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President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, and President of China, Xi Jinping, before the Leaders' Roundtable Summit of the *Belt and Road* Forum for International Co-operation

## A well-earned place in influential company

Beijing hosts two-day *Belt and Road* Forum for International Co-operation —featuring heads of state and government of 29 countries, including President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko

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# Friendship in politics isn't merely an abstract concept



Chinese journalists — participants at the meeting with the President of Belarus

**The first days of May have seen a press tour by media representatives of the People's Republic of China — the first in the history of Belarusian-Chinese relations. Journalists from 29 printed and electronic media (covering 10 Chinese provinces and its largest cities) used the perfect opportunity to get acquainted with our country and its people and to see our nature and businesses. Their audience is around 1 billion people. Chinese Central Television — CGTN — alone boasts 600 million viewers, while more than 100 branches of the Xinhua News Agency work on three continents. The key event of the press tour occurred in the Palace of Independence, with its participants meeting the President of Belarus and having a detailed and open conversation.**

Alexander Lukashenko sincerely and hospitably welcomed the Chinese guests and explained the format of the meeting, “Firstly, this year, Belarus and China are celebrating the 25th anniversary since the establishment of diplomatic relations. There's possibly no other country in Europe that is closer to China

than Belarus. I'd like to quote the words of Zhang Dejiang who has recently visited us. The Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China named representatives of Belarus and China ‘firm friends’. We see the current year as a landmark in bilateral relations. Secondly, the current press tour has been organised on the eve of the *Belt and Road* Forum for International Co-operation in which Belarus will also take part. Thirdly, the press tour stresses again the importance of co-operation between the regions of Belarus and China. The regions are major areas of interaction, since each of your provinces is comparable in economic potential with a strong average European state.”

Journalists from China Central Television — CGTN — asked Mr. Lukashenko to share his views on Minsk-Beijing relations that have lasted for a quarter of a century, as well as its achievements and expectations. The answer was substantial and detailed, with a retrospective into history, “We greatly appreciate the relations with the People's Republic of China. Today it's a country without which not a single issue is solved: neither regional nor global. I'm proud that I have been an initiator of establishing warm relations with China at a time when this country was a developing state. However, we expect greater results from our relations. We need to advance further and to attract to the Great Stone Industrial Park companies with the most ad-

vanced technologies — those of tomorrow or even beyond. When the results of the Great Stone Park businesses have been calculated, we assume that Belarus will receive about \$50bn from exports of produce from the park.”

The famous Chinese project — the creation of the Silk Road Economic Belt — was another topic of conversation. Mr. Lukashenko determined how he sees it, “On setting out this economic and logistics route, the People's Republic of China isn't imposing its will on anyone. In such cases, almost all states set some political conditions, though a purely economic project is being implemented. However, China is the wisest nation. The peculiarity of China is that as a friendly country, China offers loans, investments and the

## PUBLIC RESPONSE:

**Representatives of the Chinese central and regional media shared their impressions of the meeting with the President with their Belarusian colleagues.**

**Xe Zhijuan, a correspondent from the Gansu Herald newspaper:**

I was surprised at how well the President of Belarus knows our country. He spoke a lot about China, paying attention to regional co-operation. The second highlight of the meeting was in his answers to our questions. It was a very lively and interesting discussion. My lasting impression of Belarus is our joint project of the Great Stone Industrial Park; the construction rates are truly impressive.



**Ren Qi, a correspondent of the China Daily newspaper:**

I liked that the answers of your President were sincere. We're very grateful to him for this open dialogue which has become a symbol of our partnership. The friendly atmosphere testifies to the level of interaction between our countries. The atmosphere in the country has also made a great impression on me: clean air, beautiful streets and a friendly welcome towards us.



## On the request of representatives of the Chinese media, the President also tackled other issues. Mr. Lukashenko shared his views regarding:

### Interregional co-operation

This can facilitate our relations across all areas. You can count on support for any of your initiatives in Belarus. The work in this direction has been conducted over a long period. For example, Gansu Province has been closely liaising with the Grodno Region, while the city of Harbin has been co-operating with Vitebsk. We'd like to encourage your enterprises to come to our country and our companies to your state.

### Promising areas for collaboration

We have anticipated your high-tech businesses and we'll be providing them with comprehensive assistance. On the other hand, Belarus has lots that can be launched in China, for example, mechanisms to protect maternity and childhood. Belarus has a small population but, only last year, we

achieved a small growth in the birth-rate and this is already a big win for us. In total, we'd like to double our population. I have received information that many Chinese men have already created families with Belarusian women.

### Personal friendship with Xi Jinping

I must admit I don't subscribe to personal relations having an influence on co-operation. However, everything depends on it in inter-state relations. We have very friendly relations with Xi Jinping. He has been to my house and our relations can be even called ‘familial’. Such a kind approach has influenced the establishment of warm relations between Belarus and China. I have never been refused by Xi Jinping. He will always be a friend to us and will be able to come to Belarus at any time.

most advanced technology in the countries through which the Silk Road will pass.”

Meanwhile, Belarus will receive bonuses, as well as China from interaction with our country.

“A new window of opportunity opens for the export of Belarusian products to China today. I once told Hu Jintao that you would receive the most reliable representative of China in Europe in the face of Belarus. Moreover, our country is a member of the EAEU — an organisation which covers an area triple to that of China. This is room for considerable opportunities for PRC both in terms of working resources and natural resources. Moreover, when China is building close relations with any country it always looks to ensure that

it won't upset the balance of its relations with other states. The current situation is unique: because of close relations with Belarus you won't affect relations with anyone else in the world,” asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

Meanwhile, friendship between Belarus and China promises only to strengthen. It's known that Mr. Lukashenko will take part in the *Belt and Road* summit, to be held in Beijing in mid-May. Chinese journalists asked the President to describe the forthcoming meeting with the President of China as part of this summit.

“We'll discuss acute issues on the international agenda and, foremost, topics that are important for the promotion of our bilateral interaction in trade-economic, investment, financial and humanitarian spheres. Moreover, it's not easy to organise such a large-scale summit, since it will be attended by the leaders of many countries. Chinese President Xi Jinping will be busy with preparations for the event as well. When you are hosting events of this kind it always takes a lot of time and effort. Nevertheless, the President of Belarus will be among those with whom the Chinese President will find time to meet. This speaks volumes about our relations with your leader, as well as Belarus-China relations.”





One Belt and Road forum in Beijing solemnly opened on May 14th at China National Convention Centre

# Place in influential company

By Vasily Kharitonov

Belarus was one of the first to support the initiative of the Chinese leadership regarding the implementation of the project. Invitation to our country to participate in the forum confirms China's interest in the development and strengthening of bilateral contacts, as well as co-operation on integration of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road Economic Belt project.

Back in 2013, China announced a new strategy of economic development — *Belt and Road*. It is aimed at creating infrastructure and establishing relations between the countries of Eurasia. The strategy includes two key areas of development: the Silk Road Economic Belt and the maritime Silk Road. It refers to the creation of a corridor between the West and the East under privileged conditions. The priorities for this concept are political co-ordination between countries, trouble-free trade and free movement of people and capital.

The focus is on the construction of modern infrastructure which includes new railroads and highways, bridges, power supply lines, production parks and free economic zones. Over the last three years Chinese companies have already invested around \$50bn and constructed 56 zones of trade-economic co-operation in 20 countries of the 'belt and road', thus creating 180,000 jobs for residents of these states. China does not put any economic pressure on other states. At the opening of the forum, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that in the near future, China will give assistance worth \$8.7bn to developing states and international organisations taking part in the strategy.

"We have no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of other states, bringing in our own model of development or impose our will on them. All countries should respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other," noted Mr. Jinping. "China hopes to create a new model of mutually beneficial co-operation

via the *Belt and Road* project."

Such an approach is especially relevant today when tendencies to protectionism and an imbalance in economic development of the states is gaining momentum in the global economy.

Russian President Vladimir Putin also spoke about this. "Let's not forget about the threats that are brought by regional conflicts. Zones of deep-rooted contradictions are preserved in many places in Eurasia. To untie these knots the world should refrain from military rhetoric, mutual claims and reproaches which only aggravate the situation. No problem can be solved using the logic of old approaches. We need fresh ideas — free from stereotypes," he said.

The strategic concept of the creation of the Silk Road Economic Belt is aimed at developing an innovative model of interaction and the formation of a new order of international co-operation.

The President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, sees in this one

more opportunity to defeat terrorism, since poverty, social exclusion and the colossal gap in the level of development of the countries of the regions act as a breeding ground for terrorism. "We won't overcome these challenges if we don't overcome stagnation in global economic development."

States can achieve prosperity only through joint peaceful and mutually beneficial development, noted the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, at the round table discussion of the heads of state — participants of the *Belt and Road* Forum for International Co-operation.

The President stressed that that the *Belt and Road* and the *Community of Common Destiny* global initiatives, put forward by Chinese leader Xi Jinping, are not just an idea for economic partnership. They are, first of all, a uniting philosophy of international co-operation. "These concepts do not envisage a hard-sell approach or trade expansion of countries. China comes as a friendly

state — and this is its unique peculiarity — suggesting mechanisms to promote joint development," noted the Belarusian leader.

According to the President, the *Belt and Road* project reshapes the global economic map, creates new points of growth and develops new international relations. This is integration above blocs with a view to harmonising all economic institutions and removing barriers for free movement of goods, investment and people. "I'm proud that Belarus has become Europe's first country and one of the first states in the world to join the Silk Road Economic Belt project," asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

Belarus and China have been promoting the Great Stone Industrial Park project as part of the *Community of Common Destiny* initiative. It is being built as a city of the future: eco-friendly, innovative and comfortable for people to live and work. The two countries are developing both the infrastructure and laws for this Silk Road Economic Belt hub.

# Useful contacts in Beijing

During his meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Alexander Lukashenko offered an invite to him and his family to visit Belarus

By Vladimir Khromov

"Thank you for remembering the nuances and details of our meeting in Minsk. If it's God's will, we'll meet again at the beginning of August in Minsk. We are looking forward to welcoming you. I would like you to spend more time in Belarus, to familiarise yourself with our manufacturing potential and major areas for co-operation, to see the beauty of this country at the centre of Europe," noted Mr. Lukashenko.

The President hopes that Nawaz Sharif will visit Belarus with his family.

In turn, the Prime Minister of Pakistan emphasised how pleased he was to meet with Alexander Lukashenko once again, and added that he had warm memories of his latest visit to the Belarusian capital city. "Over a very short period of time we managed to advance the relations of Belarus and Pakistan to a high level, thanks to our personal relations," he said.

According to Mr. Sharif, he is looking forward to his next visit to Belarus. "Thank you for inviting my family. Of course, they will accompany me, and the two families will finally meet each other," he added.

The two leaders agreed that the regular exchange of high-level visits will help make a breakthrough in bilateral relations. They believe that solid political ties will give impetus to the development of economic co-operation.

The meeting also focused on the development of industrial co-operation, existing projects and prospects for setting up joint ventures in Pakistan. Belarus urged businesses to step up efforts in this field. Another issue on the agenda was the export of popular Belarusian products to the Pakistani market.

Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Sharif



Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif

took part in the opening of the *Belt and Road* summit which has brought together delegations of about 130 countries.

The two leaders conducted brief negotiations and exchanged opinions about the current state of affairs and prospects for Belarusian-Pakistani collaboration outside the regular business of the summit.

Mr. Lukashenko also had a bilateral meeting with the President

of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Negotiations between the heads of state took place as part of the *Belt and Road* forum, held in Beijing's suburbs at the China National Convention Centre.

Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Erdoğan have discussed the implementation of the previously reached agreements, as well as prospects to develop co-operation between the two countries in various spheres.



# Seeing with one’s own eyes

By Yevgeny Kononov

On the eve of the President’s official visit to China, a large group of Chinese media representatives arrived in Belarus. Around 40 journalists from China’s leading news and TV agencies and editorial offices came for a week to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of Belarus — to further their impressions for their own audiences. Alexander Lukashenko’s press conference was also prepared for the foreign guests but, on eve of their meeting, the Chinese visited the BelGee joint venture, the Great Stone Industrial Park, Gomselmash and the High-Tech Park, also getting acquainted with production of the world’s largest dump trucks, tasting food from Ozheritsky-Agro JSC and making friendly contacts with Belarusian colleagues from the *Mass Media in Belarus* exhibition. This year, China acted as the exhibition’s special guest.

The Chairman of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee — Semen Shap-



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iro — met the guests, focusing on trade, economic and investment projects. “We should create the economic conditions for China’s businesses to see it as profit-

able to come to Belarus,” he stressed, speaking of some examples of successful investment co-operation. Among them are the Great Stone Industrial Park and

the BelGee car assembly facility (to be launched this summer). Every year, up to 60,000 vehicles will be made there — all aimed at the EAEU market.

The Head of the Great Stone’s Administration, Alexander Yaroshenko, spoke of the benefits provided to the Park’s residents. In particular, they are exempt

from land tax, income tax and property tax for a decade, while all materials, services and equipment — imported for the implementation of the investment project — are also exempt from customs duties and from VAT. Journalists are always curious. While visiting BelAZ, the Chinese guests virtually ‘bombarded’ the hosts with questions. They later posed for photos against

the giant vehicles. “This is an impressive production facility. It is the first time I’ve seen trucks of the size; I’m surprised and shocked,” said Liu Minyan, a member of the tour.

The programme of the event also in-

cluded visits to Belarus’ landmark cultural sites: the Great Patriotic War History Museum, the Khatyn Complex and the Logoisk Ski Resort.



Chinese journalists visit a range of businesses in Belarus

# The roads that we choose

Meeting at the Palace of Independence was devoted to an issue relevant not only to drivers but to everyone

By Vladimir Khromov

In December 2016, the development of local highways was discussed as part of the opening of Minsk’s second ring road. Their total length around the country is 70 thousand kilometres and around half of them have not been repaired for 20-30 years. Alexander Lukashenko requested a clear plan for the reconstruction of highways of local importance. A working group was established to develop the proposals. Its participants listened to all interested parties, studied the experience of similar countries, calculated the financial cost and — armed with their figures — came to the meeting with the President.

In recent years, the country has had considerable dealings with the construction, reconstruction and repair of the Republic’s highways. This is justified as a transit state can’t have poor roads. The primary task was to connect Minsk with regional centres using first class roads. This goal has been mostly achieved, with

only the Minsk-Grodno highway M6 remaining under construction. In a short time, the road builders have constructed a wonderful second ring road...

While the leading transport arteries have been improving, the regional road network has been left behind; this has understandably led to criticism. According to the experts, about six thousand kilometres of regional roads require urgent repairs but local authorities usually cite lack of funding as an excuse. This argument did not convince the President. Firstly, to postpone solving the problems means even greater expenses in the future. Experts have calculated that if we don’t repair roads promptly, it costs almost three times as much later. Secondly, money was always scarce — even in Soviet times, but we now have the necessary resources for road construction: high-performance machinery, professional personnel, cement factories and ever upgrading technologies. Not so long ago, scientists of the National Academy of Sciences developed new ma-



Brest-Moscow highway

terials for the construction and repair of highways — including import-substituting emulsifiers and bitumen modifiers.

Mr. Lukashenko set down the basic objective that, in three to four years, local roads must be put in order. “By the end of the five-year plan, we must complete the repair and restoration of roads. We have enough technology to do it,” he said.

To achieve the goal, the state programme for road development to 2020 will be amended, including the needs of non-central roads. The President asked for the issue to be approached in a business-like way, scrupulously calculating every square metre. After all, reducing costs allows the opportunity to repair an extra thousand kilometres of road.

Minister Anatoly Sivak knows how to solve this problem, “Effective use of funds is possible only through competent technical approaches. The Ministry has developed standard solutions for various types of roads and different types of repair. This document will also be legalised through the state programme.”

We take high quality main highways for granted now, local roads will soon enjoy the same condition. After all, they are the ‘showcase’ of our country: foreigners notice them and the state should be keen to spend money on the road network, but this money does not come from thin air. These are taxes, including the state vehicle duty. It’s necessary to pay for comfort and convenience.

The figures were confirmed by

the Minister of Finance — Vladimir Amarin, “From 2017-2020, about Br900 million will be allocated for capital repairs of local highways. These are budgetary funds, including money from the Republican road fund. Of this 900 million, about 40 percent is money from levying the state duty.” At the moment, the latter is distributed as follows: 61 percent goes to the Republican budget and 39 percent to the local budget. From 2018 to 2020, this ratio will be 50 / 50.

All road repair works will undergo independent examination. In addition, Mr. Lukashenko promised to personally assess the efforts of local authorities in bringing the road network to a good condition in the autumn.





During the wreath and flower laying memorial to the Eternal Flame in Grodno

## From a speech by the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, at the wreath-laying ceremony at the Victory Monument on the 72nd anniversary of the Great Victory

Dear veterans!

Dear compatriots and foreign guests!

Our history is rich in milestones. May 9th, 1945 however, is a special day as it commemorates the Great Victory achieved by the Soviet people in the most dreadful and cruellest war against fascism.

Salvation from the fascism came at a tremendous cost. During the war years Belarus lost every third resident. Over 200,000 people were killed in the Trostenets death camp near Minsk alone. How many more were killed in burnt villages and devastated cities?!

Our country suffered irreparable material damage. Thousands of businesses, schools, museums, libraries and churches were destroyed. We lost more than half our national heritage.

Nazi crimes cannot be erased from memory particularly by those who are trying to rewrite history today, those who are trying to take the Great Victory away from our nation must not be allowed to do so. We will never stop admiring the courage of our countrymen who went through this hellish war. They did not kneel before the invaders. Both old and young revolted against the enemy. Hundreds of thousands of partisans and underground fighters killed the enemy in every part of Belarus. Such a powerful resistance gave a real contribution to the defeat of fascism and the liberation of Belarus.

# No one will deprive us of our Great Victory!

This year, the morning of May 9th was cool but the holiday mood prevailed and nature seemed to follow. During the wreath laying ceremony at Pobedy Square in Minsk, the sky cleared and the sun came out...



War veteran Ivan Bashnin

Before the President's arrival to the site, I spoke to the veterans. "Do you feel chilly?" I asked. They responded, "Not as cold as waiting in damp trenches for an order to attack the enemy." The eventual order led to victory, hence the holiday. The President laid a wreath at the Victory Monument and the metronome counted out a minute of silence.

We remember...

During the event, Alexander Lukashenko spoke to foreign diplomats, as has become traditional. Global geopolitical speeches are often flowery but

the ambassadors and attachés opened their hearts to express ordinary feelings. They sincerely congratulated Belarusians on our great holiday. We are grateful to our partners from around the globe for they share our joy in remembrance of the great victory.

The festive events in Minsk lasted until late at night when the Victory Monument was literally drowned in flowers. A sparkling televised concert *Pobedy Square-2017* closed the day, in addition to the traditional fireworks. Congratulations on the Great Victory!



War veteran Lidia Volkova

During the celebrations in Pobedy Square, the President also talked with reporters, sharing his views on the following:

### Lessons of history

This might sound immodest, but we are good pupils. We remember what happened in history and we know the reasons for failures at the beginning of the war. We learned those lessons and we understand that it is necessary to be ready, while keeping our weapons sheathed in peacetime. The most important thing for us, no matter what events may occur, is the economy. If the country continues to develop, it ensures peace, security and internal stability. Our nation should not be concerned about this. We have everything in place to protect

this land where we live.

For the third time in just over two decades, we have conducted a programme of reforming, reconstructing and improving our Armed Forces. We anticipate negative events and learn from what is happening in the world, which is currently in a restless state with wars continuing across the globe. We carefully observe what is happening, while drawing our own conclusions to adapt our Armed Forces for the protection of our homeland. It's important to enjoy unity inside our country, so that we can withstand any threats.

### On development

There are many small and medium-sized towns



in our country. We've put Minsk in order, as well as regional and district centres, agro-towns. We are now 'moving' towards the outskirts. Small villages remain; these were centres of collective farms and state farms

in the past. Some of them might be difficult to work with but we need to develop them, we'll repair and modernise the infrastructure to meet local needs.

This approach will be used countrywide. We must do everything possible to ensure families with children have a good standard of living. If it is necessary to drive children to school, then we'll take on this obligation. Importantly, we've already implemented the *School Bus* programme. We should now lay roads to villages where people live. This is the focus of our programme of local road network development. In 2017, we are focussing on these roads and I think, in three or four years, the problem will be solved.



# Word to respond with action

## New technology of the future and diverse participants among the attractions at the 21st International *Mass Media in Belarus* Specialised Exhibition

By Vladimir Velikhov

In early May, the BelExpo Exhibition Centre turned into a large editorial office for four days; its doors were open to everyone. That was a great opportunity for readers, listeners and viewers to personally interact with the journalists whose materials they follow daily in newspapers and on the radio. The exhibition hall in Minsk’s 14 Pobediteley Avenue was crowded from early morning: this year, around a hundred participants expressed a desire to take part in the media forum. Among them were news agencies, editorial offices and media publishing houses. Foreign representatives were also in attendance.

The exhibition was opened ceremonially by cutting the traditional red ribbon. The greeting to participants of the media forum on behalf of the President was read by the Deputy Prime Minister — Vasily Zharko. Alexander Lukashenko believes that this large-scale event is of great public importance in the country: ‘The annual demonstration of national media opportunities shows their significant potential’. Guests and participants at the forum were also addressed by Information Minister Lilia Ananich, “We enjoy a fully-fledged national information space which includes over 1,600 national printed media and more than 270 television and radio programmes. Our media space is open and has a wide diversity of participants.”

Apart from our own country, the exhibition was attended by representatives of Russia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia, India, Germany, Turkey and Georgia. The Chinese mass media was its special guest this year: a press tour for China’s regional media was organised to Belarus and guests visited the landmark technological, industrial, agricultural, historical and cultural sites of the Republic. Particular attention is drawn to joint Belaru-



At the International *Mass Media in Belarus-2017* Exhibition

sian-Chinese projects. When talking to journalists, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of China to Belarus — Cui Qiming — said the *Mass Media in Belarus* fair is popular among Chinese media who have taken part in the forum for many years.

Visitors to the show could read printed editions not only in Russian or Belarusian: many other languages were also available. The guests took part in organised round table discussions, seminars and master classes. The regional editorial offices prepared an interesting programme, amongst the many unique stands on show the Vitebsk Region surprised visitors with unusual pastries.

The *Media in a Changing World: Professionalism and Responsibility* conference became a highlight of the fair. Its participants focused on information security. Ms. Ananich proposed that they join forces for the security of the Internet. “To ensure the Internet is safe for children and society all participants of the information space must combine their efforts,” she said. “For example, this can be realised in the form of public-private



Near *The Minsk Times* stand

partnerships. Along with artistic unions and media editorial offices, the providers and owners of Internet resources could take part in such projects.” A device gently pressed paper into cubes with hieroglyphs on them: another visitor to the show was introduced to ancient Chinese book printing technology. This year, the Chinese stand attracted visitors with a particularly rich programme

as China was the special guest. Over 400 printed media, TV and radio programmes were presented in Minsk and, according to Mr. Quiming, the exhibition is gaining credibility.

The *Gomelskaya Prawdа* stand featured a strange fantasy-like company — a secretary in a military tunic and a red handkerchief near an old typewriter and a revolutionary sailor. The newspaper is celebrating

its centenary; possibly this is how its first journalists looked. Close by, a robot-transformer is slowly moving — reminding everyone that the event is taking place in the Year of Science. At the same time, two large extinguishers are entertaining the crowd: the *Yuny Spasatel* magazine is inventing new forms of teaching safety rules.

The Deputy Information Minister — Alexander Karlyukevich — commented, “It’s nice that regional journalists are actively participating in exhibitions. Stands demonstrate that interesting local newspapers are published nationwide. We welcome the People’s Republic of China as our special guest. The press tour of Chinese journalists has shown off our Belarusian sights; at present, they are getting acquainted with our mainstream media.”

Chen Weiwei, the Press Officer and Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy in Belarus, added, “We have strong co-operation with our Belarusian colleagues. We write a lot about Belarus: recently, you’ve been visited by our correspondents from central TV to make a report on Chinese-Belarusian families. It now enjoys great popularity in China.”

This year, Belarusian children’s media (comprising over 20 companies) shared a single stand — full of noise and fun. The Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *Vyaselka* magazine — Natalia Radikevich — said, “We’ve connected our presentation to the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book publishing. Children even have an opportunity to see how an ancient printing press operates.”

At the Indian stand, visitors are collecting stacks of colourful magazines. Om Parkash — a Senior Secretariat Assistant from the Indian Embassy to Belarus — explained, “We are informing people about our country, culture and the nature of different parts of India. The show is very bright and beautiful. I’m glad I’m here.”

# New festival landscape

By Irina Zavadsкая

**The festival of landscape architecture and design has turned the historical centre of Minsk into a new gallery under the open sky, with art objects and installations created by professionals and students of design departments, available to see, touch and test for strength in the Upper Town**

These unusual street compositions have been on show in the

Upper Town since May 1st. The designers weren’t simply getting ready for the competition but were also conducting master classes for the owners of cottages, garden plots and even balconies, over several days. Sociologists confirm that by 2050, 75 percent of the planet’s population will move to the cities and what remains beyond the urban borders will be turned into recreation areas which will be made even more comfortable and picturesque.

Anyone can join in the event.

The programme is diverse, offering lectures, film screenings and workshops. Professionals teach people how to make mini-fountains and grow roses, trim trees and see potential even in a blank space. Meanwhile, a considerable number of the installations in the Upper Town have been created mostly from waste: rusted car components, bits of pipe and other rubbish.

During the festival, live concerts and performances will be held, as well as competitions of ar-



Landscape architecture is interesting

chitects and gardeners with spectators voting and even an international tournament for landscape

chess. It appears that it’s quite easy to organise a countryside festival in the heart of the city!



# First Belarusian language song at *Eurovision*

## Portugal wins International *Eurovision-2017* Song Contest in Kiev, with Belarus placed 17th in the final

By Alexander Pimenov

The winner's prize and Eurovision's crystal microphone went to Portuguese Salvador Sobral for his song Amar Pelos Dois: the young man scoring 758 votes. The song was written for him by his sister Louise — a renowned author and performer; after the semi-final, it immediately joined the list of favourites. Salvador's magnetism and amazing sensitivity conquered the audience's hearts.

Second place went to Christian Kostov from Bulgaria and Moldova's *Sunstroke Project* team were placed third.

Belarus' *NaviBand* was placed 17th in the final, receiving the highest 12 points from Azerbaijan and Ukraine. Overall, the band scored 83.

Artistes from 26 countries performed on the stage of the International Exhibition Centre in Kiev. *NaviBand* performed their *Story of My Life* in Belarusian.

The *NaviBand* singers are grateful for the support of their fans; which they felt throughout the entire competition. After the show, Artem Lukyanenko and Ksenia Zhuk told reporters, "We tried to be honest in everything and did our best to share our joy. We are very tired as the contest is a great challenge for artistes.

However, we constantly felt support from Belarus; we are very grateful for this." Of course, Artem and Ksenia wanted to achieve the best result but they are not upset with their 17th place. "Our song was played twice at Eurovision — which is the key. We believe this is important for our language and culture," they said. They are very pleased for the Portuguese winner, considering him sincere and he was virtually guaranteed to win.

That evening, the couple tried to relax: they deviated from the script slightly at the end of their performance when Artem kissed Ksenia. "Just a few minutes before go-



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**NaviBand didn't lose in the final of the contest**

ing on stage, we remembered our old joke that we would tell journalists we are a couple if get through to the Eurovision final. This was not rehearsed or planned. Nobody knew what would happen on the stage," they said.

Artem and Ksenia admit that they have no plans to participate in the contest again. "This is a test. We are musicians and we want to write songs, develop our band and record a new album in the summer. On June 3rd, we'll give an hour-long concert near Minsk's Town Hall; the entry will be free. We are happy to play for everyone to thank them for their support," the

musicians added.

Natalia and Alexander Zhuk, Zhanna and Sergey Lukyanenko — the couples' parents — believe *NaviBand* is an incentive for other Belarusian musicians. "We think that Belarusian authors will want to work harder, without fear that their Belarusian language music is dying. There are interesting bands in Belarus and they have their fans," said Natalia and Alexander Zhuk.

"Our musicians' songs are warmly welcomed by audiences of different ages and from different countries. Music and energy unite people and a certain magic is rooted in this," the Lukyanenko

family added. The parents plunged into the *Eurovision* atmosphere with interest; there was a great deal going on behind the scenes. "We did not expect that throughout the week every day would be so busy with rehearsals, interviews and meetings. This is a responsibility and a serious experience for each artiste," they said.

Every participant greatly appreciates their support. "We are happy that Artem and Ksenia felt it; they were supported by a great number of people. During the Kiev contest, a new method of smiling easily was made. "Simply say 'Navi'," the parents say.

Advice from Dr. Zhukova

# Risk obviously cannot be underestimated

We ask what is the role of modern diagnostics in the treatment of cardiovascular disease?

A. Matusevich, from Vitebsk

At present, hypertension is one of the most common diseases of the cardiovascular system. A blood pressure of 140/90 mm Hg and above is viewed as AH. Arterial hypertension is the leading risk factor for cardiovascular morbidity. Regardless of the economic status of countries, AH makes a major contribution to overall mortality.

The spread of AH globally is on a pandemic scale. In 2000, around 972m people with hypertension were registered around the world but, according to the 2025 prognosis, this number will soon rise to 1.56bn. Every year, the AH figures in Belarus increase by an average of 5-10 percent.

### Reasons

**The reasons for AH remain unknown in 90 percent of cases. Nevertheless, certain factors are known to increase the risk of its development:**

- age (with age, the walls of large arteries become more rigid; because of this the resistance of blood vessels to blood flow increases and

pressure rises);

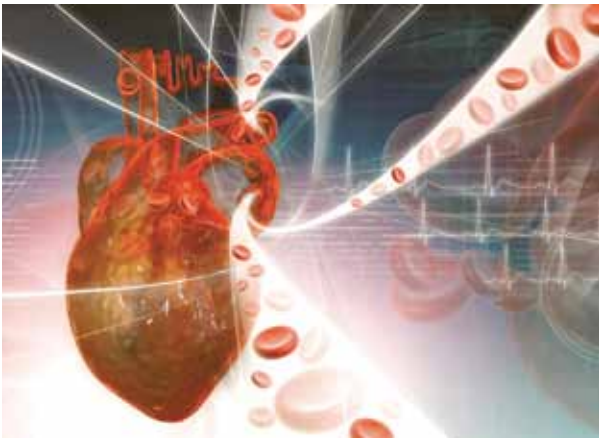
- hereditary predisposition;
- sex (men most often suffer from arterial hypertension);
- smoking;
- excessive consumption of alcohol, salt, obesity;
- inadequate physical activity;
- stress;
- kidney disease;
- increased level of adrenaline in blood;
- congenital heart diseases;
- regular intake of certain medicines (e.g., analgesic or oral contraceptives);
- late toxicosis of pregnant women (complication of pregnancy).

### Symptoms of hypertension

Increased blood pressure may not be accompanied by any symptoms and can be detected by accident — for example, when measuring blood pressure. In some cases, there may be headache, dizziness, disturbed vision.

### Complications

- stroke;
- infarction;
- visual impairment;
- heart failure;



- renal failure.

### What can you do

It's possible to reduce blood pressure and thereby cut the risk of coronary heart disease in the following ways:

You should at least partially shed excess weight because obesity increases the risk of developing hypertension. Even a loss of 3-5kg, can reduce blood pressure and control it in the future. Having achieved a lower weight, you can also reduce the level of cholesterol, triglycerides and sugar in the blood. Normalisation of weight remains the most effective drug-free method of controlling blood pressure.

Do regular exercise. Regular outdoor exercise

such as walking, running, cycling or swimming can prevent high blood pressure. More vigorous physical activity will also help reduce weight and decrease the impact of stress on the body. Specialists recommend doing exercise of 30 to 60 minutes 3-5 times a week.

Make sure that the food is not too salty. You should limit daily salt consumption to 2.4 mg. This can be achieved if less salt is used in cooking and if you limit eating tinned food, convenience foods and fast food.

You should limit the intake of alcohol. It's been proven that people who drink too much alcohol more commonly suffer from hypertension. They also suffer from excessive weight and,

accordingly, it's much more difficult to control blood pressure. Recommended limits would be 350 ml of beer, 120 ml of wine or 30 ml of 40-degree spirits.

Take more potassium which can also reduce blood pressure. Potassium-rich food include fruit and vegetables. At least five portions of vegetable or fruit a day are recommended.

It is extremely important to stop smoking. Smoking itself does not induce arterial hypertension but is, nevertheless, a significant risk factor in coronary heart disease.

Food should not be very fatty. Observations show that a low-fat diet helps lower cholesterol in the blood and thereby reduces the risk of coronary artery disease.

### What can your doctor do?

Visit your doctor regularly. The doctor can make a diagnosis, conduct an additional examination (check the state of the fundus, the function of kidneys and examine the heart), they can prescribe antihypertensive therapy and identify possible complications. The doctor's recommendations should be

taken seriously, problems arise when patients arbitrarily stop treatment when they are feeling better. Such a recovery often does not last long and its consequences can be significant — including heart attacks and stroke. Do not stop taking medication if your blood pressure is normal, as it is probably the medication keeping it on track.

After you have achieved the desired effect and your blood pressure has decreased, you must control it. It is recommended to regularly measure blood pressure at home and consult the doctor at least once a year (to monitor the general state and effectiveness of the therapy).

### Prevention of arterial hypertension

Regularly measure your blood pressure. Refrain from smoking and alcohol. Observe a low-fat and low-salt diet. Do exercise, preferably in the fresh air (cycling, running, active walking). Learn to overcome stressful situations. Maintain a normal body weight.

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





France’s new president, Emmanuel Macron, centre, on the Champs-Élysées in Paris after his inauguration

# Hard work begins for Macron after election

Emmanuel Macron has been sworn in as the new president of France

The handover took place in a formal ceremony at the Elysee Palace in Paris. Former president Francois Hollande handed over the reins of power to his successor in a ceremony heavy with protocol.

“We are at the dawn of

an extraordinary renaissance. We have in our hands all the benefits that have made and will make the 21st century. We will remake and relaunch the Europe we need because it protects us and allows us to demonstrate our values to the world. France’s role in

the world is an eminent one. We will assume our responsibilities when it is called for. A timely response to the big crises of our era.”

In his acceptance speech, Macron stressed the need for France and the French to come together. It was a message of

hope and encouragement. The country has political, social, economic and security challenges to overcome, he said.

The 39-year-old pro-Europe centrist Emmanuel Macron vowed to work to heal divisions in society.

Macron’s inauguration is

a first for the world’s fifth largest economy. The newcomer was unknown to the wider public three years ago and remains outside any of the traditional political groupings. The former investment banker is the youngest post-war French leader.

## Brazil declares Zika emergency over

**Brazil has declared an end to a national emergency over the Zika virus, following a sharp decline in cases**

The emergency had been in place since November 2015, when the virus was linked to the birth of babies with abnormally small heads. The threat peaked just as Brazil prepared to host the 2016 Olympics. Some 7,900 suspected cases of Zika were registered between January and April, a 95 percent drop compared to the same period a year ago, according to the latest epidemiological data. To date, more than 2,200 cases of babies born with microcephaly have been confirmed among 10,000 reports of suspicions.

The Health Ministry said while the disease remains a public health concern, Brazil no longer meets the requirements required to maintain the state of emergency — namely that the epidemic is unexpected, unusual or that it risks spreading abroad.

It added that measures taken to control the population of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes had proved effective in combating not only Zika but also dengue fever and chikunguña. The World Health Organisation lifted its own international emergency last year, saying Zika is here to stay.



## Mummies in Egypt

**Archaeologists have discovered 17 mummies in a complex of catacombs in Minya province, south of Cairo**

The ancient artefacts were reportedly found at the Tuna Al-Gabal site at the

city in Upper Egypt. Experts from the Faculty of Archaeology at Cairo University have been working at the site, near the necropolis of birds and animals.

They were investigating an eight-metre deep burial

shaft. Other artefacts have also been found.

The discovery is the first of its kind since 1950, when egyptologist Sami Gabra discovered a burial site of ibis and baboons on that date.

## Global cyber attack hits hospitals and companies

**Britain’s National Health Service says 16 regional health authorities have been hit by a massive cyberattack from persons unknown demanding money**

The ‘ransomware’ attack also affected computer systems in some doctors’ surgeries, which had to turn patients away and cancel appointments as software crashed. However, it appears the attack was a general one and did not target health services in particular.

At the same time similar attacks have been crippling businesses in Spain. Cyber attacks there have targeted telecoms giant Telefonica, banks, retailers, energy and transport firms, again using ransom-



ware to demand money.

Several companies have taken pre-emptive measures to prevent any hack into their systems by the variant of the WannaCry virus, which encrypts vital data making it unreadable. Staff at some companies were told to

switch off machines and cut internet access. With cyber-hacking on the rise many organisations are looking at their systems, some of which still run software written in the 1980s.

**Materials prepared with aid of information agencies**



# Artist Roman Sustov's parallel world

*Arrival* exhibition at National Art Museum comprises just twelve colour lithographs from the artist's collection, but is nonetheless attracting a good deal of attention from visitors

By Veniamin Mikheev

*Arrival* is based on the idea of the existence of invisible lands, unknown continents, countries and cities. The parallel world is fantastical, but accessible and recognisable in the images. This is the leitmotif of Roman Sustov's most graphic works.

This artistic project is inspired by modern hypotheses of the Universe — for example, the string theory and quantum foam, the theory of expanding and contracting Universes popular among researchers. Mr. Sustov has also become interested in the possibility of visualising matter that can hardly be seen or felt. As a result, his series of lithographs are filled with planetary architecture and earthly artefacts, hybrids of mechanical and biological, living and not. The series is a suggestion for viewers to look at the continent behind the door, while making a kind of visual image of the universal dialectic.

Mr. Sustov's graphics amaze visitors with striking images and the precision of his drawing. The artist uses incredibly difficult structures in his works — both in composition and meaning. Their creative visualisation is based on numerous cunningly devised elements and complicated constructions.

Roman Sustov has participated in over seventy international



and Republican exhibitions. He's repeatedly been the recipient of diverse awards and diplomas from prestigious competitions. It is not surprising that three lithographs from his *Arrival* series have already gained recognition from critics and connoisseurs of graphic art. In particular, they have received an award at the 5th Belarusian Biennale of Painting, Graphics and Sculpture.

Impressively, the artist's works are now kept at the National Art Museum, Minsk's Museum of Modern Fine Arts, as well as private collections in the USA, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine and Belarus.



## Serious problem also discussed 100 years ago

By Vladimir Velikhov

### Gomel's Drama Theatre premieres Yakub Kolas' little-known play

Gomel's Regional Drama Theatre premiered *Plague* — based on Yakub Kolas' *Antos Lata* — by young Gomel stage director Andrey Shidlovsky. He chose a rare play by the classical writer of Belarusian literature, difficult to find even in collections of works by this famous author. This year celebrates the 100th anniversary of the work.

The last staging of *Antos Lata* was 15 years ago at Mozyr's Drama Theatre. Before this, this work was only seen in the 1920s.

Gomel's Regional Drama Theatre has staged the performance in the Belarusian language, leaving author's text almost unchanged. The stage director presented it as a tragic comedy. He has also tried to move completely away from time frames, not allowing the audience to know when the action takes place: in the past or the future.

The problem of alcoholism, tackled by the Belarusian classical writer in his *Antos Lata* play a hundred years ago remains acute nowadays. This tragic comedy is about a disease which can be experienced by anyone, whatever form the plague knocks at the door: in the guise of a glass, a syringe or a cigarette. Its major weapon is the weakness of human nature.

The performance in Gomel involves leading young artistes of the Regional Drama Theatre: Yuri Martinovich, Mikhail Grushechkin, Mikhail Ruchko, Alla Lenaya, Dmitry Baikov, Vitaly Tishkov, Alexandra Bychkov and Maria Khodyakova. Tatiana Stysina is the theatre designer while Dmitry Neberov was responsible for the music.

Stage director Andrey Shidlovsky is the author of such performances as the *Country of Unwanted Toys* (based on his own play); *Treasure Island* (R.L. Stevenson) and *The Show Begins* existential show. Andrey has also played leading roles in Gomel Drama Theatre's performances.

# Authentic custom from Okhnovo village

By Alexey Fedosov

### Unique traditions of a Slavonic custom to be restored in Grodno Region's Dyatlovo District

Residents of Okhnovo village breathed new life into the ancient custom of 'Yurie'. Local residents have been celebrating the ancient farming holiday in honour of the protector of peasants and animals, St. Yuri, since the dawn of history and view it as a 'Second Easter'. People prepare for the

holiday well in advance, decorating crosses on the streets with rushniks and flowers, cooking sausages, cakes, pancakes, cheese and other delicacies to exchange with each other and give to guests. In the evening, the residents get together and walk through the village with a folklore ensemble, stopping near the crosses to ask St. Yuri for protection and singing songs to bring rich crops, good weather, strong health, happiness and well-being. On the first day 'Yurie'



is welcomed, while the next it is bid farewell, with the whole village gathering together

and plant summer cucumbers. People of all ages take part in the holiday.

The custom in Okhnovo however, has its own peculiarities; alongside the traditional topic of farming and animal breeding it also includes visits to newly-weds who have married in the year. The visitors arrive at their houses and sing a Magnificat song to a young wife who then gives presents and throws a woven belt onto the fence (pieces of it are later used as protective charms).

This year, two young couples are waiting for guests in the village. The Okhnovo locals sing unique songs in the Belarusian language, very difficult to memorise, and even people in neighbouring villages don't know them.

It should also be mentioned that this authentic custom from Okhnovo was the first item of intangible cultural heritage in the Grodno Region, registered on the State List of Historic and Cultural Values of Belarus.



# Bell-bottomed trousers from *Pesnyary*

Minsk hosts an exhibition of the *Pesnyary* ensemble's unique costumes

By Kristina Khilko

### Bold experiment

We all remember the bell-bottomed trousers, shirts with bright patterns and folk decoration! The legendary *Pesnyary* were not only performers of nationwide popular hits — *Belovezhskaya Pushcha*, *Yas Mowed Clover* or *Vologda* — but also true style icons.

The exhibition displays over fifty sketches by artists Valentina Bartlova, Galina Krivoblotskaya, Yuri Piskun and Olga Demkina. There are also musical manuscripts, photos and concert posters — in addition to the maestro's favourite instrument: the double-necked guitar.

Vladimir Mulyavin chose the stage designs personally and often sent back a costume for revision if he disliked even a single detail. "Some patterns have even preserved Mr. Mulyavin's signature and his hand-written 'Agree'," comments a scientific researcher from the National Historical Museum, Yulia Krivdyuk.

Original costumes are the main exhibits. Mr. Mulyavin loved aristocratic outfits and his image with a long moustache was emphasised by his unique and recognisable style: the maestro put a coat on over his peasant's overcoat — tying it with his wide belt which resembled the traditional Slutsk sash. He always had a fur hat with feathers and vintage boots of brown leather.

Not all the musicians appreciated those outfits, as they were hot and the boots were uncomfortable — with high heels or a platform sole. It was a real challenge to perform a concert with them on. One of the musicians once sawed the high heels off. Mr. Mulyavin was strict. "Fix them or leave. You can do anything you want but you must appear on stage as intended," the maestro told him. The next day, the heels were returned to the shoes.



White coats embroidered with cornflowers are among the most recognisable images of the 'Pesnyary'



One of artist Yuri Piskun's outfits (left) made in the aristocratic style with luxurious embroidery, rich finishing and fur hats, only the Slutsk sash is lacking. The ensemble toured the USA in the mid-1970s in these costumes (right).



### Heavenly gardens

One of Mr. Mulyavin's favourite outfits in the show was based on a work by the Belarusian artist Alena Kish. In 1994, the ensemble prepared a new programme for the *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* — *The Soul's Voice*. The musicians performed with the chamber choir

and the *Khoroshki* Dance Ensemble. Colourful costumes were designed specially for the occasion. Mr. Mulyavin's shirt featured flowers, trees and whimsical pat-

**Exhibition curator Yulia Krivdyuk: 'In these costumes, the ensemble sang their famous *Venus Star* based on poems by the Belarusian classical author — Maxim Bogdanovich'**

terns — wonderfully resembling the naïve art pictures of Ms. Kish who loved to draw paradise gardens.

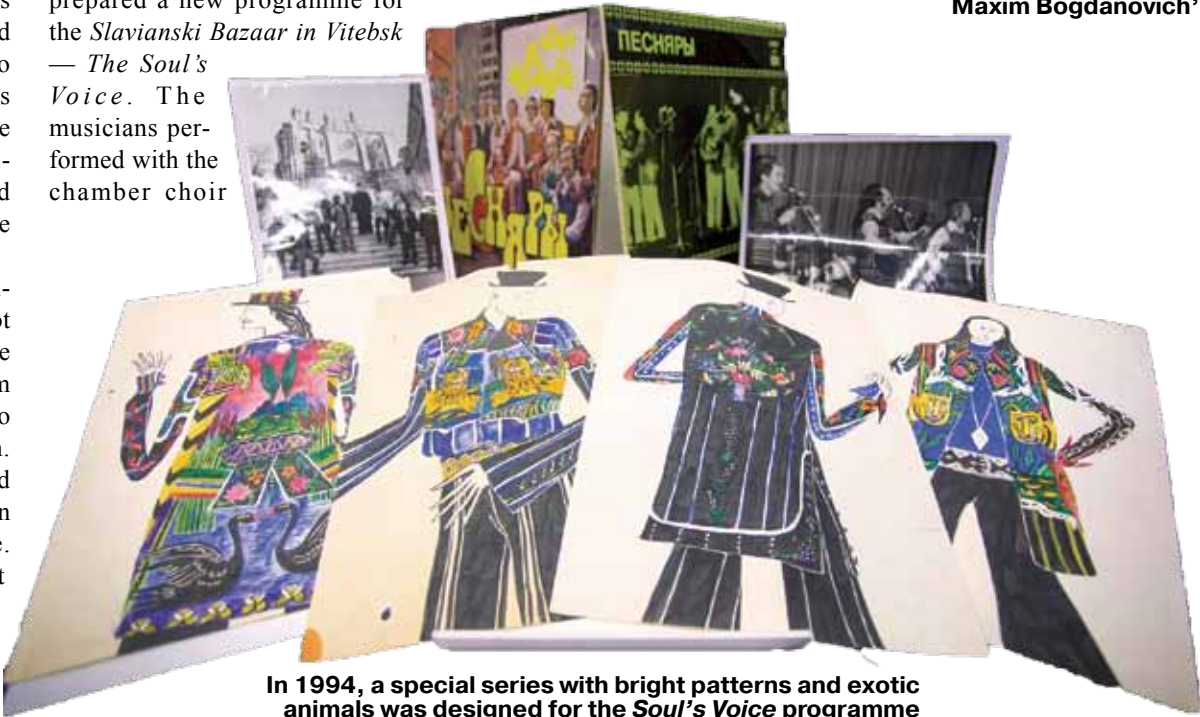
Two years later, *Pesnyary* presented their *Freedom: Cossack Liberty* programme. They enjoyed a large-scale tour from Brest to Vladivostok, and the band appeared in public in velvet suits embroidered with Cossack patterns.

Their outfit sketches were approved at the highest level in the Ministry of Culture for each concert programme and the costumes trace the evolution of the legendary band's work. *Pesnyary* has left their bright and unmistakable trace both in the music world and also in the history of stage costume of Belarusian and Soviet music.

### Hello, America!

In 1976, *Pesnyary* became the first Soviet ensemble to tour the United States. For their trip, the musicians sewed costumes from fashionable jeans, obtaining the fabric from abroad in a special order. The ensemble went on the US tour with the winners of the Grammy Award — the *New Christy Minstrels* folk band. The latter played for the popular Soviet ensemble in the opening act. After the concerts, fans ran backstage — thanking the musicians, asking for autographs and talking about the friendship between the two peoples. *Pesnyary* were appropriately nicknamed the 'Soviet Beatles'.

On their return, Mr. Mulyavin told reporters with a smile, "Those concerts were no different from those we give at home, in small towns. Soviet audiences are more attentive and Americans are more emotional."



In 1994, a special series with bright patterns and exotic animals was designed for the *Soul's Voice* programme



# Remaining among the elite

After a series of setbacks, Belarus' hockey team defeats Slovenia — 5:2 — to preserve its place in the World Championship top division

By Kirill Karin

The Belarusian team managed to not only guarantee a place among the best teams but also take revenge for their defeat to the Slovenians in September 2016 in the Olympic qualifications. Andrey Kostitsyn — who missed the dramatic match against France — returned to the team.

The events of the meeting with the Slovenians were no less interesting. Realising that the winner would keep their place in the elite division, the Belarusians were on the attack. The first goal in the match was scored by Alexander Pavlovich; with his wrist roll, he sent the puck under the crossbar. However, Dave Lewis' team failed to capitalise on their success in the first twenty minutes of the match. In turn, their rivals managed to score twice. Ziga Jeglic scored to finish — 1: 1 at the end



A moment in the Belarus-Slovenia match

of the first half. In the 20th minute, David Rodman produced an accurate throw to take his team in the lead

— 2:1. Many experts and fans have called the game against France one of the best second periods played

by the Belarusian team at the tournament. However, after the match with Slovenia, opinion may change.

The Belarusians showed their character. Our young players performed confidently and scored four

times. Immediately after the break, Yevgeny Kovyrshin took Andrey Kostitsyn's pass near Gasper's gates to send the puck into the goal taking the score to 2:2. In the middle of the second period, Alexander Pavlovich hit the Slovenians' open angle — 3:2. The Belarusians continued to attack and hit the mark twice more.

At the end of the TV broadcast, Vladimir Novitsky — an experienced sports journalist and hockey specialist, gave a sigh of relief. He expressed the fans' feelings, saying, "Thank God, we have not thrown this away!" Alexander Pavlovich (producing a goal and a scoring pass) was named the best player of the match against Slovenia. After celebrating, Belarus' anthem was heard for the first time during this year's World Championship at the AccorHotels Arena.



Congratulations to the winner

## 55 steps forward

By Semen Bondarev

**Belarusian tennis player Yegor Gerasimov wins tournament with a prize fund of \$74,000 in Uzbek Qarshi and rises by 55 positions in ATP ranking**

In the decisive match, Yegor Gerasimov defeated Turkish tennis player Cem Ilkel (ranked 326th) — 6:3, 7:6 (6:4). Before winning the tournament in Uzbek Qarshi, the 24-year-old Minsker had been in 225th position, after his triumph he moved to 170th place, boast-

ing 241 ranking points.

Last season, Yegor received a serious back injury but thanks to his desire to return to the court as quickly as possible and, with the help of highly qualified professionals, Yegor managed to recover quickly and even improved on his previous form. According to the Belarusian Tennis Federation, he has benefitted from the launch of new preparation methods for Belarusian tennis players.

Having started the season in 298th place in the world rankings, Yegor be-

gan to make significant progress, as is demonstrated by his results. Before winning the competition in Qarshi he triumphed at the ATP Challenger in France (starting from qualification) and then won the tournament in Bukhara. Moreover, Yegor Gerasimov and his teammates played superbly for the national team of Belarus in victorious matches of the Davis Cup against Romania and Austria, which enabled the Belarusians to get into the play-offs of the elite division of the unofficial world championship.

## Fights and dreams

Belarusian fighters with 20 medals occupy first place in team standing of Muay Thai World Championship, held at Minsk's Sports Palace

By Igor Svitov

On the last but one day of the tournament, the winners of the under 23 years (class B) were decided. Our athletes claimed five medals: Maxim Petkevich (63.5kg) and Dmitry Filippov (71kg) became world champions, while Roman Dovnar (67kg), Karen Tumasyan (81kg) and Vladislav Shedko (over 91kg) were awarded silver. Previously, bronze medals were won in class A by Sagif Gasanov (51kg), Nikolay Svedomsky (54kg), Andrey Gerasimchuk (over 91kg), Veronika Sobol (67kg), and Maria Belush (under 75kg). Artem Vinnik (60kg) finished third in the under 23 age group.

"Our young Belarusian athletes have performed well in the domestic championships. The only thing that gives me some concern is that there were too many injuries. After several fights, athletes appear in the finals with injuries. I know how ag-



Saranon Glompan and Dmitry Valent (right)

gressive this contact sport is, but there wasn't such a large number of injuries previously," noted Belarus' head coach, Mikhail Stepanov.

On the final day, almost all the athletes who performed in the finals of the adult competitions won gold: Yelena Leshkevich (45kg), Diana Yemelyanova (over 75kg), Artem Avanes-

ov (63.5kg), Dmitry Varetets (67kg), Dmitry Valent (81kg), Yevgeny Volchek (86kg) and Denis Gonchero-nok (91kg).

A silver medal went to Lyudmila Chislova (48kg). Vadim Vaskov (71kg) also qualified for the finals but didn't appear in the final fight because of injury and was awarded silver.





International festival of vintage and classic cars — *Retro-Minsk-2017* — held in Minsk

EXHIBITIONS	
<b>NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS</b> <i>20 Lenin Street</i> Until 21 <sup>st</sup> May. <i>On Land and Sky</i> Until 28 <sup>th</sup> May. <i>Forgotten Fairy-tales</i> Until 3 <sup>rd</sup> July. <i>Rembrandt’s Engraving</i>	<b>BELARUSIAN STATE MUSEUM OF GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY</b> <i>8 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 25 <sup>th</sup> May. <i>How I See War and Peace</i> Until 26 <sup>th</sup> May. <i>Aviation of Great Patriotic War Partisans</i>
<b>NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF BELARUS</b> <i>12 Karl Marx Street</i> Until 21 <sup>st</sup> May. <i>Chernobyl: Look from the Present</i> Until 1 <sup>st</sup> June. <i>From Romanian Dinary to Belarusian Rouble</i> Until 4 <sup>th</sup> June. <i>Field of Flowers</i>	<b>MUSEUM OF NATURE AND ECOLOGY</b> <i>117 Kazinets Street</i> Until 11 <sup>th</sup> September. <i>Miraculous World of Butterflies</i>
<b>NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS</b> <i>116 Nezavisimosti Avenue</i> Until 30 <sup>th</sup> June. Exhibition of wax figures: <i>Miraculous Travel</i>	<b>CAT MUSEUM</b> <i>23 Internatsionalnaya Street</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> May. <i>Our Cosmos</i>
<b>PALACE OF ARTS</b> <i>3 Kozlov Street</i> Until 21 <sup>st</sup> May. <i>Return of Image: Devotion to Marc Chagall’s 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday</i>	<b>HOUSE OF PICTURES</b> <i>89/3 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 4 <sup>th</sup> June. <i>Scents of Life-2. Sense and Feelings</i>
<b>YANKA KUPALA STATE LITERARY MUSEUM</b> <i>4 Y.Kupala Street</i> Until 16 <sup>th</sup> June. <i>Host of Belarusian Song</i>	<b>TSENTRALNY</b> <i>13 Nezavisimosti Avenue</i> Until 21 <sup>st</sup> May. Photo exhibition: <i>Reflection</i>
<b>YAKUB KOLAS STATE LITERARY MUSEUM</b> <i>5 Akademicheskaya Street</i> Until 30 <sup>th</sup> September. <i>In Waves of Endless Movement: Along Kolas’ Automobile Paths</i>	<b>YAKUB KOLAS SQUARE</b> Until 9 <sup>th</sup> September. <i>The Artist and the City: Golden Collection of Belarusian Pictorial Art</i>
	<b>GALLERIA MINSK</b> <i>9 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 31st July. White Pole ice-cream museum

THEATRES	
<b>BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE</b> <i>1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square</i> 18.05. Flying Dutchman 19.05. Seven Beauties 21.05. Magic Flute 22.05. Cinderella 23.05. Figaro’s Wedding 24.05. Firebird; Scheherazade; Shades of Beauty 25.05. Carmen	21.05. Magic Rings of Almanzor; Woe from Wit 23.05. Double Eternity 24.05. Truth is Good but Happiness is Better 25.05. Lady for Day
<b>BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE</b> <i>44 Myasnikov Street</i> 18 and 19.05. Bridegrooms 22.05. Glass of Water 23.05. Ball in Savoy 24.05. Shalom Aleichem!	<b>THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS</b> <i>13 Pobediteley Avenue</i> 18.05. Nobody Ever Said Life Would Be Easy 19.05. An Unnamed Star 20.05. The Battlefield 21.05. Even a Wise Man Stumbles 23.05. Forgetting Herostratos 24.05. A Very Simple Story
<b>YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE</b> <i>7 Engels Street</i> 18.05. Waltmaster-Accordion 19.05. The Tyke 20.05. Art 21.05. Crystal Shoe; Paulinka 23.05. School of Taxpayers 24.05. The Seagull 25.05. Evening	<b>REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA</b> <i>44 Kropotkin Street</i> 18.05. Searching 19.05. Oscar and Pink Lady 20.05. Princess-General 22.05. Adel 23.05. This is All She 24.05. Uninvited Guest 25.05. If No Tomorrow
<b>YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE (SMALL STAGE)</b> <i>12 Engels Street</i> 24.05. HendelBach 25.05. Old-fashioned Comedy	<b>BELARUSIAN REPUBLICAN YOUNG SPECTATOR’S THEATRE</b> <i>26 Engels Street</i> 20.05. Cat’s House
<b>MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE</b> <i>5 Volodarsky Street</i> 18.05. Innkeeper 19.05. Pane Kokhanku 20.05. Tricks of Khanuma	<b>BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE</b> <i>20 Engels Street</i> 19 and 20.05. The Kid and Karlsson on the Roof 21 and 23.05. Pippi Longstocking 24.05. Belvedere 25.05. Interview with Witches