



Igor Stasevich, Djibril Sidibe, Antoine Griezmann during the match

four line-ups for the match (each able to hold their own in the Russian Championship). Meanwhile, Belarusian head coach Igor Kriushenko — due to a series of disqualifications, injuries and misunderstandings — had to send an absolute novice, Yuri Kovalev from Soligorsk, to the Saint-Denis match. The

midfielder did well against Varane, Griezmann, Matuidi and the other stars of French and world football but it goes without saying that Soligorsk, London, Madrid and Paris differ greatly.

Our national team is now entering an indefinite period. It's quite possible that Igor Kriushenko, despite his

good work, will retire as head coach. It's unknown whether the Federation will replace him just yet, as the team has no matches scheduled, apart from facing Armenia in November.

UEFA has made drastic changes, with qualifying matches for the 2020 European Championship commencing

only in spring of 2019 (rather than next autumn). European teams have been invited to participate in the new League of Nations, the first stage of which is scheduled for autumn 2018. The Belarusian team may perhaps qualify, if it manages to avoid playing the strongest teams.

Due to its bad performance in the present selective round, our team has dropped to Division D of the League of Nations (alongside Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Georgia, Armenia, the Faroe Islands, Latvia, Luxembourg, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Liechtenstein, Malta, Kosovo, Andorra, San Marino and Gibraltar). Meanwhile, UEFA has announced that the team winning the competition (the fourth league of European football) will participate in Euro 2020. This might inspire hope but for the fact that the Belarusian team has lost to Macedonia and Luxembourg previously.



## Festival of the week



4th festival of twins, *Double Happiness*, held in Minsk during *Maternity and Childhood* exhibition

### EXHIBITIONS

#### NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street  
Until 3rd December. *Napoleon Orda. Illustrated Encyclopaedia of the Country*  
Until 3rd December. *Ernst Barlach and Käthe Kollwitz: Beyond the Borders of Existence* Until 10th December. *Treasures of Ancient Egypt*

#### NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street  
Until 29th October. *Dedication to 135th Birthday of Photo Master Lev Dashkevich and Poet Yanka Kupala*  
Until 10th January. *Fashionable Century*

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 20th November. *Skaryna's Letters and Words* Until 31st December. *Francysk Skaryna and His Epoch*

#### STATE MUSEUM OF HISTORY OF BELARUSIAN LITERATURE

13 Maxim Bogdanovich Street  
Until 29th December. *Kandrat Krapiva: from Childhood to Maturity*

#### MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square  
Until 29th October. *Synthesis in Architecture* Until 31st December. *Meeting the Master*

#### SAINT ELISABETH CONVENT

6 Vygotsky Street  
Until 21st November. *Crown-Bearing Family. Path of Love* (Emperor Nicolas II and His Family)

#### TSEKH

16 Oktyabrskaya Street  
Until 26th October. *If Only Nothing Would Happen*

#### HOUSE-MUSEUM OF FIRST RSDRP SESSION

31a Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 29th October. *Revolution Names*

#### GALLERIA MINSK

9 Pobediteley Avenue  
Until 15th January. *Museum-Factory of Fir Tree Toys*

#### PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

11 Sovetskaya Street  
Until 27th October. Exhibition from the Literature in Art cycle: *Ivan Melezh's People of the Marsh*

#### CAT MUSEUM

23 Internatsionalnaya Street  
Until 30th November. *Miraculous Autumn*

#### BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS

32 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
13-15 and 18.10. *Lighting Stars*

### THEATRES

#### NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Street  
19.10. *Laurencia, Turandot* 20.10. *Anyuta; Nights with Serenade. Silent Words of Love* 21.10. *Madam Butterfly* 22.10. *Love and Death; Songs from Soviet Cartoons* — Most Sacred of Love  
24.10. *Carmen* 25.10. *Sonnets. Small Death. Six Dances* 26.10. *The Players*

#### BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street  
19.10. *Jane Eyre* 20.10. *Wedding in Malinovka* 21.10. *Buratino.by; Shalom Aleichem!* 22.10. *Adventures of Kai and Gerda (Snow Maiden); Bridegrooms*  
24.10. *Mary Poppins* 25.10. *Once in Chicago* 26.10. *A Glass of Water*

#### YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street  
20.10. *People of the Marsh*  
21.10. *Paulinka* 22.10. *Paulinka; Art*  
24.10. *Pinsk Gentry* 25.10. *Local Cabaret*  
26.10. *Weltmaster* — Accordion

#### MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street  
19.10. *Inn Keeper* 20.10. *Ideal Husband*  
21.10. *The Twelfth Night* 22.10. *Divers*  
24.10. *Pygmalion* 25.10. *Testosterone*  
26.10. *Double Eternity*

#### THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTOR

13 Pobediteley Avenue  
19 and 20.10. *Battlefield* 21.10. *Who Laughs Last* 22.10. *Robbery at Midnight*  
23.10. *The Same Place Next Year*  
24 and 25.10. *Mechanical Man*  
26.10. *Abduction of Yelena*

#### REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street  
19.10. *Doctor Raus' Career*  
20.10. *Feint-Kruaze* 21.10. *The Broken Nest* 22.10. *Love of People*  
24.10. *Eternal Song* 25.10. *Maybe*  
26.10. *Three Giselles*

#### YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street  
19.10. *The Fool*  
20.10. *Whether Spring Sacred*  
21.10. *Lesson of Love. Kosciuszko Story*  
22.10. *Chekhov. Comedy. The Seagull*  
24.10. *Caught out With Love*  
25.10. *Dreamworks*  
26.10. *Zhmurik; Tectonics of Feelings*

#### BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE

20 Engels Street  
19.10. *Tartuffe*  
20.10. *Interview with Witches* 21.10. *Little Red Riding Hood*  
22.10. *Pippi Longstocking*  
26.10. *Mann Ist Mann*