


Money will definitely begin to flow on rails

Single railway logistical project should generate revenue in excess of \$11 billion for Customs Union member states **Page 4**


Casting a greedy eye over pies

MT correspondents visit culinary capital of Belarus: the agro-town of Motol, in Polesie **Page 7**


Old estate reborn and blossoming

Minsk's most popular ghost, the White Lady of Loshitsa, may be seeking peace elsewhere, joke those employed on the estate **Page 10**



President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko meets President of India Pranab Mukherjee

Configuration of plans acquires real features

President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, makes official visit to Minsk

The Independence Palace hosted the official meeting of the President of India with Alexander Lukashenko. The two presidents talked privately, and in extended formats, resulting in the signing of a number of important bilateral documents. As is now traditional, Mr. Mukherjee has planted a tree on the Alley of Honorary Guests.

Ready to share useful experience

By Vladimir Velikhov

Meeting between President Lukashenko and Governor Andrei Turchak tackles development of co-operation with Pskov Region

Our country has established good interaction with many Russian regions; we can confidently say, with most, including the remote regions of Primorsky Krai and Amur. However, we enjoy warmer relations with some, such as the Bryansk, Smolensk and Pskov regions.

Our shared 300km bor-

der brings us close to many Russian neighbours, where residents tend not to recognise 'dividing lines.' Households help each other, and relatives often live in nearby villages, either side of the official frontier. Being brotherly, we can set an example to others, including with a buoyant trade turnover. This has been growing with the neighbouring Vitebsk Region, although total turnover has been falling since 2012.

Alexander Lukashenko is concerned that trade turnover between Belarus and the Pskov Region is small, being convinced that improvement

is necessary: especially as we have much to offer each other. The spheres of agriculture, industry and construction look promising, while our organisations are ready to take part in the design and construction of residential houses, production and sports facilities. Belarusian experts are eager to lay roads, using our technologies and materials, while housing is a sphere in which we have much experience with Russian partners. Homes are a wonderful legacy of collaboration.

The Pskov Region is to host the Youth/Junior Biathlon World Championship in 2017.

Of course, Belarus has already organised such an event (as specialists assess, at the highest level). We can offer not only advice but practical assistance, helping create infrastructure.

The Pskov Region is dynamically developing and is now keen to update its fleet of public transport. Being aware of our high-quality buses, local authorities are considering purchasing our automobile and communal vehicles, as well as Belarusian machine tools, to help industrial modernisation.

Belarus also has a tradition of agriculture and working the

land: growing flax, reclaiming agro-soil, livestock breeding and a variety of other spheres. The Pskov Region's Governor, Andrei Turchak, notes his interest in forming liaisons.

Moreover, Belarus boasts excellent experience in developing rural settlements: an area of great use to the Pskov Region, with agro-industrial interaction of particular interest. The renovation of agricultural machinery and collaboration between agrarians is a good starting place, since we have similar climatic conditions.

Mr. Turchak thanked his



Andrei Turchak

hosts for the intensive programme of his visit, saying, "We're interested in the work of free economic zones, having seen those in Vitebsk and Brest. We're ready to share experience and revive forgotten co-operation, which has always existed between our industrial enterprises."

National Library is fulfilling online orders

There's no need to search long for articles or books at the library, since we can now access the catalogue online

By Nadezhda Dekola

Editions can be requested online and delivered to your e-mail address within just a few days (or even hours), thanks to the National Library's e-delivery system. Staff trialled the service over a decade ago but saw little interest, although one village resident did give them a surprise with his request. It wasn't until the National Library began offering online access with e-payment that the service truly began to 'take off'. Now, not only Belarusian readers but those from Poland, Germany, France, Austria, Israel, the USA, Canada and various CIS states have been making requests, paying conveniently in their own currency.

The Head of the Inter-Library Subscription and Document Deliv-



E-delivery enjoys popularity at National Library of Belarus

ery Department at the National Library, Olga Skalaban, tells us, "We can send e-copies of periodic articles and book pages — including those which are rare. In addition, we can provide fragments of photographs, as well as audio and video materials. The library keeps documents in 70 languages, and around 10,000 Belarusian thesis papers. We also buy e-bases from around the world, such as are not available online. If a customer is unsure where to find a particular article, we can search on their behalf. We do have some rules, such as only providing e-copies of up to 10 pages. We look at each case individually, following the law 'On Copyright and Related Rights.'"

Ms. Skalaban continues, "Staff involved in the e-delivery service don't know their virtual clients personally but, as seen from the themes of requests, most are students, researchers, local history investigators and scientists. Placing an order, users often indicate that the matter is urgent: even that they have 'exams tomorrow'. Some orders are received from people living close to the National Library but 30 percent of all requests are from foreigners. Not long ago, customers from Buratia addressed us, wanting to collect information on Harbin's Russian Law Department from the 1920s. Luckily, they discovered *Vestnik Manchurii* magazine at the Belarusian library —

including its first issue (1926)."

Olga notes that the Yakub Kolas Central Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences will be next to offer the online service, followed by other libraries. She asserts that the impression that any information can be found online is not yet the case, as many documents are yet to be digitised. However, the current materials available are adequate for schoolchildren and first year university students. She admits, "Those needing more detailed information, to prepare a serious scientific project, should address libraries. Writing your diploma paper purely from online sources isn't sufficient."

More friends

By Anastasia Shoplya

Ecuador's Group of Friends Act signed in Minsk, with solemn ceremony hosted by House of Friendship

The Ecuadorian Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Carlos Larrea Davila, stressed in his speech that the opening of diplomatic missions in Minsk and Quito aims to promote the development of Belarusian-Ecuadorian co-operation across various areas. He particularly noted the importance of joint projects in industrial development, transport, construction, oil industry, geology, energy, the sci-tech sphere, education and healthcare. He stressed the friendly character of our bilateral relations, despite geographical distance and huge potential for collaboration. The Ambassador also took note of the heroism of the Soviet people in the years of the Great Patriotic War and World War Two, including Belarus' contribution to the Great Victory over fascism, which was of global importance.

Strict response to illegal migration

Last year, Lida border guards blocked 'loophole' to Europe, through which ten people attempted to reach Lithuania illegally

Residents of Tajikistan have recently been sentenced for their part in attempting to smuggle Vietnamese migrants across the Belarusian-Lithuanian border. A guide, uncaptured, had been sent to wait for them on the other side. Complaining of lack of jobs at home and a difficult financial situation, the Vietnamese explained that they were collected from their hostel by two cars, paying 20,000 Russian Roubles for their journey. The Tajiks instructed them on how to behave if stopped by officials, and where a car would later meet them near the state border with Lithuania.

Lida District Court heard that an eleventh passenger was intended but was left in Russia, due to being pregnant. The cars stopped only to refuel, and soon arrived at the appointed place. However, on being asked for their documents, the Vietnamese had nothing to show. All have now been deported to their country of origin.

Lawyers find solution

By Lyudmila Gladkaya

Over 120 lawyers and scientists from Belarus, Russia, the CIS and Eastern European states gather in Minsk for international conference dedicated to 25th anniversary of Belarusian Republican Union of Lawyers

The conference is held annually, explains Irina Or-

lovskaya, the Executive Director of the Belarusian Union of Lawyers. She notes that this year's meeting dealt with topical issues, in an international format. She tells us, "Since the Union of Lawyers unites specialists from various spheres of activity, and the conference is an international event, we've taken the common topic of Integration and Law: Experience, State and Prospects of Develop-

ment. Major areas include integration in the sphere of alternative ways to solve conflict, reform of the Belarusian judicial system, and the development of arbitration and mediation.

In particular, Russian colleagues have shared their experience, enabling us to build on our knowledge of others' mistakes. Integration of law and the development of legal relations with Russia, Georgia



At the conference

and other partners is another area of interest. We've discussed the difficulties arising from changes in the systems of advocacy and notarization in Belarus, as well as Eurasian

Economic Union legislation, mechanisms of protecting foreign investments within the CIS, and other acute problems in the sphere of integration and law."

Configuration of far-reaching plans acquires real features

By Vasily Kharitonov

The Indian President's visit to Belarus continues a series of key foreign political events of late, Minsk having been visited by Chinese President Xi Jinping recently, and Alexander Lukashenko having paid an official visit to Pakistan.

Belarus is known for its commitment to a multi-vector foreign policy, with such meetings as those mentioned above acting as a clear illustration. They reflect our process of trade consolidation (which is gaining momentum), liaising with countries confidently becoming new world economic leaders.

Some time ago, the People's Republic of China proposed the initiative of the new Silk Road trade zone, involving India, Pakistan, the Eurasian Economic Union countries, and a range of other states. The Chinese Foreign Minister explains the idea, noting that the aim is to provide mutual benefit: 'a symphonic concert of partners rather than a solo attempt'.

Looking at the map, it's clear that the intention is to create more than an overland connection between eastern China and Europe, since sea routes are included: across the Indian Ocean, and the South China, Red and Mediterranean seas. This global project could never be implemented alone, even by a very large and rich country; it relies on the collaboration of many, in a constructively-disposed world. Belarus has a key role to play, being the only calm and stable corridor between Europe and Asia in our region. It's little wonder that the largest countries are eager to engage in dialogue with us.

Communication between the presidents of Belarus and India began with recollections of their first meeting in New Delhi, in 2007, when Mr. Lukashenko visited. This was a catalyst for new dynamics of inter-state interaction. At that time, Pranab Mukherjee was Foreign Minister, creating the foundations of our relationship, to mutual benefit. The Indian President recalled that occasion with warmth, noting the friendly relations which connected India and the USSR and adding his hopes that future partnerships will be just as strong, if not even stronger. He is keen to expand interaction with Minsk, echoing the feelings of the President of Belarus. Mr. Lukashenko underlined that our country has no desire to be 'isolated' and is proud of its good relationship with such a powerful state as India.

Further talks concentrated more on business and Mr. Lukashenko told his Indian colleague his view on promising areas of co-operation. For example, boasting contemporary technologies and equipment, Belarusian specialists are ready to take part in the modernisation of Indian mining industry. They can also advise how to enhance the efficiency of oil and gas sector.

In the nearest time, India plans to considerably enhance its level of coal extraction. Of course, it will need to ensure a reliable fleet of heavy-duty



During the Belarusian-Indian Business Forum

Mr. Lukashenko visited New Delhi in 2007, meeting Pranab Mukherjee to discuss measures to be taken to develop ties between our countries. At that time, Minsk and New Delhi intended to triple turnover, bringing it closer to \$0.5bn. This goal was achieved in 2012, when the volume of bilateral trade reached \$494.6m. Political contacts at top level in 2007 brought genuine business continuation. Unfortunately, the world crisis took its toll. By 2013, mutual trade had fallen significantly. It revived in 2014 and is now ready for new stimuli, inspiring dynamic interaction between our two countries. The official visit of the Indian President to Belarus should facilitate this.

dump trucks; our BelAZ vehicles are already working at its enterprises successfully, making them an obvious choice for further supply. Belarus is already setting up a service centre to maintain its machinery, with its first such centre to open later this year in India.

Collaboration in tractor building is also on the agenda, our 'Belarus' tractors being well-known in India since the 1960s and 1970s. They helped achieve the 'green revolution', which brought significant rises in crop yields from Indian fields.

The 'Made in India' governmental programme aims to attract new production technologies into the country, including joint production ventures — such as for the manufacture of buses, trucks, communal and road-construction machinery. Belarus has much to offer in this sphere.

India is also keen to access the markets of adjoining states, as well as organising commodity distribution networks, banking and joint financial provision for projects.

Belarusian has also proposed educational initiatives to reinforce manufacturing success. Another large-scale Indian programme is the Development of Professional Skills, for which Belarus could help train specialists across various spheres, via technical training centres in India.

Minsk is eager also to welcome Indian specialists to Belarus, liaising in the sphere of power engineering and other infrastructural projects.

Undoubtedly, such collaboration is beneficial to both states.

The achievements of the Indian pharmaceutical industry are recognised worldwide and Belarus would welcome investments into its own branch, as well as joint ventures in nano- and biotechnologies, micro-electronics, machine building and renewable energy. The Great Stone Industrial Park is oriented in this direction, and would welcome high-tech Indian companies.

President Mukherjee asserts that India is very interested in our proposed areas of interaction, being convinced that today's level of turnover is far from showing our true potential. Meanwhile, India is opening a credit line worth \$100m, for joint projects.

The roadmap of Belarusian-Indian collaboration was a key document of the meeting, guiding areas for development. Meanwhile, the Belarusian-Indian Business Forum tackled how 'real' liaisons are to be achieved.

Mr. Lukashenko has offered India unhindered access to the Eurasian Economic Union market, via setting up manufacturing in Belarus, as he noted, speaking at the Belarusian-Indian Business Forum. The Head of State believes that Belarus and India can reinforce interaction in the spheres of industry, power engineering, logistics, communication, bio- and nano-technologies. In addition, Belarus is keen to develop joint production in the spheres of phar-

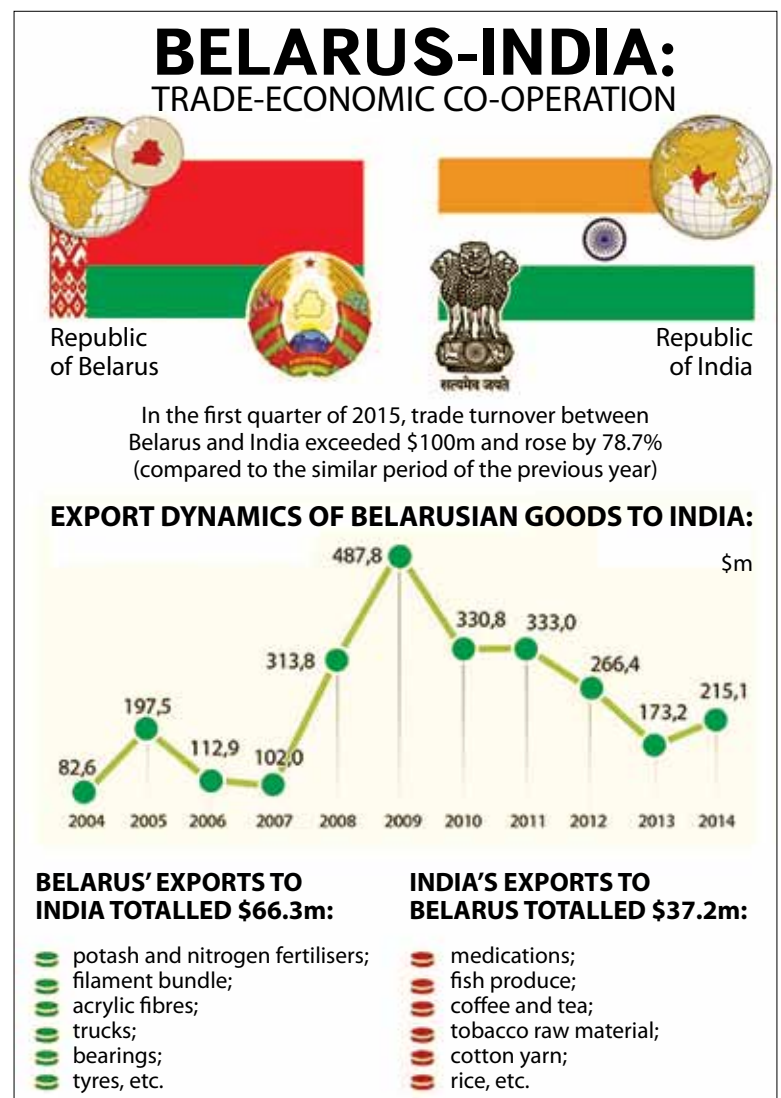
maceuticals, IT and communication technologies.

"We suggest setting up such enterprises at the Great Stone Industrial Park," noted the President of Belarus, inviting representatives of Indian business circles to tour the Park, and see its potential. "By opening manufactures in Belarus, you'll be able to enjoy unhindered access to the market of the Eurasian Economic Union and will be able to explore the markets of the European Union," noted the Belarusian Head of State. "You understand well that there are no better logistical options for working in the two unions, since Belarus

is geographically located at the very centre of these economic giants."

Mr. Lukashenko stressed that Belarus is focused on co-operation across the regions, believing that such interaction fills bilateral trade-economic ties with new content. The President added that direct contacts between Belarus and the Russian Federation are a good example.

President Mukherjee also took part in the business forum, joining Mr. Lukashenko in unveiling a memorial devoted to interaction between Indian and Belarusian specialists in reconstructing the Grodno TPP-2.



Money will definitely begin to flow on rails

Single railway logistical project should generate revenue in excess of \$11 billion for Customs Union member states

By Irina Sudas

The United Transport & Logistics Company (UTLC) looks set to contribute \$5m to the GDP of Russia, \$5.3bn to that of Kazakhstan and \$1bn to Belarus. The Minsk Council session on Railway Transport within the CIS was attended not only by those from within the CIS, but colleagues from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Finland and, even, Iran.

The UTLC railway operator unites the infrastructure of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, having launched last year (although experts like to date its operation from its first contract concluded). The UTLC will render railway transportation and mailing services, including internationally, providing unhindered movement of container cargoes within the Single Economic Space and across transit routes between Europe and Asia. Belarus, for example, expects to increase transit container flow 4.5-fold.

Participants of the session discussed the theme of international passenger traffic, which has reduced considerably of late. Last year, for example, just over 27m railway journeys were taken in the CIS: down 41.5 percent on 2013. To attract passengers, prices have been lowered: Belarusian Railways and Russian Railways almost halved ticket prices at the start of this year, for journeys from Belarus into Russia (depending on terms of purchase and distance travelled). Now, other countries across EEU and CIS are following suit.

The Talgo train, offered on the high-speed route from Moscow to Minsk and on to Berlin (and vice versa), transits through Brest, where a device allows accelerated admission of trains from Belaru-



Logistics project targets profit

sian Railways and Russian Railways (moving between broad gauge and narrow gauge). Many trains also go on towards Kaliningrad. Electric trains are soon to launch between Belarus and Latvia, and between Russia and Ukraine.

Meanwhile, Belarusian Railways has been liaising with Ukrainian colleagues to consider electrifying the line connecting Gomel with Chernigov and Kalinkovichi, and on to Korosten.

Latvian Railways has been negotiating with Russian Railways for similar electrification: for the Smolensk-Vitebsk-Daugavpils-Riga route.

The Head of Belarusian Railways, Vladimir Morozov, notes that it's important to co-ordinate with neighbouring railway administrations, in the short-term and long-term. He explains, "We'll continue to seek out ways of encouraging passenger rail travel."

MTS REFERENCE:

The United Transport & Logistics Company (UTLC) is an international railway operator for countries within the Customs Union, founded by Russian Railways JSC (owning 99.84 percent), the Belarusian Railways State Association (0.08 percent) and the Temir Zholly National Company of Kazakhstan (0.08 percent)

Train of Friendship of War Veterans Against Nazism organised by Council

The Moscow-Minsk-Brest-Moscow route recently carried 127 war veterans from Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Estonia on its 'friendship train', with Minsk hosting a welcome ceremony. The Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus, Anatoly Kalinin, greeted the veterans, saying, "This action shows once again our respect for veterans, while reminding young people of the feats of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers. This route was created to show the continuity of generations. The delegation visited the Belarusian State Museum of Great Patriotic War History, and laid flowers at the Eternal Flame of the Victory Monument, before heading to Brest. The event was agreed one year ago in Astana, at the 60th session of the Council on Railway Transportation of CIS states.

From Asia to Europe and back

By Dmitry Ampilov

Belarus hopes to develop container shipping as part of Silk Road Economic Belt project

At present, 19 container trains make regular trips across the Belarusian railway network, with five new joint projects on cargo transportation between Asia and Europe implemented in 2014 alone. Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister, Anatoly Kalinin, speaking at a joint session of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic at the National Assembly of Belarus, has announced, "We hope that the container shipping business will be further developed within the Silk Road Economic Belt project." According to Mr. Kalinin, container shipping is a priority in the sphere of freight traffic.

Belarusian design for nuclear power stations in Finland, Hungary and Vietnam

By Oleg Dovlatov

Valery Limarenko, head of the Russian group of nuclear industry companies NIAEP-ASE-AEP, tells journalists in Moscow that the Belarusian nuclear power station design may be replicated in Finland, Hungary and Vietnam

Mr. Limarenko has underlined that European experts are impressed with the Belarusian nuclear power station currently under construction. He notes, "We have a positive assessment because the Belarusian nuclear power station is a three-plus generation facility: a cutting-edge power station, adhering strictly to its construction schedule and



On the construction site of the Belarusian nuclear power station

within its planned budget."

Mr. Limarenko adds that monitoring is rigorous at all stages for the off-the-shelf design and is de-

lighted by the idea that the experience gained in building the Belarusian nuclear power station will be applied abroad.

Good venue for new ideas

By Valery Sidorov

Over 150 innovative developments presented at business contact exchange in Gomel

The developments highlighted at the forum characterised the Gomel Region's economy, explains Anatoly Silchenko, the Deputy Chairman of the State Science and Technology Committee. He comments that the forum aimed to present the region's business profile, particularly for industrial enterprises and manufacturing. Such innovations as methods of hardening hard-alloy instruments and the use of nano-technologies were on display, as well as technologies to make high-durability reinforced thermoplastic polymers, glass fibres and glass cloth.

Business contact exchange is a vital area of work for the State Science and Technology Committee. The event in Gomel is the first of a series, helping contracts to be signed for provision of innovative R&D products and acting as a platform for sharing innovative infrastructure experience. Belarus currently boasts 12 science and technology parks, as well as two technology transfer centres.

Weightier investment portfolio

By Irina Sudas

World Bank's financial support of Belarusian economy has doubled over past three years, reaching \$938m

This year, the amount will exceed \$1bn, with more to come. From July 1st, joint projects will launch: with \$150m designated for improving the competitiveness of the Belarusian economy; \$50m for modernising the education sector; and \$10m for updating the system of public finance management. A roadmap of structural reform is also foreseen.

During Qimiao Fan's meeting with the Chairman of the Council of the Republic, Mikhail Myasnikov, the World Bank Director for Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine emphasised, "We've managed to significantly raise our level of relations, with a developed strategy of partnership. We've also greatly reduced the time needed to complete internal procedures, and to approve new programmes. For example, in record time, we've managed to prepare a project to modernise roads, worth \$250m."

Mr. Myasnikov assured his guest that Parliament continues to improve the efficiency of its co-operation with the World Bank. The National Assembly is working in two main directions: to pass legislation supportive of the sustainable economic development of our country; and the unification of legislation to fit the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union.

A vehicle for every purpose

During Soviet times, Belarus was well-known for its agricultural machinery. These days, it's pretty self-sufficient in producing vehicles for fields and farms, as well as other equipment, and even exports two thirds of its industrial agro-production, showing the competitiveness of Belarusian vehicles, as evinced at the recent *Belagro* Expo, in Minsk.

By Vladimir Khromov

Improvements in agotechnical facilities have ensured food safety and brought export revenue from foodstuffs of almost \$6 billion a year, explained the Deputy Prime Minister, Vladimir Semashko, speaking at the opening of the International *Belagro-2015* Specialised Exhibition, hosted by Minsk's Indoor Football Manege.

According to the Deputy Prime Minister, we must strive to constantly improve our models of machinery, moving forward. He believes that such exhibitions and trade fairs are helpful, in allowing us to show our achievements, and to see those of others.

The Minister of Agriculture and Food, Leonid Zayats, believes that, to compete successfully on the world food market, costs must be minimised and quality improved, while reducing the price for customers.

Gomselmash JSC stand displayed powerful combine harvesters (for grain and laying-in of fodder), as well as the economy-class KZS-5, which processes 2.5-fold less than the basic model, but costs half as much. It's a good solution for small farms, harvesting around 30 centners of grain per hectare.

Agricultural enterprises growing larger volumes may be interested in an experimental batch of rotor thrash-



At *Belagro* exhibition

ing vehicles, able to work with even the heaviest corn. After the development of full-scale production, the import of combine harvesters will be no longer necessary, according to Konstantin Borisenko,

who heads advertising and display of machinery at Gomselmash JSC.

Minsk Tractor Works JSC is keen to promote its 355 horsepower harvester and other heavy vehicles. How-

ever, its head of advertising and patents, Sergey Petukhov, believes that the housing and utility sector only needs tractors with 80 horsepower engines, since these are adequate for the level of work

required. Purchasing heavier-duty vehicles is unnecessary: a waste of finances.

The Minister of Agriculture of Georgia, Otar Daneliya, also attending the event, praised the Belarusian agri-

cultural machinery on show, noting that small-sized, low capacity vehicles are perfect for his country, where fields tend to be modest in size, and privately owned.

With the latest equipment and technologies on show, including achievements in livestock breeding, and sample testing organised by processing enterprises, the exhibition has proven a great success: informative and inspiring.

25th International *Belagro-2015* Specialised Exhibition is located at single Minsk venue for first time in many years: at and around Indoor Football Manege.

502 companies attended from 23 countries. In all, 386 are from Belarus, with the largest expositions from Russia, Germany, Poland and China. As is traditional, the exhibition will be divided into three main components: *Belagro-2015*, where mechanisation will dominate; *Belferma-2015*, for livestock; and *Belproduct-2015*.

There was no demonstration of agricultural machinery this year, as only a handful of people tend to be interested. A field has been designated for the ploughing competition, featuring teams from every region of the country. A team from the Lipetsk Region of Russia participated in the competition for the first time: the first step in making the contest international.

Reform is obviously essential

By Alexander Pimenov

Two decades of agro-industrial progress, but path far from smooth

Dozens of billions of Dollars have been invested in the agro-industrial branch, with relevant legislation adopted. Now, although agrarians are generating about \$7 billion annually from sale of foodstuffs, various problems remain, including some unprofitable enterprises and those 'walking the line'.

In his recent Address to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly, President

Lukashenko noted that the agricultural branch requires a new approach to development, working on principles of self-sufficiency. He declared that state support is to be reduced, with competitive selection playing a greater role in allocation of funding. However, enterprises will be given equal access to loans. The guiding principle will be the need for responsibility and the meeting of goals.

Reform of agriculture is to continue, with the President holding several meetings at which he will be strict in requiring the Government to set

out a strategic action plan. The Permanent Commission on Agrarian Policy (of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly) has set out a path of orientation, as Chairman Victor Shchetko explains.

Primarily, a system of control is needed for agricultural organisations, via advisory centres set up within district executive committees. This will allow owners of enterprises more freedom; moreover, conditions should be created for efficient work of security market, including unimpeded redemption of shares.

Mr. Shchetko notes,

"We've long spoken of the need to eliminate disparity in prices, approving certain costs for production in the spheres of agriculture, industry and energy. Cost-efficient work is impossible without such guidelines."

State support and high interest rates on loans continue to be problematic but the Permanent Commission plans to direct at least half of the loans available towards manufacturers, to allow prices to be maintained (most especially for meat and milk). Meanwhile, state support should not exceed 10 percent of the gross



Path towards harvest difficult

value of goods. Restructuring is possible for inefficient agricultural organisations with debt, and private ownership is to be encouraged across production spheres (though not the privatisation of land). Following the experience of states with advanced levels of

agriculture, Belarus may gain a working body to establish purchasing prices for all processors.

It is still unknown which route will be accepted but one thing is obvious: our agricultural sphere must be reformed, and soon.

Genetic passport to animal health

By Vera Arteaga

Like all other creatures on Earth, man is a slave to his DNA, likely to suffer from hereditary weaknesses such as diabetes and a disposition to various illnesses. Of course, in the world of agriculture, farmers need their livestock to remain healthy, leading to much time spent on husbandry and breeding technology.

The Head of the Laboratory of Animal Genetics, at the Institute of Genetics and Cytology of the National Academy of Sciences, Maria Mikhailova explains, "Agricultural livestock in our country, as elsewhere in the world, is the foundation of our food security. All inhabitants of farms and complexes must be healthy and productive. Selection of the best allows us to gain healthy offspring while improving meat and milk yields: all vital."

Animals, like people, suffer from a wide range of hereditary diseases, which grow from mutations in the genome. Of course, two apparently healthy individuals may give birth to sick offspring, since genes hail also from their forebears. The complete genetic line is relevant.

Geneticists leave nothing to chance in creating a genetic passport, although such work takes great effort and time. Breeders are currently closely monitoring our aurochs to avoid sibling relationships. Eight years ago, hereditary mutations stood at about 6 percent; now they are just 0.1 percent.

What problems currently affect our cattle?

The most disadvantageous mutations are hereditary immune-deficiencies, since these make the animal vulnerable to 'cold' viruses. Vertebral malformation, including rickets, is also significant. Even simple stress can affect an animal's ability to fight off illness. Pigs, for instance, are not always



Head of Animal Genetics Laboratory, Maria Mikhailova

sued to crowded conditions, and can become afraid of injections and man. Their stress can then make their meat less flavoursome.

Geneticists are very concerned about the health of our aurochs.

Yes, we are preparing certificates for each, using samples from inhabitants of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha, where there are most problems with genetic material. Our livestock pool is quite large these days but it can be difficult to collect samples, since they are wild animals. We need to raise the viability of the population through selective breeding. This requires each 'forest giant' to have a passport. So far, our data suggests that our auroch gene pool is less varied than on the Polish side of the forest.

Will genetic passports prevent the birth of mutants, with too many limbs and so on?

Not completely, since other factors are involved: medicinal and ecological. Sometimes, in the womb, two eggs are fertilised and then fuse, creating a chimera. If we conducted an ultrasound, we'd probably avoid such cases.

Tell us about diagnosing and treating the early stages of leukemia.

Leukemia has a long period of latency, from 8 to 12 years. It becomes active with age or changed conditions. We've learned to identify the disease in its 'dormant' stage, allowing intervention. We'll patent the technology soon. We can diagnose and treat the virus but lack much practical experience.

Latest surgery technologies

By Alla Martinkevich

1st Minsk Clinical Hospital preventing fatal consequences from blood clots via less invasive surgery, with quick recovery time

As we know, when a blood clot travels the body, it can cause blockage, which may prove fatal — especially if it enters the heart or brain. Usually, surgery is necessary, under anesthesia. However, five middle-aged female and male patients have recently undergone a new endovascular treatment, allowing them to leave after just 2-3 days.

The most common location for blood clots is the left atrial appendage, leading to arrhythmia. "Blood-thinning medicines are usually prescribed; however, these fail to take effect in some patients, and may even



In the operating room

cause allergic reactions, or bleeding," says the head of the angiographic cabinet of the 1st City Clinical Hospital, the chief freelance X-ray endovascular surgeon of the Health Committee of Minsk City Executive Committee, Pavel Chernoglaz. "In such cases, surgery has been thought of as the only option, but we don't need to operate

with a scalpel: keyhole endoscope surgery is the less invasive alternative."

A small puncture can be made in the upper thigh, near the groin, allowing medical instruments to be inserted. X-ray control leads them through the femoral vein, and the vena cava, to the left atrium. Here, an 'umbrella', or occlude, can be positioned, opening the atrial appendage and avoiding a blood clot causing harm. Within 40-50 minutes the

procedure is complete. Currently, the state pays the cost of such intervention, with each 'umbrella' costing about \$10,000. Previously, the technique was available only at the Cardiology Republican Scientific and Practical Centre and the Republican Clinical Medical Centre of the Administration of the Presidential Affairs.

Advice from Dr. Zhukova

Your body needs enough iron

What is iron-deficiency anaemia? And what causes it?

O.Naumovich, Khoiniki, Gomel Region



Iron-deficiency anaemia is a haematological syndrome characterised by the abnormal synthesis of haemoglobin, due to either a deficiency of iron or over-absorption. It is most commonly brought on by blood loss or a diet lacking in iron. Globally, 1.5 billion people suffer from iron deficiency: of these, nearly 1.2 billion suffer from iron-deficiency anaemia.

Loss of blood

Adults tend to suffer from iron deficiency following loss of blood: constant small losses or chronic concealed bleeding (5-10ml daily); a single massive loss (exceeding what can be replenished easily); or repeated considerable bleeding (after which iron stock lacks time to be restored).

Blood loss leading to post-hemorrhagic iron-deficiency anaemia is most commonly caused by metrorrhagia (bleeding from the alimentary canal); it is rare to develop anaemia from nosebleeds, tooth-extraction, pulmonary, nephritic or traumatic bleeding or other kinds of blood loss.

According to statistical data, 20-30 percent of women of childbearing age have a latent iron deficiency, while 8-10 percent have iron-deficiency anaemia. Metrorrhagia increases the volume of blood loss among women and cases of iron-deficiency.

The second most common cause of post-hemorrhagic iron-deficiency anaemia is blood loss from the alimentary canal of latent character. This is difficult to diagnose but is the main cause of anaemia among men, often linked to disease of the digestive organs or other illness. Abnormal iron levels may be accompanied by infections of the oesophagus or stomach, bleeding gastro-duodenal ulcers, or chronic infectious and inflammatory diseases of the alimentary canal.

Latent blood loss can be hard to diagnose, including when caused by gastro-oesophageal hernia, oesophageal varicose veins, rectal varices (dilatation of vessels due to portal hypertension), haemorrhoids or tumours. Pulmonary bleeding is a rare cause of iron deficiency. Another cause may be bleeding from the kidneys or urinary tracts (accompanied by stones or a tumour). In certain cases, blood loss comes from a different location or may be linked to a blood disorder or the destruction of blood vessels through inflammation (vasculitis) or collagen diseases. Sometimes, iron-deficiency anaemia is caused by blood loss, and can develop in babies and toddlers. Children are more sensitive to blood loss than adults. Newborns are vulnerable to blood loss from the placenta, especially through damage during caesarean delivery.

An unbalanced diet

Iron deficiency of alimentary origin can develop in children or adults whose diet lacks sufficient iron. It may be observed in those suffering from chronic malnutrition or starvation, or in those whose diet is simply too limited, being based largely on fats and sugar. Several physiological conditions require the body to

raise its absorption of iron, such as pregnancy and lactation, and during periods of growth (in children). The latter is most acute in the first year of life, and during puberty. Girls have an additional need, due to menstruation.

Iron-deficiency anaemia is most common during infancy and old age, accompanied by infectious or inflammatory diseases, burns, tumours, or reduced ability to absorb and retain iron levels within the body. Iron-deficiency anaemia has two periods: a period of latency and a period of obvious anaemia, caused by iron deficiency. During latency, clinical symptoms of iron-deficiency anaemia may appear less prominently, with patients displaying a feeling of weakness and indisposition, with impaired performance. They may lack appetite, have a dry or prickling tongue, have difficulty swallowing (feeling as if a foreign body is in the throat), have palpitations or feel short of breath.



Lesser symptoms of iron deficiency may include wasting of the taste buds (atrophied lingual papillae), inflammation of the lips (including angular cheilitis), dry skin and hair, or brittle nails. Non-manifest iron deficiency can be the only sign of lack of iron. Loss of body performance may not be so much a consequence of anaemia as directly a consequence of lack of iron: patients may be weak and easily fatigued, with difficulty holding concentration and prone to sleepiness, headaches and dizziness. In acute cases, fainting may occur. These complaints tend not to depend upon the degree of anaemia but upon how long a patient has been suffering from the disease and their age.

Iron-deficiency anaemia is characterised by changes in the condition of skin, nails and hair. The skin is usually pale, sometimes with a light green shade (chlorosis) but with a quick ability to blush. Dry skin is also common, with peeling and chapping. Hair loses its shine, becoming grey and thin, breaking easily, and turning grey quickly. Nails become thin and flat, flaking and breaking, with striations and loss of shine; they may even become spoon-shaped.

Prevention

Monitor your blood level, ensure a diet high in iron (including meat, and perhaps liver), take iron supplements (especially if you are in a 'risk group') and remove sources of blood loss.

By Tatiana Zhukova
Doctor of higher category,
M.D. Ph.D.

Casting a greedy eye over pies

MT correspondents visit culinary capital of Belarus: the agro-town of Motol, in Polesie



SERGEY LOSIYK

By Dmitry Ampilov

During the Soviet era, the village of Motol, in the Ivanovo District of the Brest Region, was known informally as the 'sheepskin coat' capital of the USSR; residents were known for sewing good sheepskin coats and jackets. Today, Motol is known better as a culinary capital. Anticipating surprising discoveries, our correspondents went to the native land of the country's 'tastiest' festival: *Motol Delicacies*. Here, you can sample delicious bread and the tastiest sausages, as well as learning the secrets of the round wedding loaf tradition: one of the latest historical and cultural heritage treasures of Belarus.

Motol is considered to be an agro-town, although local residents are more likely to run their own business than be involved in farming. Among the 4,000 residents there are 67 entrepreneurs and nearly 40 shops. Many have Jewish ethnicity, which may explain their business acumen.

Our journalists spent the day in Motol and could not but notice the entrepreneurial atmosphere. On asking Nikolay Stasevich, the head of Motol baking company Aniks Sania, if his staff might pose for a photo he tells us, "Only if you promise that it will be published in the newspaper!"

The town opened its own Museum of Bread this winter, filled with ancient utensils and tools (including ploughs and millstones) and various unusual hand-made articles. There is even a house made from toasted bread and various artworks featuring baked goods delight the eyes. Poetry and prose extolling the virtues of the humble loaf adorn the display.

Mr. Stasevich explains that he is keen to make the exhibition more interactive, to involve visitors in the process of baking bread, with insight into Motol recipes. He tells us, "Visitors can grind flour themselves, as we have our own mill. Then, they can sift flour, to make dough. Moreover, I've built the 'Motol Venice' agro-estate on the bank of the Yaselda River. We intend to open a 'School of Motol cuisine' there."

Manager Olesya Shikolai takes us on a tour, describing how bread rolls were made from an ear of wheat in olden times and how they are made today. She demonstrates the threshing of grain, using a thrasher,



SERGEY LOSIYK



Wedding round-loaf tradition of Motol village recognised as intangible historical and cultural treasure of Belarus

SERGEY LOSIYK

and a straw 'shyyan' (a special woven container).

Man cannot live by bread alone but there's no doubt that bread is central to any gathering or celebration. The local round wedding loaf tradition has recently become one of Belarus' intangible historical and cultural treasures, being held as a sacred ritual.

Young people may not always appreciate what is interesting to history and folklore enthusiasts, or what was once valued by the senior generation. As Olga Kulbeda, the Director of Motol's Museum of Folk Life and National Creativity, notes, last year, 30 weddings took place yet only three or four requested a traditional 'round loaf'. For many years, the happiness of the newly weds was thought to depend largely on the baking of this special loaf. Only women with children, who were happily married, respected, and skilful in housekeeping were per-

mitted to have a hand in making the loaf. There was even a parade for the bread, with each stage of its making accompanied by ceremonial songs, prayers and blessings.

Elderly resident Nina Kulbeda recalls that a traditional wedding would require a whole week of preparations and celebration: on Thursday and Friday, dishes were cooked, and the dough for the round loaf was baked on Saturday, with the wedding on Sunday. On Monday, the round loaf was divided, while Tuesday and Wednesday saw people taking 'bread cones' for visiting the mother of the bride and then relatives of the groom. She baked a round loaf just recently, for the wedding of her grandson, in February.

The recipe for a round loaf is simple, involving flour, milk, butter, sugar, yeast, eggs, sunflower oil, vanillin, vodka and salt. Set aside some dough for decorating and cones. The round loaf symbolises

the sun, while its braided decoration is the interlacing of two families. The 'cones' represent the branches of apple, pear or plum trees, made in dough and baked in a stove, then fastened with a red ribbon. Keep the ribbon after the wedding, as it's thought to have healing properties.

Asking if we might view the ceremony, we're told that we'd need to attend a wedding in July to do so, since road loaves aren't made often. However, the process has been captured on video. It's most likely that we'll return in early August, for the international *Motol Delicacies* Culinary Festival. On the weekend between the end of harvest and Dormition Fast, Motol becomes a fabulous food-court, with more than 1,700 homesteads offering home cuisine to visitors.

The Chairman of Motol Rural Executive Committee, Sergey Pilipovich, asserts, "There are so many visitors from around the world; the population of the village almost doubles! We have to accommodate everyone, so we've opened the Hotel Fest and are developing our agro-estates. They can't cope with our large numbers of visitors, although we've always done our best to offer beds in our own homes. Entrepreneurs help with the festival and we become host to several 'sausage kings' (state owned and private). There are so many traditions associated with sausages. Motol dwellers especially honour the founder of the

MT'S REFERENCE:

Motol, located on the bank of the River Yaselda, is one of the largest villages in Belarus, with a population of more than 4,000. It is the centre of Polesie agro-eco-tourism, and was home to the first President of Israel, Chaim Weizmann. In 2012, it celebrated its 590th anniversary. The village has two comprehensive secondary schools and an art academy, as well as several museums. The Motol Museum of National Creativity boasts 27,506 exhibits, including a windmill. There is also a Museum of Archaeology, called Our Roots. Transfiguration Church, constructed in 1877, plays a great role in the Orthodox life of Motol residents. Meanwhile, Agro-Motol JSC is the biggest generator of income for the settlement, breeding Limousin cattle for meat.

first sausage shop, Stepan Minyuk, who launched a range of sausages 80 years ago."

Nina Kulbeda prepared a whole tub of kholodnik (cold vegetable soup) for the last *Motol Delicacies*. Refreshing in the hot weather, it sold well, as did her tasty liver and blutwurst sausages, fried eggs with crackling and onions, salceson, goose jelly and traditional 'zurek' soup. Her namesake, Yelena Kulbeda, sold salty milk mushrooms and fried pike.

So many Vitebsk Region dishes are potato based, I notice, greedily consuming another fragrant suet dumpling filled with meat. Motol residents just smile in response, telling me that potatoes are a cheap way to fill the belly. In fact, they consider themselves prosperous compared to some who live in the north and point out that it's far harder to raise a pig than to grow a potato plant.

Yelena Kulbeda recalls that, before they had refrigerators, they would salt or tin meat and never threw out waste food, always finding a way to make it edible. She notes, "The only thing that we did not use was blood; we had many Jews and, for them, blood is the soul."

Waste food can become extremely tasty when prepared well: the proof was in a plate of hot 'shurpa' with liver, so rich that the spoon didn't sink! The tastiest 'shurpa' is from freshly-killed pig. A feature of Motol cuisine is to add coriander and dill to meat and sausages. However, an even more important ingredient is the boundless hospitality of Polesie residents.



Protesters rally against G7 summit in Bavaria

G7 protesters take to streets in Munich

Thousands of protesters taken to streets ahead of G7 meeting, saying that world leaders repeatedly fail to act on pressing global issues

The main demonstration ahead of the summit took place in Munich, the Bavarian capital, some 100 kilometres outside of the G7 venue. Environmentalists, globalisation opponents and other protesters is-

sued demands on everything from international trade agreements, poverty reduction and fighting climate change to rescuing migrants who take to the seas in rickety boats hoping for a better life.

Further south, about 300 protest representatives of the richest and most powerful countries in the world lay claim to decide the fate of the entire world, without having any legitimisation for this," the

group Stop G7 Elmau 2015 wrote on its website. "The G7 politics means neo-liberal economic policies, war and militarisation, exploitation, poverty and hunger, environmental degradation, and [shutting out] refugees."

Application identifies premature newborns

Researchers at Nottingham University in the UK have produced a mobile phone app designed to identify which newborns are premature enough to need specialist care

Ultrasound scanners are not always available in the developing world, so the date of conception is not always accurately calculated. But this smartphone app can determine the gestational age of newborn babies using distinctive features on their feet, face and ears to identify those who may need urgent medical care.

and gives an outline of where the face should be, or the ear should be, or the foot should be."

Apps like these are used to identify all sorts of diseases these days, including some cancers. But it's not just useful for individual babies. The app developers hope it can enable health organisations to identify pockets of premature births in remote areas.

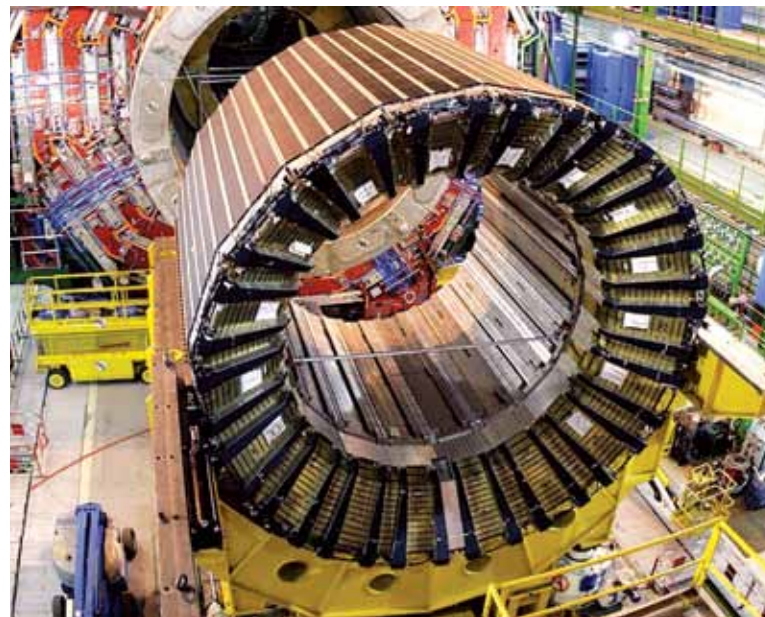
Dr. Don Sharkey is an Associate Professor of Neonatal Medicine at Queen's Medical Centre at Nottingham University, "Actually what we could do is use information from the



New mobile app to identify babies born prematurely

Michel Valstar is an Assistant Professor at Nottingham University's school of computing, "It's created to crowd-source as much data of as many babies as we possibly can to create an app that will automatically detect how old a baby is, in terms of gestational age. So it just opens the camera for you

smartphone, uploaded to a central data base; it could tell us where the pockets of prematurity are and then we could think about interventions. So the WHO, the United Nations could then target that particular population knowing that it's got a problem with very premature babies."



CERN's LHC resumes experiments at record-breaking energy

Large Hadron Collider smashes energy record

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) at CERN has reached the record-breaking energy of 13 TeV (teraelectronvolts)

So what does this mean for research into gravity and the origin of mass? Dave Charlton, Atlas Experiment spokesperson, explains, "It means that we can probe to higher energies to produce higher mass particles and also to shorter distances than we've been to before. So we're taking a step forward in the sensitivity (of the machine) to possible new physics."

In the LHC particle accelerator, protons are now whizzing around a 27-kilometre track, 11,245 times every second. It was shut down for over two years for millions of Euros' worth of maintenance and upgrade work, designed to provide almost twice the collision energy of its original run.

The restart is expected to provide an insight into the origin of mass, as well as discoveries surrounding matter and antimatter. These, it is hoped, will help scientists to solve some of the fundamental questions of our Universe.

Three tobacco companies ordered to pay billions in damages for failure to inform of health dangers

Three tobacco companies have said they would appeal a Canadian court ruling that awarded almost 11 billion Euros in damages to Quebec smokers in two related action cases

Launched in 1998, the case marks the first time tobacco companies have gone to trial in a civil suit in the country. The Director of Quebec Council on Tobacco and Health, an anti-smoking lobby group, Mario Bujold, said it had been 'a long process' but it was a 'big victory for the victims and against the tobacco companies'.

The court has ordered that the three tobacco companies leave at least 730 million Euros in trust with their lawyers. The wife of one of the original plaintiffs, Lise Blais, asked, "Did you stop to think what a cigarette is? It destroys you — your health is completely destroyed."

Volkswagen's electric plans in China

Volkswagen has grand plans for electric car production in China — as part of its planned 22 billion Euro investment there over the next four years

VW said it would localise more than 15 different electric vehicle models in China, including plug-in hybrids and fully electric vehicles. The carmaker announced that a new electric model based on its Chinese bestseller, the Lavidia, will be on the road by 2019.

ECB keeps rates unchanged, lifts inflation forecast

The European Central Bank (ECB) has kept interest rates unchanged at record lows, months after launching its historic stimulus package

As expected, the main refinancing rate was left at 0.05 percent. ECB President Mario Draghi said that the bank's quantitative easing programme, launched earlier this year, was bearing fruit.

"The recovery is on track, exactly according to our projections. However, we had expected stronger figures," Draghi said. But he added that a 'protracted period of very low interest rates causes a series of problems', such as financial risks and volatility. "Is this a good reason to change our monetary policy?" Draghi continued. "The answer is 'no'."

The ECB has lifted its 2015 inflation forecast from 0 to 0.3 percent. That amendment came on the back of data released by Eurostat showing a stronger than expected increase in consumer prices in May.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Summer Holidays sparkle with landscapes and still-lives

Art café at National Art Museum hosts personal exhibition by Minsk painter Vasily Peshkun, featuring around two dozen of his artworks

By Veniamin Mikheev

Children yearn for their summer holidays, especially when those months bring a welcome spell of warmth. Who among us does not think back to our childhood of long days, adventures, and playing in the sunshine?

Vasily Peshkun loves every season, and is inspired by nature. You'll find him outside in all weathers, with his canvas, brushes and paints. Of course, summer evokes special feelings for him, bringing greater relaxation, to restore strength, in mind and body. Mr. Peshkun has amazing energy and expressive artistic language, as shown through his works: they reflect his aspiration to penetrate the depths of life. For him, learning never ends.

The exhibition features Mr. Peshkun's landscapes and still-life works, uplifting in spirit, with their connection to rural harmony. His emotionally rich and picturesque motifs demonstrate our planet's inexhaustible energy, warmed by the summer sun and producing endless joy and inspiration.

Vasily Peshkun primarily works in the genre of landscapes and 'cosy' still-life works. His mastery inspires us to look at simple objects differently, appreciating the delicate beauty in ordinary, daily things. However, landscapes are his favourite genre, created in the open air; they have a freshness of observation and an impressionistic understanding of colour. Mr. Peshkun does more than state the fact of natural beauty; he has a connection with nature, feeling its character and mood. He catches its wonderful nuances and slight alterations through the day and seasons, adding his own, personal response.

Mr. Peshkun's rural landscapes are especially delicate and touching. These are primarily of places near his



Author's style apparent in Vasily Peshkun's works

landscapes show heart-felt dialogue with nature and with his audience. Looking at Vasily's pictures, you rather feel as if you are joining him on his journey: not only geographically but internally. This creates the impression of an incredible unbroken tie, between man and nature, inner and outer harmony.

It's a pleasure to admire Mr. Peshkun's landscapes, recognising well known places, cities and countries, depicted simply and vividly, depicting the beauty of the environment and its calmness, peace of village life and rhythms of large cities. Importantly, he discloses the harmony and joy of daily life and deep and unbroken ties of people and the environment.

Evidently, Mr. Peshkun not merely states facts and depicts moments. He shares his own feelings

and impressions: tender feelings, scents, sounds and recollections. His pictures arouse a storm of emotions. Of course, our internal state tends to match the state of nature. Moreover,



Vasily Peshkun

any true art work is more than a virtuoso example of technique; it must be original, helping us find our own reflection of thoughts and feelings.

I can assure you that such feelings are born from visiting Mr. Peshkun's exhibition at the National Art Museum.

Vasily Peshkun was born in 1978 in Gomel. He graduated from Gomel's Art College and the Belarusian State Academy of Arts (the Monumental Decorative Art Department). Vasily was awarded a scholarship from the Belarusian President's Special Fund to Support Talented Youth and, since 1999, has taken part in numerous Republican and international exhibitions. He has had over ten personal exhibitions and, since 2005, has been a member of the Belarusian Union of Artists. In 2008, he was awarded the 'Talent and Recognition' medal by the Peacemaker International Charitable Alliance. Mr. Peshkun's works are held by Belarus' National Art Museum, the US Museum of Modern Russian Art (Jersey City), as well as in private collections in Belarus, Russia, the USA, Israel, Japan, Italy, and France. At present, the artist lives and works in Minsk.

Reputable story about human choices in life

By Anastasia Shoplya

Pugach, by Belarusian director Sergey Kolosovsky, included into World of Short Films collection of masterpieces

Pugach, by young Belarusian director Sergey Kolosovsky, is to feature in the *World of Short Films* collection of masterpieces from recent years: winners and nominees of the most prestigious film festivals. Works are to be screened in Minsk, and across regional centres of Belarus, in June.

Writer and director Mr. Kolosovsky is a representative of young Belarusian cinema, born in Bobruisk in 1982. His first higher education is legal psychology and

he is a graduate of the Warsaw Film School. His repertoire includes such short films as *The Path to Paradise is Closed*, *A Letter*, *Dreaming of Mexico*, *The Bet*, and *Pugach*. Of the latter, he notes that it was his long-held desire to make a film about the musical instrument. He once studied the flute but he gave up his dream of becoming a professional musician.

He explains, "It symbolises my missed opportunity. I had the idea of creating a story about boys, based largely on my memories. The point is simple: we all face choices. We might work towards an illusive future dream, as in childhood, where tomorrow seems so far away, or we can live in the here and now. This is



Scene from *Pugach* film

a film about choice. The main character takes a wiser decision than I did as a boy; he is stronger. I was able to realise my own 'lost dreams'

through his character."

Aside from *Pugach*, audiences will see six short films: produced in the United Kingdom, the USA,

and Germany, as well as joint productions from Japan, the USA and Singapore. The six are: *Phone Call* (an Oscar winner in 2015 for 'Best Short Film'); *Boogaloo and Graham* (nominated for an Oscar in 2015 for 'Best Short Film'); multi film festival winner *Shooter* ('Best Short Film' at the Los Angeles Film Festival in 2014); *Food* (nearly two dozen cinema prizes and participant of 100 film festivals); *Harry Grows* (the 'Audience Award' at the Los Angeles Comedy Shorts Fest in 2014 and 'Best Comedy' at the Atlanta Shorts Fest in 2013); and *Oh, Lucy!* (jury prize for 'Best Short Film' at 2015's Sundance, in addition to numerous prizes and awards).

Old estate reborn and blossoming

Minsk's most popular ghost, the White Lady of Loshitsa, may be seeking peace elsewhere, joke those employed on the estate. Following restoration, visitors are flooding to tour the beautiful tourist site. Featuring 19th century-early 20th century architectural elements, it has received the expertise of Belrestavratsiya enterprise.

By Yuliana Leonovich

Restoration of the estate, which once belonged to the Prushinsky and Lyubansky families, has taken six years. In the 1920s, it was home to academician Vavilov and, a century earlier, to Dunin-Marcinkiewicz. Work began in 2008, though plans were initiated in 2002, by Minsk City Executive Committee: entitled 'On the Restoration and Development of Loshitsa Estate and Park Complex in Minsk'.

The Deputy Director of Minsk's History Museum, Piotr Khotko, tells us that it was very difficult for restorers and designers to come to a unified decision, delaying work with contractors. He notes, "Now, thank God, everything is over. The experts have completely restored the original shape of the estate, with lost features recreated in modern materials. The estate is living once more, which is the important thing. We hope that everyone visiting the halls may be filled with the spirit of the 19th century."

In fact, the architectural elements, fragments of picturesque decor, mouldings and ornamentally tiled stoves and fireplace look like new. The impression is deceptive: all the stoves are authentic and each is a work of art. They would work for their intended purpose if needed but are not lit, on safety grounds.

Restoring the interiors has taken several years, since war and time had not spared the floors, windows or ceilings. Some fragments have been left as they were, so that the work undertaken can be appreciated, as Mr. Khotko explains. He shows us a wall in the lobby, saying, "We intentionally left this part, to show the colour in which it was painted at the end of the 19th century. It faded over time, but was once bright terracotta. Experts used scalpels to scrupulously clear each millimetre of paint, peeling back many layers: sometimes, up to ten."

Loshitsa's first mansion was built at the end of the 16th century



Fine art restorer Marianna Zhitkevich

and early 17th: information remains on its external and internal appearance. Early 19th century construction is on display in one of the rooms, accompanied by a 'tree' of all the owners, from Vasily Tolochinsky onwards. Mr. Khotko indicates two portraits, saying, "These are Yevstafy and Yadviga Lyubanskies: the last owners of the estate. During Lyubansky's time, the house both blossomed and declined. Being a strong host, he transformed the estate into a vivacious residence but, after death of his wife, gave up house-keeping and, in 1913, left Loshitsa for good."

The present 'host', the Director of Minsk's History Museum, Galina Ladisova, hopes



that the site will become a calling card for 19th century Minsk life. She comments, "The city has acquired a new historical corner. We've achieved our main goal of preserving the estate for present and fu-

ture generations. We're running individual tours, in addition to taking groups. There's no need to worry that the place will become too noisy once visitors are more regular: it will retain its romantic atmosphere."

HASTEN TO SEE

A Magnolia Kobus is currently blooming in Loshitsa's park: the very tree brought from Japan by Yevstafy Lyubansky, for his wife Yadviga. The tree is located just behind the house and, according to legend, blossoms each year on the day of Yadviga's birth. Amateur botanists are sure to enjoy seeing the delicate elegance of this wonderful plant, which blooms only briefly.

Life without discrimination

By Olga Potvorova

Gender equality organisations' research presented in Minsk

The National Council on Gender Policy at the Council of Ministers has heard a report on the latest data on gender equality and discussed how best to tackle issues of domestic violence. Support for those raising handicapped children also received special attention, alongside issues of female health, including the prevention of reproduction system cancers, breast cancer, the development of the medical rehabilitation system and provision of psychological counselling.

The session was attended by representatives of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers Apparatus, the Supreme Court, and various ministries, departments and public associations.

The National Council is a permanent body dealing with issues of state policy in the sphere of gender equality. It co-ordinates the country's gender policy and elaborates agreed actions, aimed at ensuring the fulfilment of UN Conventions to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

In search of interesting sites

By Sergey Kulyagin

Tourist cluster 'Edge of life-giving wells' acquires children's educational game

Children are being encouraged to learn more about Belarus' historical places, architectural sites and nature reserves, gaining an appreciation for animals and the treasures of rural life. The aim of the game is to give youngsters better understanding of the eight districts of the Mogilev Region: Mogilev, Dribin, Mstislavl, Krichev, Bykhov, Cherkov, Chaussy and Slavgorod. Rather than speeding around the sites, children are prompted to 'visit' as many sights as possible.

The Chairman of the Mogilev Public Ecological Association ENDO, Andrey Pakhomenko, who created the game, notes that the primary task is to instil a feeling of patriotism and to encourage ecological awareness. He emphasises, "We also aim to promote an active and healthy way of life, while advancing the eastern Mogilev Region as a tourist destination. The game allows children to learn much of interest about their part of the world and the beauty of nature. They may visit some of the sites from the game in later life, being inspired to see them for themselves."

The game is part of the *Open School to Develop Agro-eco-tourism* project, which is being realised by the Mogilev Ecological Public Association ENDO. Financed by the Supporting Environmental Civil Society Organisations in Belarus and Moldova SECTOR, it is being realised by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe.

Alexander Khatskevich's trainees lost to Russia, but fought as equal

Belarusian football squad loses to Russian national team in friendly match, 2:4, in Khimki, near Moscow

By Yegor Glebov

The first half saw the Moscow squad take the advantage, although there were few shots at Sergey Chernik's net. Yuri Zhirkov passed along the left flank, sending the ball expertly into the far corner of the goalkeeper's area. Chernik dived the wrong way and Alexander Kokorin sent the ball home. Sadly, our Belarusian squad failed to make any true attempts at Igor Akinfeev's net, leaving the Russian goalie almost bored.

In the second half, coach Alexander Khatskevich was pleased to see the Belarusian squad take more initiative, scoring twice: Sergey Kislyak took a perfect penalty kick, from the corner. However, this inspired the Russians to go on the attack, sending three goals into Alexander Gutor's net. During



REUTERS

Even the efforts of most experienced footballer Alexander Hleb didn't help the Belarusian national team

the 77th minute, Russian national team novice Alexey Golovin used a position error by the Belarusian defenders to punch through the left lower corner, resulting in another goal. Within six minutes, Russia's Alexey Miranchuk had also

scored: precisely into the centre of the net. Russian national team veteran Alexander Kerzhakov had the last word, scoring the fourth goal for his team and leaving the final score a 4:2.

For both teams, the meeting was

a dress rehearsal for the next qualifying matches of the Europe-2016 championship. On Sunday, June 14th, the Russians will host the Austrian national team, in Moscow, while Belarus will face current champions Spain at Borisov Arena.

First round — against Canadians

By Kirill Karin

Paris hosts draw for Fed Cup 2016 matches

The national team of Belarus is to play Canada in the first round of the second world group, on February 6-7th, 2016. In past years, Canadian and Belarusian tennis players have never met during the Cup of Federations. Belarus' national women's team is ranked 15th worldwide, while the Canadians are in 12th position.

Appreciation by hockey inspectors

By Igor Leshin

Inspectors of Champions Hockey League praise Neman infrastructure during working visit to Grodno

The Champions League inspection team has found no serious shortcoming from its tour of the Ice Palace. Even the location of the dressing rooms and advertising boards has been praised, as has the work of service personnel and the ice cleaning machinery. The organisation of TV broadcasting from Grodno has also received attention. At the preliminary stage of the Champions League 2015-2016, the reigning Continental Cup titleholder, Neman, will play in Group 9, against German Adler (Manheim) and Czech Vitkovice (Ostrava).

The first match of the Champions League preliminary round will be played by the Grodno team at home, on August 21st, against Adler. The return game is scheduled for one week later. Then, there is a match against Vitkovice, to be hosted by Grodno on August 30th, and another against Ostrava, on September 4th. The two clubs occupying the first and second places in the preliminary stage round will go through to the Champions Hockey League play-offs.

Graces remain among leaders

Belarusian sportswomen perform successfully at Calisthenics Grand Prix stage in Berlin

The Belarusian calisthenics team leader, Melitina Stanyuta, has taken gold for her routine with a ribbon, ahead of Russia's Alexandra Soldatova. Bronze went jointly to Russia's Margarita Mamun and Belarus' Yekaterina Galkina. Stanyuta also took bronze for her hoop and ball exercise, and for that with the clubs; in the latter, Yekaterina Galkina and Melitina shared third place (earning the same number of points). In the personal all-round, Stanyuta was placed second, while Galkina came 11th.

In the group exercises, the Belarusian team of Anna Dudenkova, Maria Kotyak, Ksenia Cheldyshkina, Maria Kadobina, Valentina Pishchelina and Arina Tsitsilina won the all-round and the exercise with five ribbons. They also took silver for their routine with six clubs and two hoops. Tournaments in Brno and Bucharest are the next major international tournaments for our Belarusian graces, while June sees the first European Games in Baku. The calisthenics competition is scheduled for June 17th-21st.

High level of complexity is no hindrance

By Igor Grishin

Triathlon 1, 2 and 3 star qualifying international competitions held at Ratomka's Republican Centre of Olympic Training for Equestrian Sport and Horse Breeding, with Roman Voronko victorious in most prestigious category: long distance CCI3*

Roman Voronko managed the least number of penalty points, riding his horse, Farting. After three programmes (dressage, cross-country and jumping) he took first place, ahead of Russia's Boris Vasilev (on Nablyudatel) and Russian Alexander Markov (on Shat Nuar), who finished third. Belarusian Alexander Fominov, on Gelios, came fourth in the long distance (having previously taken part in the Olympic Games in Beijing and



Roman Voronko wins the tournament

London) while Yelena Telepushkina, a favourite on the Belarusian national team, was knocked out of the short and long distance CCI3* following a number of errors; she had been feeling unwell.

CCI3* level events count towards qualifying for the 2015 European Championship horse triathlon, taking place in August in Polish Strzegom, and towards a place at the 2016 Olympic Games.



Ole Einar Bjørndalen in Raubichi, near Minsk

Biathlete Bjørndalen training in Raubichi

By Kirill Pirogov

Eight-time Olympic champion Ole Einar Bjørndalen to train at sports complex near Minsk, for about 10 days

The senior trainer of the national team of Belarus, Alexander Syman, tells us the plans of the world legend.

Does the arrival of Bjørndalen in Belarus mean that he can join the ranks of our team?

It doesn't, unfortunately; no team would decline to have him, despite his age, as he is a biathlon legend. His name attracts a lot of attention, even

in summer!

It's a real asset for us, lending prestige.

You're right there! However, Raubichi is already well-known as a training venue and, following reconstruction, is a global leader for summer training. Its facilities are outstanding, offering the highest level. That a dedicated professional, of Norwegian nationality, has chosen to come to Raubichi, speaks volumes.

Bjørndalen's training won't be limited to practice only, as he'll focus on firearms training and will take part in fitness activities, such as swimming, sailing and cycling.

Jazz evening



Jazz Evening with Bank BeVEB, held near Upper Town concert hall, in Minsk

Exhibitions

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

20 Lenin Street

Until 28th June. *I'm Simply in Remote Trip...*

Until 13th July. *Touch of Britain. 18th-19th Centuries British Art*

Until 31st July. *Art at Finger Tips*

Until 6th September. *Dedicated to 70th Anniversary of Great Victory*

Until 2nd November. *Great Patriotic War in Art*

Until 30th December. *Celebrating Victory Day in Museum*

NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street

Until 28th August. *Boletus: Beauty is their Family*

Peculiarity photo exhibition

Until 30th August. *The World of Big Parrots and Singing Birds*

Illustrations and Medals

MINSK CITY HISTORY MUSEUM

10 Revolutsionnaya Street

Until 29th June. *From Me:* exhibition by sculptor Vladimir Zhanov

Illustrations and Medals

Illustrations and Medals

Illustrations and Medals

WANKOWICZ HOUSE-MUSEUM

33A Internatsionalnaya Street

Until 25th December. *A Prophet of his Time. Adam Mickiewicz. Illustrations and Medals*

Illustrations and Medals

Illustrations and Medals

NATIONAL LIBRARY

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue

Until 31st August. *Feeling of the Colour*

Feeling of the Colour

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

121 Kalinovsky Street

Until 30th August. International festival of sand sculptures

International festival of sand sculptures

REPUBLICAN OLYMPIC CHESS AND DRAUGHTS TRAINING

10 Karl Marx Street

Until 30th June. *Harry Potter*

Theatres

NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square

14 and 16.06. *Carmen*

15.06. *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray*

17.06. *Ballet Summer at Bolshoi Theatre: The Swan Lake*

18.06. *Ballet Summer at Bolshoi Theatre: The Firebird. Scheherazade*

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street

12.06. *Summer Musical Show concert*

15.06. *Leonardo*

16.06. *Casting; Go I Know Not Wither*

17.06. *Go I Know Not Wither; The Miracle Worker*

18.06. *The Minor*

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street

12.06. *World War Two*

14.06. *Pinsk Gentry* 15.06. *Paulinka*

16.06. *The Black Lady of Nesvizh*

17 and 18.06. *Pan Tadeusz*

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street

12.06. *Viva Commedia!*

13.06. *Taming of the Shrew*

14.06. *Double Eternity*

16.06. *The Visit* 18.06. *Private Lives*

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue

12 and 13.06. *...Forgetting Herostratos!*

14 and 16.06. *Pygmalion*

17 and 18.06. *Even A Wise Man Stumbles*

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street

13.06. *Maybe?*

15.06. *The Eternal Song*

16.06. *Feint-Kruaze*

17.06. *Adam's Jokes*

Kaleidoscope of history unveiled

June of decades and centuries past comes to life

June 12th. In 1875, Belarusian botanist Vladimir Adamov was born. He was among the first researchers of Belarusian flora and a founder of the Bolsheletchansky Botanical Garden (near Vitebsk).

June 13th. In 1834, Konstantin Verenitsyn was born — a Belarusian literary man. It's likely that he wrote the famous poem *Taras on Parnassus*.

June 14th. In 1900, Belarusian singer Mikhail Zabeida-Sumitsky was born. He sang in 18 languages, with Belarusian folk songs occupying a major place in his concert repertoire.

June 15th. In 1955, Belarusian composer Vyacheslav Kuznetsov was born. Among his works are *Idiot's Notes* (an opera) and ballets: *Twelve Chairs*, *Polonaise* and *Macbeth*.

June 16th. In 1895, Pavel Rogovoy was born — a Belarusian scientist in the field of soil studies and an academician, he was among the compilers of Belarus' soil map.

June 17th. In 1910, USSR Hero Tikhon Bumazhkov was born — an organiser and head of the partisan movement in the Polesie Region during the Great Patriotic War.

June 18th. In 1935, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor Piotr Amelchenko was born in the village of Petrash, in the Khoiniki District. He was a designer and engineer in the field of tractor machine building and was MTZ's general designer from 1978-1995.



June 12th. In 1934, Minsk's Dinamo Stadium opened.

June 12th. In 1921, Derevoobdelochnik Plant began operations. In 1939, Minsk's Radio Plant was established within its platform.

June 13th. In 1909, Vitebsk's Scientific Archive Commission was set up, with the aim of preserving documents and creating collections for

historical archives.

June 14th. In 1938, the State Puppet Theatre launched in Gomel but closed in May, 1949. In 1950, it was re-established in Minsk.

June 15th. In 1810, a construction plan was approved for the House of Masons: now

home to the Museum of Belarusian Theatrical and Musical History.

June 15th. In 1903, construction began on a new building for the State Bank (in Podgornaya Street: now known as K. Marx). It currently houses Belarus' National History Museum.

June 15th. In 1998, Belarusian Radio began its broad-

casting to Russian regions.

June 16th. In 1923, a land lot was allocated in Minsk (near Universitetskaya Street) for the Botanical Garden.

June 16th. In 1929, construction began on a new bridge from Bakuninskaya Street, taking the tram over the River Svisloch.

June 16th. In 1985, the House-Museum of Petrus Brovka welcomed its first visitors, becoming a branch of the P. Brovka Literary Museum, in the poet's home village of Putilkovich, in the Ushachi District.

June 16th. In 1990, the Union of Belarusian Poles was founded at Grodno's 1st Congress of Poles.

June 16th. In 1992, the Belarusian Bibliographic Association launched.

June 17th. In 1921, the Belarusian State University's Working Department welcomed its first students.

June 17th. In 1935, the Krysha (Roof) Café for workers opened.

June 17th. In 1939, the chief building of the BSSR Academy of Sciences was completed.