

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

ISSN 1991-2978



Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 21 (739) ● THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2018 ● WWW.SB.BY



‘Welcome’ was heard in Grodno in 36 languages

The city is hosting the Republican Festival of National Cultures for the 12th time. Dozens of stages and more than forty different events are taking place as part of the festival which markets itself as a holiday with a lot of fun for all. The forum is filled with music, dances, national delicacies, cultural customs, games and entertainments.

Vienna-Minsk: incoming traffic



Sebastian Kurz

A telephone conversation between the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, and Federal Chancellor of Austria, Sebastian Kurz, took place on the initiative of the Austrian side

The Federal Chancellor informed the President of Belarus about the changes that had happened in Austria's political arena. In turn,

Alexander Lukashenko congratulated Sebastian Kurz on his appointment as Federal Chancellor of Austria.

During the telephone conversation, the two sides discussed contacts between the two countries in various fields and agreed that they cannot be lost. Mr. Kurz invited Mr. Lukashenko to visit Austria. Having accepted the invitation, the President

of Belarus, in turn, invited the Federal Chancellor to visit Belarus together with business interests.

During the conversation, they paid special attention to the *Eastern Europe: In Search of Security for All* international forum organised by the Minsk Dialogue initiative. Mr. Kurz emphasised the positive results of the conference. Apart from that, the two sides discussed

the Core Group Meeting of the Munich Security Conference which is expected to take place in Belarus in autumn 2018. The Federal Chancellor expressed his readiness to support Belarus and provide comprehensive assistance in this context.

Speaking about bilateral co-operation, Mr. Lukashenko mentioned positive dynamics in the development of the Bela-

rusian-Austrian relations and expressed the hope that the constructive interaction will be continued. He underlined Belarus' commitment to the development of interaction with Austria.

They also discussed trade- economic and investment liaisons. Austria is one of Belarus' key investment partners. During the telephone conversation, Mr. Lukashenko and

Mr. Kurz also spoke about the operation of the Belarusian telecommunications sector, in particular, the work on the market and the further development of Velcom which is an affiliated company of Telekom Austria AG.

Border is always reliably protected



Border guard soldiers in parade formation

By Vladimir Khromov

Alexander Lukashenko sees the major threat to peace in the confrontation of major powers. He noted this while speaking to border guards and their families as he visited the Divin border guard station in the Kobrin District.

"As far as I can see, clashes of interests of major countries are the key threat. Take a look at what is going on. USA against China is the key issue. China is on the way to the top. The country is a leader in many fields. Naturally, the Americans have no intention of giving up their leadership," he said. "Then there are clashes between Russia and the West, Russia and the USA. There are tensions between India and China and a lot of problems between China and Vietnam over the Sprightly Islands."

The President stressed that these clashes manifest themselves in other places, for example, in the situation in the Donbass area in Ukraine and in Syria. "It is an open confrontation there," he said. As far as Syria is concerned, Mr. Lukashenko noted that the

interests of major powers are at stake. "Russia, Iran, and the USA are often at odds," stated the Belarusian leader. "The same situation is observed in Ukraine. It seems to me that there could be peace over there if other parties were not interested in this confrontation." Mr. Lukashenko mentioned tensions between the USA and the European Union in trade in steel and aluminium. He pointed out that sanctions are often used to deal with various issues. "What does a sanction represent? Sanctions result in the loss of money and in tensions in society. Every party safeguards its own interests. I don't want these trade and information wars to evolve into a conflict, particularly a conflict between major powers with nuclear potential. Everyone would feel the heat then," stressed the President.

He noted that small and medium countries must not blindly follow the major global players. "We should pursue a hard-stance policy and defend our interests together," said Mr. Lukashenko. The Head of State also mentioned the situation in Ukraine, while talking about prospects for the development of the geopolitical situation in the region.

In his words, there is some uncertainty in this matter. "If Ukraine joins NATO, it's one thing. If it doesn't, it's another. If ultra-nationalist trends with the desire to be at war with everyone prevail, it's a completely different situation, a more complicated one," he noted. "I often tell Russians that there may come a time when we will be happy that Ukraine is part of NATO instead of becoming a country ruled by bandits and warlords. If it does become such a country, it won't be a picnic for Russia, Belarus, and the rest of the world."

Moreover, Mr. Lukashenko believes that joining the border guard service was fateful for his presidential career. "I remember that I was a border guard once. But maybe my sons are more inclined to celebrate this day [Border Guard Day]; and I have a tradition of visiting border guard stations. Today I'm visiting your border guard station and tomorrow I will be at the unit where I started. I also keep an eye on the equipment of the border service."

He stressed that his service as part of the border guard troops will always be an important part of his life. "I often think that I'd never

have become the president of the country if I hadn't joined the border guard. There were several moments in my life, which determined who I am now," said the President. Mr. Lukashenko mentioned the well-developed and modern physical infrastructure of the Divin border guard station where all the conditions for military service are available, as well as proper living standards for military experts and their families. The complex includes an administrative building, a border guard station, and a multifamily residential building. "I wish we had border guard stations like this in my time... Although they were good. For instance, the Kizhevator border guard station. It was a good one. Many other border guard stations in the Brest Region [where Alexander Lukashenko served in the army] were outstanding. It was the best border guard service branch in the Soviet Union but serving was difficult: inspections all the time and border violators were possibly treated much more seriously then," said the President.

"We had a very serious attitude towards the protection of the state border," emphasised the Head of State.

Always trained and combat ready

By Alexander Pimenov

The Belarusian army should respond efficiently to modern threats and challenges, noted Alexander Lukashenko at a session discussing the results of the Armed Forces inspection

"We invest significant resources in the maintenance and re-equipment of the army. Troops receive new military technology and equipment. Belarus is not going to be drawn into an arms race or engage in sabre rattling. However, due to the current military political situation, we cannot afford to lower our proportion of public expenditure financing. We will spend as much on our security as is necessary. We need to feed our soldiers," asserted the Head of State.

Alexander Lukashenko noted that through the mass media, Belarus informed the general public and all those who are interested in security and defence matters outside Belarus, about the regular inspection of the Armed Forces. "On my instruction, such inspections are held without notice in order to learn the true state of affairs in the army," said the President.

The meeting considered the state of affairs in the Armed Forces and possible issues. "Our army is one of the main instruments of the state that ensures military security. It should effectively respond to modern challenges and threats. This is a crucial requirement," stressed Mr. Lukashenko.

The Head of State noted that money is invested in the army to increase the combat capabilities of the Armed Forces and improve the defence of Belarus. "It's unacceptable when costly weapons are underutilised or come into disrepair due to a lack of professionalism of individual commanders. The goal is not just to preserve or increase the military potential of our army, but to use it rationally," added the President.

According to Mr. Lukashenko, these were the aspects he asked to focus on during the inspection. "You know that we cannot get complacent, as such an attitude leads to irresponsibility, which can cost a lot to the state and the people. God forbid, we should have a war again. Today we know a lot about how the Nazi army managed to cross Belarus within two months or less. Not because Belarus or its people were not good enough. This happened because of mismanagement and bungling. Discussions about war were forbidden to avoid provocation, to appease. We must learn from such lessons."

New outlines of reality

By Vasily Kharitonov

Vice President of the People's Republic of China Wang Qishan arrives in Belarus on an official visit. Remarkably, this is his first foreign official visit in his current position.

The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, met with Vice President of the People's Republic of China Wang Qishan in his countryside residence and the meeting was held as a working dinner. Alexander Lukashenko and Wang Qishan greeted each other warmly. The President noted that there were a number of issues the two sides would have to discuss. In turn, the Vice President shared his impressions of the visit to the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park and spoke highly of the negotiations with representatives of the Belarusian Government.

The Belarusian Head of State invited Wang Qishan to see the local spring well where the Chinese guest could drink pure water with unique qualities. After visiting the well and after a tour of the residence, Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Qishan spent some time in the tea house enjoying Chinese tea and Belarusian jam. They discussed the situation in the world and international relations. The conversation about bilateral relations continued over supper in a Belarusian fashion. The guest was offered draniki (grated potato pancakes), Belarusian pelmeni (meat dumplings wrapped in dough), and a roast duck. For dessert, Alexander Lukashenko offered his signature dish — curd rolls with ice cream and strawberries.

It's remarkable that the choice of dishes available during the supper was prompted by the Chinese tradition but influenced by Belarusian zest. For instance, instead of rice flour the Belarusian pelmeni used wheat



Alexander Lukashenko treats Wang Qishan with spring water

flour. Instead of Peking duck the Chinese guest was offered duck with giblets. The choice of the Belarusian President's countryside residence as the venue for the meeting also underlined the particularly friendly and strategic nature of Belarusian-Chinese relations. Alexander Lukashenko welcomes only the most respected and dearest guests in this manner. From the first few minutes of Mr. Qishan's visit to Minsk, an intensive working schedule was prepared. Before meeting the President, he visited the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park, the National Art Museum, the Loshitsa park and laid a wreath to the Victory Monument in Minsk. At Minsk National Airport, the esteemed guest was welcomed by Belarus' Prime Minister, Andrei Kobyakov, who greeted him, saying, "We are glad to welcome a good friend of the Belarusian nation. Your visit to Belarus is highly appreciated and is perceived as an additional good sign of the commitment of the Chinese Government to expanding rela-

ACCENT
The conversation about bilateral relations continued over supper in a Belarusian fashion. The guest was offered draniki (grated potato pancakes), Belarusian pelmeni (meat dumplings wrapped in dough), and a roast duck. For dessert, Alexander Lukashenko offered his signature dish — curd rolls with ice cream and strawberries.

tions with Belarus. We want Belarus-China relations not only to grow stronger, but also to serve as an example to other countries: these are relations based on good neighborliness, mutual respect and equality".

Wang Qishan was elected to the responsible position in March 2018. His arrival in Minsk is the first foreign official visit in the new post. Beijing underlines the special importance of the Belarusian vector in its foreign policy. Mr. Kobyakov said, in his speech at the National Airport, "Belarusian society understands the idea of the President of China, Xi Jinping, to build a community based on social jus-

tice and equal opportunities for the development of countries."

The big construction is in full swing in close vicinity to the national airport, where the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park is being built. The heads of the two states stood at the foundation of this global project. The first time Alexander Lukashenko and Xi Jinping discussed this idea was in 2010. At that time, Mr. Jinping occupied the position of the Vice President of the People's Republic of China. Five years later, when Mr. Jinping became the President, during his official visit to Belarus, with Mr. Lukashenko he visited the construction site. In the

presence of the heads of state, certificates of registration were given to first seven residents of the Park. Now, their number has increased 5-fold. Mr. Qishan visited the Great Stone Park immediately after his arrival, where the Head of the Park's Administration, Alexander Yaroshenko, informed him that, "The preferences given to the Park's residents enabled us to seriously advance attracting investors. In late 2016, we had eight residents, while on May 25th we accepted our 35th resident. Moreover, 19 residents come from China, 9 originate from Belarus while the remaining come from other states. We also have projects from the USA, Germany, Austria, Lithuania, Russia and Israel. We position our venue as an international project. We plan to have no fewer than 40 residents by the end of the year."

According to most modest calculations, residents of the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park have already made applications for the creation of at least 700 new high-tech jobs. This is only the beginning, and the Great Stone is becoming a central platform in implementing a large-scale Chinese concept, *Belt and Road*. Mr. Qishan said during his visit that, "The Great Stone is a very important project in developing the *Belt and Road* initiative. If everything is ok here, then we'll be able to realise this initiative everywhere. It's necessary to reinforce investments in the Park. There are many parks in China, while the Great Stone Park is the only such in the world. It should be successful."

These are working initiatives, aiming to develop an idea that is actually already implemented. There's no reason to doubt the big future of the project. The mutual interest of Minsk and Beijing in partnership is more than apparent.

Synchronisation of watches

By Oleg Bogomazov

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, discusses preparation for forthcoming session of the Supreme State Council of the Union State with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov

Mr. Lukashenko warmly welcomed Mr. Lavrov, stressing that Belarus is not a foreign country for him. "I'm absolutely sure of this. I always cite co-operation between the ministries of foreign affairs of Belarus and Russia as an example and a role model for all our departments in Belarus and Russia. You always find mutual understanding. You make plans and execute them, unlike many plans made in different agencies, including the integration

ones," noted the President.

"Today's meeting is very important, as it is taking place ahead of the Supreme State Council meeting. We need to take another look at the forthcoming event, to discuss the details, specify the date if necessary. There are no changes regarding the event on Belarus' behalf. If Russia has questions, we are ready to discuss them. I know that you were going through a transition period connected with the formation of the new government. It's a very important moment," added the Head of State. According to the President of Belarus, the second reason why this meeting is important is the need to discuss the international agenda and outline co-operation prospects.

For his part, Mr. Lavrov conveyed greetings and best wishes from Russian President Vladimir

Putin to the Belarusian Head of State. The Minister noted that he had already held detailed and trust-based talks with Belarusian counterpart, Vladimir Makei. "We primarily discussed the preparations for the session of the Supreme State Council. There are no obstacles that would make us change our approach to the event. Those who are responsible for the organisation of the meeting have yet to confirm the date and the agenda. It is important that a very serious strategic document, namely the priorities of the further development of the Union State until 2022 will be submitted for the meeting. And, of course, we agreed that the Ministries of Foreign Affairs will monitor all the work involving other departments of our governments. We considered a number of other is-

sues of co-operation," added Mr. Lavrov.

According to observers, Belarus-Russia relations in politics, economy, social sector and culture are at a high level. Russia is Belarus' major trading partner. In 2017, mutual trade totalled \$32.4bn — 23.5 percent up compared to 2016. Last year, Russia accounted for 38.1 percent of the total foreign investment in Belarus (\$3.7bn). Russia's FDI made up 36.8 percent of the total investment attracted to Belarus.

In line with established protocol practice, the two states annually exchange working visits on a regular basis to discuss Belarusian-Russian relations in the foreign political sector. Apart from the talks with Belarus' Minister of Foreign Affairs, Vladimir Makei, Mr. Lavrov also met students and teachers of



Sergey Lavrov

the Academy of Public Administration under the aegis of the President of the Republic of Belarus. The two countries are also expected to sign an intergovernmental agreement on certain issues related to the rules of entry of foreign nationals and stateless persons attending international sporting events. At the solemn ceremony in the Foreign Ministry, the two ministers signed an agreement. Previously, foreign football fans who bought tickets for FIFA matches and were given the so called 'fan passports', received an opportunity to visit Russia without a visa. Now, they will be able to arrive in the Russian Federation via Belarus.

If business goes well

Stadler Rail Group plans to additionally invest 35m Euros into the development of production in Belarus

By Vladimir Velikhov

Prospects for development of modern railway rolling stock production were discussed at a meeting of the President of Belarus — Alexander Lukashenko — with the Chairman of the Board and owner of the Stadler Group of Companies, Peter Spuhler. “I’m pleased to meet you. I recall our first meeting when I suggested that you think about working in Belarus. You thought seriously and have made a decision. Since then we have been cooperating with you and with your company,” the President said, adding, “You offered to create an excellent innovative promising enterprise in Belarus. We’ve established it and it is operating well. It receives orders and plans are expanding. I know that you are ready to offer a new construction, a new enterprise or extension. This is very interesting to me and I would like to hear your suggestions on the development of your business in our country.”

In turn, Mr. Spuhler noted that, since his meeting with the President of Belarus in August 2016, there have been positive changes. “We received some very good orders for two-story trains, including those for Aeroexpress in Moscow. We are proud that trains produced in Belarus are now performing an important task in Moscow. We’ve also sold trains to Azerbaijan and Georgia. All products have been manufactured in Fanipol. We are now preparing to send an order for trams to St. Petersburg. I negotiated with Aeroexpress and it seems the company would like to use our trains in St. Petersburg,” he said. The Swiss Stadler Rail Group has been one of the leading European manufacturers of railway rolling stock for over 75 years. The company employs over 7 thousand workers, (including at Stadler Minsk JSC) in over 20 divisions. The Stadler Group includes branches located in Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Belarus, as well as start-up (service) centres in Switzerland, Algeria, Italy, Austria, Hungary and the Netherlands.



At Stadler Minsk production in Fanipol

At Fanipol in the Dzerzhinsk District, the Stadler Rail Group implemented an investment project to organise production of railway and municipal passenger electric transport in Belarus and, in 2014, established the Stadler Minsk company. As of May 1st, 2018, since the start of the investment project, Br83.8m has been invested in Stadler Minsk. Since the plant’s launch, 21 trains have been produced, including 12 four-wagon and 9 six-passenger double-decker trains (model KISS), 2 trains of seven wagons of the FLIRT series, parts of railway locomotives and tramway cars or rolling stock, as well as services for the repair and maintenance of railway cars and other

rolling stock. The company’s products were shipped to Azerbaijan, Georgia, Poland, Russia and Switzerland.

At present, Stadler plans to additionally invest about 35m Euros in the development of production in Belarus. This was explained by Mr. Spuhler to journalists after his meeting with the President. “Several years ago, we opened a train manufacturing plant near Minsk, and we have been successfully working all this time. Our products are delivered to Russia and other countries, including to Western Europe. The presence of good contracts in recent years have inspired us to think about further expansion and investment,”

Mr. Spuhler noted. According to him, it is primarily planned to establish production of converters for trams and trains which will also be exported to the countries of Western Europe as separate products. Also, the existing production of car bodies up to 300 units will be expanded. “In total, two of these projects will require about 25 million Euros of investment and, during the next stage, we plan to expand production of these carloads to 450 pieces per year,” he added.

Mr. Spuhler stressed that the company is satisfied with the high level of qualification and work capacity of Belarusian specialists. “I can only advise all Western potential investors to use



Peter Spuhler

this,” he said. “We’ve created a company in Belarus virtually from scratch, equipping it with the latest western technologies. In a relatively short time, it is able to compete on an equal footing with our other facilities all over the world.”

For example, a tender for supply of trams to Bolivia for the city of Cochabamba was recently won; the whole batch will be produced in Fanipol. “We’ve already had orders from Russia and Western Europe, but we have not supplied anything to Latin America,” Mr. Spuhler said.

He also talked about the possible geography of supplies and commented on the situation around the contraction of the order by Russian Aeroexpress JSC. “There was a contract for the supply of 24 trains. Two of them (prototypes) were produced in Switzerland and the remaining were made in Fanipol. In the midst of the contract, there was an economic downturn and the customer experienced difficulties in paying for the contract. Aeroexpress then cut the order to 11 trains. Jointly with finance from banks and insurance companies, we’ve found a suitable solution to this issue — selling 9 trains to Azerbaijan and 4 trains to Georgia from the unclaimed part of the order,” Mr. Spuhler explained. “As a result, we solved the problem. We did not lose money on this order. The load of these trains, which are already in operation, reaches 98 percent. We continue negotiations with Aeroexpress and a new batch is possible. It is very important to meet clients in cases of crisis — in order to work together to find a way out.”

Speaking about the potential geography of deliveries of products manufactured in Belarus, he primarily mentioned the CIS and the Eurasian Economic Union countries, in addition to Central Europe. However, presence in remote markets — such as Latin America — is also possible. “I think that we — as an enterprise — and Belarus as a whole can be proud that we are on an equal footing in this global competition,” Mr. Spuhler concluded.

It is important to be always connected

By Yulia Vasilishina

Will roaming between Belarus and Russia disappear?

This issue is now tackled by high profile ministries, noted Belarus’ Minister for Communications and Informatisation, Sergey Popkov, on the eve of the opening of the 25th International Forum on Telecommunications, Information and Banking Technologies, *TIBO-2018*. “There’s an instruction from

the Head of State, and two ministries are currently working on this task. At present, Belarusian operators suggested subscribers tariff plans which to some extent reduce roaming expenditure and not only to the Russian Federation. However, it’s necessary to understand that this is business. Mobile operators are also working with each other,” said Mr. Popkov, reminding us about the difficulties connected with the refusal of internal roaming in Russia.

As far as Belarus is concerned, one of the serious tasks for today is preparation for the 2nd European Games in 2019 and the provision of transport corridors, roads and railway lines, with good quality mobile communication. Mobile operators are already investing huge amounts of money in the development of networks. Belarusian specialists are studying the experience of South Korea on the eve of the Olympic Games and are going to visit Russia during

the World Football Championships. Moreover, Mr. Popkov announced that, during the 2nd European Games in Minsk, data transmission services for athletes, judges and members of delegations will be free of charge, while free Wi-Fi will be available at all sports facilities and hotels (which will be accommodating guests of the event), as well as on a range of bus routes. Infrastructure and communications seriously influence the image of the state.

In the rating of the International telecommunications Union (ITU) Belarus is ranked first among the CIS states in terms of the development of information and communication technologies.

In Belarus, there are 11.4 million subscribers to mobile communication (while the number of residents is 9.5m); 74.5 percent of the population is covered with 4G standard mobile communication services.



By Vladimir Khromov

“I can state with confidence that the production sector is recovered from the recession and is now steadily growing. In 2017, the industrial output growth rate totalled 106.1 percent, while in January-April 2018 the figure reached 108.8 percent. We hope that we will finish this year with the same rate,” said Vladimir Semashko. In his words, modernised branches of the processing industry — automobile engineering, metallurgy, petrochemical industry, woodworking, and light industry — contribute a lot to the development of the production sector. “Work to master car production is going well. We are at the beginning of our path, but the first steps inspire optimism about the potential of the car industry. The first shipments created strong interest on the part of the European Union. The development of electric transport has a great future,” noted the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr. Semashko pointed out that woodworking companies are developing rapidly thanks to their own raw materials base. “This industry can be cited as an example of the successful implementation of the government strategy on upgrading manufacturing enterprises. The sum of exports by the forestry industry has increased by 1.9 times since 2007, the time when the re-tooling campaign began,” he said. “In my opinion, the future of the production sector will be based on the introduction of advanced technologies and the manufacturing of new competitive products. All the conditions are available for it,” summarised Mr. Semashko.

As is traditional, the Belarusian Industrial Forum was taking place in Minsk and the programme featured over 50 events. The central place was occupied by 21st *TechInnoProm* International Specialised Exhibition, focusing on the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0). The specialised events included such

Coming out of recession and showing growth

Industry of Belarus has come out of recession, noted Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Semashko at *Belarus — the Place of Integration of the West and the East. Future Development of the Industrial Potential of the Republic* plenary session, held as part of Belarusian Industrial Forum



Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Semashko (centre) during work of the forum

sections of the exhibition as ‘Additive Technologies, 3D Printers’, ‘Aerospace Technologies’, ‘Technologies of Virtual Reality, Artificial Intellect’, ‘Robotics. Industrial Robot-equipped Manipulators. Robot Cars and Pilotless Means of Transport’. Alongside traditional areas — such as ‘Industrial Equipment, Technologies and Produce’ and ‘Power Engineering in Industry, Energy-Saving and

Ecology’ — the following topics were also high on the agenda: ‘Digital Transformation of Industrial Sector of Economy, Business and Society’, ‘The Development of Internet of Things’ and ‘Cloud Services’.

The Industry Ministry, together with the National Academy of Sciences and Minsk City Executive Committee reserved a specialised stand at the exhibition,

dedicated to the development of light automobile manufacture, the production of electric vehicles and market of automobile components. Holding Management Company of Belkommunmash together with Stadler Minsk CJSC organised in the pavilion and on an open ground of *TechInnoProm* a joint exposition of modern and promising transport means and systems, such as electric buses, speedy

trams, the latest trolley buses, buses with diesel and gas-motor engines, railway rolling carriages and metro wagons.

Alongside Belarusian enterprises, the exhibition also featured collective expositions of the Russian Federation. Moreover, manufacturing companies of industrial goods from China, Ukraine and Sweden were also taking part.

The business programme of the *TechInnoProm* exhibition included dozens of specialised events. The most large-scale and substantial were *Belarus — the Place of Integration of the West and the East. Future Development of the Industrial Potential of the Republic* plenary session, the *Technology. Equipment. Quality* international symposium, and the *Prospects of Development of Additive Technologies in the Republic of Belarus* international scientific and practical symposium.

One of the key moments of the Belarusian Industrial Forum was a business visit by representatives of German companies to establish contacts and co-operation on the topic ‘Automation, Robotics and Digitisation’. Negotiations also took place as part of the business match-making session, and visits were organised to Belarusian organisations and enterprises.

Moreover, a specialised conference was held in the format of 2nd German-Belarusian Forum Industry 4.0, in addition to a series of interesting presentations during the trade fair of innovative developments.

It should be mentioned that the Belarusian Industrial Forum has been annually held since 1997. Over this time, it has acquired world popularity as a demonstration venue for advanced technologies and innovations in industry. Famous companies from more than 30 countries were participants of the exhibition and business programme of the forum at various times. Annually the exposition is attended by 200-300 organisations while around 150 became permanent exhibitors.

Entering joint orbit

President of the world's largest Chinese Academy of Sciences visits National Academy of Sciences of Belarus

By Yulia Vasilishina

The NAS of Belarus solemnly welcomed honorary guest, Bai Chunli, on his first visit to our country. The President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences — the largest in the world — is a famous scientist in the sphere of nano-technologies and scanned probe microscopy. The visit was long expected: in autumn, he was elected as a foreign member of our Academy, this was preceded by serious scientific co-operation between the two countries.

“We have around twenty joint projects and several joint Belarusian-Chinese centres and laboratories established in the NAS. Moreover, there's also a range of agreements on co-operation with the provinces and many proposals for further work: starting from space exploration to biological investigations. The range of issues for discussion is wide: lasers, nano-technologies, new materials, biotechnologies and machine building,” notes Vladimir Gusakov, the Chairman of the Presidium of the NAS of Belarus.

Space interaction may become one of the major topics



Bai Chunli visits exhibition of achievements of domestic science at NAS

for discussion. According to Mr. Chunli, both states have huge potential here. The Chinese Academy of Sciences has already developed 36 satellites and an innovative satellite centre has been established. On the Belarusian side, there are proposals to take part in the creation

of our second satellite for Earth remote sensing and in investigations on when the satellite will be launched. The development of another joint Belarusian-Chinese space apparatus was also high on the agenda. “Photos are in demand both in our country and abroad. Just in our country

alone, 11 ministries use information from the Earth remote sensing satellite. This is prompt data about the situation in a particular part of the planet which quickly changes,” explained Mr. Gusakov, focussing attention on the practical importance of such work.

How to eat in order to lower cholesterol level

Cholesterol is one of the main causes of atherosclerosis — a serious disease of the arteries which takes millions of lives each year. However, this is only one undesirable side of the complex and diverse activity of cholesterol on the metabolism. Cholesterol is a natural fatty (lipophilic) alcohol — a valuable element for cell membranes of all nuclear living organisms, without which cells cannot exist. That is why there is so much cholesterol in a human body.

Cholesterol exists in the form of two components: LDL or low-density lipoprotein, called “bad” cholesterol (it is involved in the formation of atherosclerotic plaque). High-density lipoprotein (HDL) is known as ‘good’ cholesterol (it protects the vessel wall). The optimal amount of total cholesterol in healthy people is less than 5 mmol/l. People suffering from cardiovascular diseases or diabetes should have a total cholesterol level less than 4.5 mmol/l. Increased cholesterol in the blood contributes to the development of atherosclerotic damage

to the walls of blood vessels and is one of the risk factors for the development of severe cardiovascular diseases — such as stenocardia (ischemic heart disease) and myocardial infarction, cerebral stroke and atherosclerosis of lower limbs. Daily consumption of cholesterol by healthy people should be less than 300mg, while those suffering from hypercholesterolemia and cardiovascular diseases must consume less than 200mg per day.

In order to lower the level of cholesterol in the blood, an integrated approach is needed. Consult your physician to choose the optimal programme for controlling high cholesterol levels. General recommendations are as follows:

- a diet (see nutritional recommendations below),
- weight correction,
- increased physical activity,
- giving up smoking,
- drug treatment.

Basic nutritional recommendations

Cholesterol levels in the blood can be lowered in the following ways:

- eat more polyunsaturated fats and less saturated fats.



It's good to eat correctly

Reduce consumption of beef, pork and lamb, eat only lean meat. Cook chicken without skin and fat.

- move from whole milk to non-fatty sour-milk products. Use more vegetable oil. Consumption of animal fat (butter, fatty meat and dairy products) should be reduced by replacing it with vegetable oils (sunflower, olive, corn).
- eat fish more often (at least 2 dishes a week). Sea fish contains many polyunsaturated fats which lower the level of cholesterol in the blood. Salmon, mackerel, herring, sardines and lake trout are most rich in such fats.
- eat sea kale. Seaweed contains a large amount of iodine which affects fat metabolism in terms of improvement of utilisation and removal of food cholesterol from the body.
- use mostly soluble fibre.

Certain types of dietary fibre

can reduce blood cholesterol; this refers to water-soluble fibre in apples, dried beans, peas, beans, oat flakes and other food. Choose cereals from unprocessed grains / cereals (oats, brown rice, buckwheat); bread from wholemeal flour.

- daily consumption of fruits and vegetables (including legumes and excluding potatoes) should be at least 400g.

- reduce consumption of table salt to 5-6g per day. It's also necessary to limit alcohol consumption: no more than 1 glass of wine or 1 glass of strong drink per day.

If you have to keep to a diet to lower cholesterol, it is better to avoid any temptation to move away from it, making every effort to stick to it to ensure good results.

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

Building a monitoring system

By Olga Savitskaya

It seems that little time has passed since Belarus took on the commitment to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, the country is recognised as a leader of the process at an international level. 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 subordinate tasks — which plan to be achieved by 2030 — are successfully being implemented at national level. To know what direction to move in and see the result, we need a unified system of evaluation. Its indicators were discussed by representatives of the Parliament and the Government, public and international organisations.

Of course, against such ambitious plans it is extremely important to establish partnerships and to hear the opinions of all interested parties. It's no accident that all 17 points of the Sustainable Development Goals are united by a common message: not to leave anyone on the side-lines.

“You cannot achieve these goals if the ideas are not supported by society,” said the Deputy Chair of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus, the National Co-ordinator for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals — Marianna Shchetkina. “Therefore, we attach great importance to our partner group. It is open and includes representatives of the public, business circles, businesses — all those who are interested in working in one direction or another. To ensure productive work, we need to have a single system of indicators for evaluation.”

To build a common monitoring system, the National Statistical Committee — jointly with its stakeholders — has developed a special roadmap for statistical development; it will be a kind of guide consisting of 6 sections. National indicators are defined for each purpose; there are 255 points for monitoring.

“True, there are no countries that could boast such a steady progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals like Belarus,” said Zachary Taylor, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Belarus. “This has partially become possible by the creation of a system of indicators. As, if something cannot be measured, it cannot be managed. Accordingly, it cannot also be improved. The creation of platforms and systems of indicator tracking is one of the key factors to achieve success.”

Polotsk ancient and new

Modern Polotsk is impossible to imagine without the wonderful Dvina River, with its cathedral on the steep bank, beautiful residents and blossoming nature. We were lucky to visit this city at the end of spring when we could breathe the warm air with the dizzying aroma of lilac in the most unusual colours, chestnuts, acacia and jasmine...

The best view of the city of course, is from the wide river. This view was seen by visitors sailing 'from the Varangians to the Greeks' and merchants who were returning to northern lands. Polotsk has fought, surprised and conquered, sinking forever into the heart.

The monument to the first printer, Francysk Skaryna, in the central square is a firm favourite, honoured and famous in the city. Skaryna looks on the modern streets, as well as Polotsk residents and its guests who live, fall in love, kiss and make dates near the monument. They read while waiting: some read books or newspapers but more often it's a smartphone, tablet or a laptop. Life continues to change and Francysk Skaryna will soon see something completely new. However, these wonderful changes would not have happened without his help.

The first mention of the city is in the *Tale of Bygone Years* in 862. Polotsk is one of the oldest cities of the Eastern Slavs, the centre of the Polotsk Principality which includes the area of current Vitebsk, and the Mogilev and Minsk regions. During the reign of legendary Duke Vseslav, nicknamed the Magician, in the 11th century, the principality reached its greatest point and Polotsk was a major rival for Kiev...

"Oh, I have been to many



places but Polotsk is like my first love! It is the best... It can't be confused with any other city," says a smiling man. Nowhere else are the past and present intertwined as in Polotsk. One looks on the magnificent St. Sophia Cathedral — white against the background of blue sky — and has the feeling that time has stopped, and you don't know which century you're in. Then, a mobile phone rings in my pocket and the voice of my wife, who was born in Polotsk, returns my thoughts from the past to the present. I tell her what I see and where I'm walking, and she gives me advice on where to go next. I hear love for Polotsk in her voice and at the same time sadness that she isn't here with me to enjoy it.

Since the times of the ancient chronicle, the Dvina River has overflowed



many times and only archaeological finds, washed by the waves to the banks, remind us of the city's glory. The local boys often find the coins of long lost states and glass beads... We imagine that many years ago, Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya perhaps touched the newly-discovered bead. Maybe, she was walking along the bank, a string of beads broke, and the glass pieces scattered and now, one lost almost a thousand years ago, is found... "Today the fishing was bad as it's hot,

but yesterday, you should have seen the two chubs I caught in the Dvina River. They were very beautiful! I live here but work at a factory in Novopolotsk," a fisherman tells me, while packing his fishing rod away on the bank.

Life follows its own laws in the Saviour Monastery of St. Yevfrosiniya without which we can't imagine Polotsk. Nuns in black clothes, pilgrimages and tourists from various, sometimes remote, countries, the blossoming of the lilac, the shine of domes and silence through which the prayers of evening service are heard. The monastery was founded by St. Yevfrosiniya in the 1120s and she was its first Mother Superior. On the site of the wooden church, the architect Ioann built the famous stone Saviour Transfiguration Church — a masterpiece of

the architectural school and one of the most ancient in Belarus. According to the legend, St. Yevfrosiniya lived there herself, in a small monastic cell, to the right of the choir.

In Polotsk, under her order, Lazar Bogsha created the famous Cross (1161). Today it's honoured

as one of the major relics of the Belarusian nation and is viewed as a unique monument of ancient Belarusian culture of the 12th century. However, in 1941, the relic was lost. Fifty-six years later, a solemn return of the restored Cross to the church took place, created by contemporary master Nikolay Kuzmich. This small church has also preserved unique frescoes from the 12th century. I'm confident that these were seen by Francysk Skaryna and Simeon Polotsky — a great Belarusian enlightener, monk, public and church figure, religious scholar, teacher, educator, poet and writer.

Modern Polotsk is a calm, cosy and very 'homely' city. The historic buildings of the cadet corps are home to the university. St. Sophia Cathedral has a famous concert hall where the organ plays, while the building of the former Brethren School of the Polotsk's Epiphany Monastery is occupied by the museum of book printing. "Oh, don't take photos of us; we're not beautiful, you'd better taste our Polotsk draniki. They are delicious," say the waitresses on the boulevard. "We love Polotsk, come and visit us again!"





Guatemala's Fuego volcano eruption kills 25, injures hundreds

An estimated 25 people, including at least three children, were killed and nearly 300 injured last Sunday in the most violent eruption of Guatemala's Fuego volcano in more than four decades, officials said

Volcan de Fuego, whose name means 'Volcano of Fire', spewed an 8-kilometre stream of red hot lava and belched a thick plume of black smoke and ash that rained onto the capital and other regions.

The charred bodies of vic-

tims laid on the steaming, ashen remnants of a pyroclastic flow as rescuers attended to badly injured victims in the aftermath of the eruption.

It was the 3,763-metre volcano's second eruption this year. "It's a river of lava that

overflowed its banks and affected the El Rodeo village. There are injured, burned and dead people," Sergio Cabanas, the General Secretary of Guatemala's CONRED national disaster management agency, said. CONRED said the num-

ber of dead had risen to 25, including a CONRED employee. Some 3,100 people have been evacuated from the area. Officials said the dead were so far all concentrated in the towns of El Rodeo, Alotenango and San Miguel los Lotes.



Dozens were killed as migrant boat sank off Tunisia

The Tunisian government says at least 48 migrants were killed when their boat sank off the country's coast. Another 67 were rescued by the coast guard.

It's one of the worst migrant boat accidents in recent years. The Defence Ministry said the vessel went down near the tourist island of Kerkennah.

Security officials said the

boat was crammed with about 180 migrants, around 100 of them Tunisian and the remainder from other African countries. One survivor said the captain abandoned the boat after it began sinking to escape arrest.

Unemployed Tunisians and other Africans often try to cross the Mediterranean in makeshift boats.

Two illegal migrant camps are being cleared in Paris

Refugees from two illegal camp sites in Paris are being made to move on by police

This was happening at Porte des Poissonniers, in northeast Paris, and another site next to the city's Canal Saint Martin.

A similar operation happened recently as the government attempts to deal with a migrant influx in the last three years. Around 1,000 people in the northeast of Paris have been taken to various accommodation centres in the capital.



More than a million people from Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan have tried to reach the continent via Turkey or by sea. Many originally went to Calais but since that was cleared in late 2016, the rest gather in Paris and the south east near the Franco-Italian border.

BHP process to unload US shale operations could take until 2019

The planned exit of BHP Billiton Ltd from its US shale business has drawn oil companies and private equity firms into a competition that may have no clear winner until late this year or early next year

BHP, the world's largest miner, said in August that it would exit its US shale oil and gas business after pressure from activist hedge fund Elliott Management, which owns a stake in the company and argued the unit was a drag on BHP's value.

BHP is offering to sell off acreage in seven different packages spanning three formations.

Rolls-Royce completes sale of parts maker L'Orange to Woodward

Rolls-Royce said it had completed the sale of Germany-based diesel parts maker L'Orange to US-based engineering company Woodward Inc. with net proceeds totaling 673 million Euros

Rolls-Royce sold the business as part of a plan to simplify its operations.

The proceeds compared to the 700 million Euros sale figure the company gave at the time when the disposal was announced in April.

"Net proceeds totalled 673 million Euros after transaction costs and other adjustments and included a cash contribution reflecting 2018 trading prior to the date of completion," Rolls said in a statement.

Slovenia faces coalition tussle after anti-immigrant party tops vote

Slovenia faces a battle to form a coalition government after an anti-immigration opposition party came top in parliamentary election. With nearly all votes counted, the Slovenia Democratic Party has 25 percent of the vote amid a fragmented political landscape.

The right-wing party of former Prime Minister Janez Jansa is estimated to take 25 seats in the 90-member National Assembly. Turnout is put at around 52 percent, only just above a record low in 2014.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Artist who vividly portrays his feelings — not objects

Minsk's Artel Art Gallery invites spectators to reflect on the secrets of the creative cuisine of Minsk artist Sergey Balenok. The author's exhibition project — *Yes, We Are Familiar!* — aims to help.

By Veniamin Mikheev

Sergey Balenok joined the Belarusian fine arts in the late 1980s. The graduate of the Department of Book Graphics of the Ukrainian Polygraphic Institute named after Ivan Fedorov, confidently declared himself an original artist with a subtle worldview and a broad thematic

range. Some time ago, works of the 'scandalous' and 'atypical' Sergey were used to illustrate such books as *Cat's Cradle* by Kurt Vonnegut, a collection of fiction — *The Forgiving Planet*, the *Wings of the Night* collection, Bulgakov's novels and several collections of poetry by Iosif Brodsky.

Yes, We Are Familiar! features about thirty etchings by Sergey Balenok created by him in the last three decades. His mastery of the complicated technique of etching and his rich imagination enabled Sergey to create truly delicate, filigrees and pieces deep in content. Each of them is a story with its script and drama. Through his works, the artist speaks of the inner contradictions of man, his relationships with others and the surrounding reality. The main leitmotifs of Mr. Balenok's works are loneliness, fear, uncertainty, melancholy and sadness. Involving the viewer in his world, the artist does not give universal life prescriptions: everyone is free to make his own interpretation of his visu-



Black-and-white and coloured magic

al stories. The author stresses, "These images are not objects, but the same sensations, emotions, memories, impressions, even feelings that are peculiar, in general, to all people. I just picture them. I even came up with a concept — pictures about memory: not based on the memory but about memory."

The name of the exhibition comes from the eponymous etching drawn by Sergey in 1999. He is very attentive both to the process of creating a work and to its name. "When I engrave I already imagine what I can do, words begin

to move in my head. This is a creative process, and very active. A good name is very hard work to think of. This one line is painted like a picture — to arouse interest," he said.

As part of the project, audiences have an opportunity to get to know the master's paintings. The artist turned to the technique of oil painting quite recently. In his works, Mr. Balenok gives preference to the genres of still life and landscape. He uses pastel colouring, a broad brush, and light-air perspective. It is important for him to convey the colour diversity of the objec-



tive world. However, even here, the artist remains true to himself. His paintings are not realistic images but rather 'pictures of memory' produced in colour.

It's said that each work by Sergey Balenok is a separate story with its script, dramatic composition and language. The author's etchings are like a diary where the composition is a plot and an image is a code. Sadness and melancholy are the format of the narration.

Through his works, the artist, as a rule, tells us about simple and ordinary things: human relations, nature and life in a metropolis in a sharp, smart and slightly melancholic way. This is not the production of universal life recipes but an opportunity to penetrate deep into the author's feelings and to make one's own interpreta-

tion of visual stories. Since these stories have no prescribed message, each viewer can draw their own conclusions.

Sergey Balenok was born in Ukraine and graduated from Lvov Polygraphic Institute and has worked in many Minsk publishing houses since 1980. He was then a 'freelance' painter. He conducted

several personal exhibitions, including at the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus. His works are also kept in collections of art museums of Rimini, Eindhoven, Krakow, Polotsk, Minsk, as well as in private collection in Germany, Switzerland, Holland, Ireland, Sweden, France, the Czech Republic, Canada, the USA, Israel, Turkey, China and Russia.

"Art is a part of reality: independent, original, unique. This is not a repetition of the world around us. I paint to ensure these works cause personal associations, memories, and emotions of viewers. In a word, my pictures do not state any facts but offer people something to remember, feel and think about," Mr. Balenok said, sharing the secrets of his artistic 'cuisine'.

Langbard's avant-garde ideal and the immortal *Carmen* at Bolshoi Theatre

The most beautiful and recognisable theatre in Belarus turns 85

By Kristina Khilko

Behind the scenes

A wardrobe, a buffet, a hall... This is the standard route of the atreagoers. However, the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre offers its visitors the opportunity to leave their comfort zone. It recently held an open day providing an excellent opportunity to look behind the scenes and get to know the theatre from the inside.

On entering the foyer, to your right is the island of Sicily, from where you can reach... Paris! Mystified? The colourful scenery of the famous operas *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *La Bohème* decorate the entrance to the theatre. Right here it's possible to try on luxurious outfits and take a fantastic selfie for Instagram. The 'holy of holies' — the dressing room — is nearby. It takes just a few minutes for the professionals to create terrific 'makeup' of a brave hussar or a beautiful fairy, while wig manufacturers and costume makers share the secrets of their craft. Students of the Gymnasium-College of Arts named after Akhremchik — directed by conductor Ivan Kostyakhin, the *Amadis-Brass* ensemble and the *Serenade* string quintet are responsible for the musical element. The most courageous guests are welcomed to master classes in vocals, classical dance, acting and drumming. A cosy room offers creative meetings, with no tedious lectures but exciting live conversations with the Chief Director Mikhail Pandzhavidze, Chief Conductor Viktor Ploskina, ballet art direc-



FACTS

The theatre is the largest not only in Minsk, but in the whole of Belarus

The height and weight of the Greek gods decorating the theatre façade is **5 metres** and **5 tonnes**

It's the most popular theatre in Belarus: over **200,000** visit it annually

The costume room keeps over **40,000** outfits and a single production might need up to **200** costumes

tor Yuri Troyan and choreographer-cum-director Alexandra Tikhomirova.

A dreamer's creation

At the end of the day, the audience could admire the legendary *Carmen* opera, with soloist of the Bolshoi Theatre of Geneva — Alima Mamdi — performing the lead role. It was this performance that opened the history of the Bolshoi Theatre: on May 25th, 1933. It was accompanied by a full house, standing ovations and bouquets of flowers. From the opening bars, the spectators were fascinated by the fatal gypsy performed by the great Larisa Alexandrovskaya.

The opera by the French composer was staged at the famous Belarusian Drama Theatre (now

known as the Kupala Theatre). Here, in the early 1930s, ladies in elegant dresses accompanied by gentlemen came to listen to *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades* by Tchaikovsky, as well as *The Tsar's Bride* by Rimsky-Korsakov. The first ballet production — *Red Poppy* by Gliere — was also staged at the theatre. The artistes received their own home shortly before the war — in 1938. The 'construction of the century' was launched on one of the highest hills of Minsk — Troitskaya. In the 19th century, the Troitskiy Bazaar — the largest and noisiest market of the city — was situated there.

The modern theatre building is the brainchild of famous Leningrad architect, Iosif Langbard. When the classic Belaru-

sian writer, Yanka Kupala, saw the sketches, he proclaimed with a smile: 'This Langbard is a dream!' At that time, the avant-garde architecture of the new-fashioned constructivism was seen as a bold decision, even for the capital.

The Bolshoi Theatre survived the fateful 1940s, though with losses. In the early hard days of war, a bomb hit the hall at the heart of the theatre. The fascists destroyed all its beauty, transforming the building into a stable and a warehouse for belongings seized from prisoners of the Jewish ghetto. After Minsk's liberation, the theatre gradually 'healed its wounds', witnessing several reconstructions. The major one took place twelve years ago: the façade was then redecorated with former sculptures of beautiful nymphs, muses and Apollo. The stage was equipped with modern mechanisms enabling directors to realise their most daring ideas. Every season, the theatre premieres new performances, inviting audiences to classical and modern productions with the participation of Belarusian and world stars.

EXHIBITION

Lost in the Labyrinth

The sparkling 'diamond' of the capital — the National Library — invites guests to another surprise. Its Labyrinth Gallery exhibits seven hundred unique posters revealing the most striking theatrical productions of the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre. One of the most precious is a poster for Yevgeny Tikotsky's *Mikhas Padgorny* opera. This was the first performance staged at the theatre on March 10th, 1939.

In 1967, Yevgeny Glebov's *Alpine Ballad* was premiered, and its poster has also been preserved. On white paper with scarlet letters, the name of the play surrounds contours of the faces of the main characters of Ivan and Yulia wrapped in barbed wire rings. Using minimal details, the artist achieved the maximum effect of empathy. There are also posters reminding us that, during the war years, the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre troupe worked in evacuation: in Kovrov and Gorky. The exposition also reflects the events of the recent history of the main theatre of Belarus. Various posters invite people to modern productions: *The Tsar's Bride*, *Vytautas*, *Aida*, *La Traviata*, *The Barber of Seville*, as well as to international competitions and forums.



Vladimir GRIDYUSHKO, Director General of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus:

The main gift is the interest of our audiences, their shining eyes and words of gratitude. We are in the prime of life, full of energy and creative ideas. The jubilee 85th season was rich and bright. In autumn, we presented a new *La Traviata* and, in winter, premiered *Tosca*. In late April, *La Bohème* was staged. A full house is the best compliment for us. We are actively working on Richard Strauss' *Salome* drama; it will open a new season in September. Next year, in honour of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Belarus, we will once again stage our *Alpine Ballad* ballet. The production covers other anniversaries too: the 95th anniversary of writer Vasil Bykov, the 90th anniversary of composer Yevgeny Glebov, the 105th anniversary of Yevgeny Chemodurov (the former chief artist of the theatre). The *Alpine Ballad* was staged in 1967 and, a year later, it was recognised as the best ballet in the Soviet Union.



MAJOR PROJECTS

- Musical Nights at Bolshoi
- Ballet Summer
- Minsk International Christmas Forum
- CIS Youth Opera Forum
- Opera and Ballet Art Festival: Nights of Bolshoi Theatre at Radziwills' Castle
- Large New Year Ball



Handballers from Brest win Belarus Cup

Golden double made by handball squad

Brest's Meshkov handball club captures the Belarus' Cup for the fifth time in a row. Moreover, the squad has also previously won the national championship.

By Oleg Vetrov

In the decisive match of the Cup draw at Minsk's Uruchie Sports Palace, the Brest players beat the national championship silver medallists — Minsk SKA — with a score of 29:20.

In the first half, both teams played well in defence and went to the break with a small margin — 12:11 in favour of Meshkov HC. In the second half, Brest's handballers were noticeably stronger, allowing the hosts only 9 goals. The visitors meanwhile

scored 17 goals and took a well-deserved victory.

This season, Sergey Bebeshko's team have made the golden double — winning the championship and Belarus' Cup. As a result, the Brest handball team now boasts 10

championship titles and eleven Cup trophies. Third place in the Cup was taken by Gomel's handballers, who beat Grodno's Kronon — 29:25. This year, the Gomel club has also won a bronze medal in the Belarusian championship.

Quick water in French Gravelines

By Svetlana Sukhorukova

Three medals earned by Belarusian athletes at European Junior Rowing Championship in France

Ivan Brynza achieved the highest result, finishing second after his rival from Germany, Moritz Wolff. The Belarusian rower also earned the minimum qualification score for participation in the summer Junior Olympic Games in Buenos Aires, to be held next October.

Bronze medallists of the continental tournament were Yegor Shlyupsky and Vladislav Lokun in the double sculls, who were behind British Jake Offiler and James Cartwright, while silver medals went to Filippo Graziano



and Nicolò Carucci of Italy.

In the end of the championship, the Belarusian eight rowers were pleased with their performance. The female crew

of Inessa Sys, Olga Zgurskaya, Veronika Gulevich, Alesya Dubrovskaya, Yevgenia Kulbitskaya, Yulia Kruglikova, Valeria Poperina, Angelina Lyskovskaya

and coxswain Margarita Nikolai-chik claimed third place.

In total, the European Junior Rowing Championship brought together 23 Belarusian athletes.

Violations should be punished

By Sergey Terekhov

Tougher measures for taking responsibility for violation of anti-doping rules should be implemented, notes the Chair of the Belarusian Cycling Federation, 2004 Olympic bronze medallist and eight-time world champion, Natalia Tsylynskaya

As previously reported, the President of Belarus signed the Decree 'On Counteracting Dop-

ing in Sport'. From now on, when an athlete or their personnel are disqualified for doping, they will be prohibited from practising any pedagogical activity in the sphere of physical culture and sport. They will also be required to refund any incentive payments and will be deprived of state awards given for corresponding sporting achievements.

Ms. Tsylynskaya has a long established tough position regarding prohibited substances in sport. "Toughening of responsi-

bility for violating anti-doping rules is necessary. I have voiced my position on this issue many times: I'm unanimously against it. I believe that the problem of using prohibited substances in sport affects not only individual countries, but should be conducted more efficiently at international level, though I don't agree with all the points of the WADA code. If a prohibited substance gets into an athlete's body, he becomes guilty automatically, but there are many cases when

the athlete could be acquitted and should not be subject to such severe punishment," explains Ms. Tsylynskaya.

According to the prominent cyclist, the Belarusian Cycling Federation is conducting a serious campaign against doping. "Specialists and athletes in our sport observe anti-doping rules and follow all the recommendations, but work to prevent the use of prohibited substances mustn't be stopped," stressed Natalia Tsylynskaya.

Team winning in relay race

By Olga Korneeva

Pentathlon athletes Yaroslav Radyuk and Irina Prosentsova win bronze in relay race at 2018 UIPM Modern Pentathlon World Cup IV

The Belarusian duo successfully started their performance in fencing gaining third place. Important points were also earned in swimming. As a result, before the final stage of pentathlon (cross and shooting) Yaroslav Radyuk and Irina Prosentsova were ranked fourth in the standings. The opening section of the distance wasn't very successful for the Belarusians. However, Yaroslav Radyuk managed to confidently cover the remaining shooting ranges and moved to third place of the final standings in the relay.

In the individual contest, the highest result among the Belarusians was shown by Ilya Polozkov who finished his performance in the World Cup stage in eighth position.

Bronze medal — a good result

By Oleg Samsonov

Vitaly Mikhailitsyn of Belarus wins bronze at the 2018 FIG World Challenge Cup, in Croatian Osijek



Vitaly Mikhailitsyn

In the pommel-horse exercise, Mikhailitsyn qualified successfully and received 14,100 points from the judges in the decisive round, thus claiming bronze. The winner in this type of the programme a representative of China's Taipei — Lee Chih-kai, scoring 15,333 points while silver went to Akim Musaeov of Kazakhstan (14,333).

Alongside Vasily Mikhailitsyn, Pavel Bulavsky and Yegor Sharamkov of Belarus also performed in Croatia, but failed to qualify for the finals. In total, the jubilee World Cup stage in Osijek brought together gymnasts from 30 states.

Competitions in artistic gymnastics became a part of the programme of 2nd European Games to take place in Minsk. The tournament will offer 12 medals and is to be held at Minsk-Arena from June 22nd-26th, 2019.

Custom of the week



'Farewell to the Mermaids' custom held in Khoiniki District

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 26th June. *Chinese Painting of Ideas*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 K. Marx Street
Until 10th June. *Under Muse's Heel: Footwear History Facts* Until 8th July. *Multi-Colour of Tatar National Culture* Until 11th July. *Criminal Money or History of Money Counterfeiting*

EXHIBITION HALL OF NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM

9A Bogdanovich Street
Until 3rd July. *Song Birds and Pigeons*

MUSEUM OF MODERN BELARUSIAN STATEHOOD

38 K. Marx Street
Until 26th June. *Man. Cosmos. Belarus*

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM

8 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 13th August. *Piotr Masherov: His Heart Beats for People*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN CINEMA HISTORY

4 Sverdlov Street
Until 17th June. *Peaceful Time*: exhibition of Piotr Taranda

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 1st July. *My Homeland — Tale of Times* project Until 31st August. *Enlightenment. Experience. Progress* Until 15th September. *ABCs from Around the Globe*

YANKA KUPALA STATE LITERARY MUSEUM

4 Kupala Street
Until 16th June. *Bulgakov as Illegal Phenomenon*

VANKOVICH'S HOUSE

33a Internatsionalnaya
Until 18th July. *Dreams of the Past*

CHELYUSKINTSEV PARK OF CULTURE AND REST

84/1 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 30th June. *Legacy of Belarus: Dedicated to Minsk's 950th Anniversary*

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

6 Kirill and Mefody Street
Until 1st July. *MotoVeloMinsk: Two-Wheeled History*

YAKUB KOLAS SQUARE

Until 8th September. *The Artist and the City*: open air exhibition of Georgy Skripnichenko's pictures

THEATRES

NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 ParizhsКОЙ Kommuny Street
07.06. Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Petrushka. Scheherazade 09.06. Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Spartacus 10.06. Le Corsaire 11.06. Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Swan Lake 12.06. Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Orr and Ora; Life in Song. Extracts from Home Singer by Stanisław Moniuszko 13.06. Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Gala-concert of world ballet stars 14.06. Queen of Spades

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
07.06. Cleopatra 08.06. Jane Eyre 10.06. Mister X 11.06. Casanova 12.06. Blue Cameo 13.06. Bridegrooms 14.06. Cherry Orchid

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
07.06. Ideal Husband 08.06. Lady for a Day 09.06. Fourth Planet 12.06. He and She 13.06. Private Lives 14.06. Circle of Love

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street
07.06. Matches; ART 08.06. Elza's

Land; Tolerance 10.06. Inspector; Radio Prudok 11.06. Two Souls 12.06. Local Cabaret 13.06. Jeweller's Jubilee 14.06. School of Taxpayers

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
07.06. Merchant Yepishkin's Theatre 08.06. Pygmalion 09.06. A Very Simple Story 11.06. Forgetting Herostratos 12 and 13.06. Battlefield 14.06. Robbery at Midnight

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
07, 11 and 13.06. Miracles in Circus 10.06. How Much Love Is? 11.06. Concrete 13.06. Adam's Jokes 14.06. Pelican

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
07.06. Love of Three 11.06. Fool 12.06. Zhmurik 13.06. Playing Happy Family 14.06. New Affair of My Husband

YOUNG SPECTATORS' THEATRE

26 Engels Street
07 and 13.07. Wolf and Seven Goats 08 and 12.06. Merry Roger 11.06. Blue Bird 14.06. My Little Enchantress