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Bright tournament rich in exciting suspense and warm friendly meetings

Minsk hosts 15th Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus, with Belarusian team winning the event → **3, 10**

Bright holiday of Christmas

The Christian holiday is celebrated by millions of Belarusian residents, with Christmas services held at 1,692 Orthodox parishes, including at the Memorial Church of All Saints in the Belarusian capital, where President Lukashenko attended the mass

By Vladimir Mikhailov

The President has addressed everyone with sincere words about Christmas, saying, "For our nation, this holiday is more than merely a Christian tradition. It unites millions through the power of faith and inspires the deepest feelings: of love, forgiveness and the desire for peace and concord. The atmosphere of this solemn holiday encourages kind deeds. These Christmas days are filled with charity events."

Mr. Lukashenko views Christmas as one of the most special Christian holidays



Memorial Church of All Saints in Belarusian capital

and the Church of All Saints as being a special meeting place. He commented, "Through history, Belarus has lost millions of its sons and daughters. They gave their lives defending their Motherland. Time may have erased many names but we remember the heroes of the past century and of our present days, here in this magnificent church, made by our young state. Everything — from the idea to the embodiment of this concept — serves to preserve our historical memory and to promote peace and concord in society."

During the divine service, it was noted that many people helped build the Church of All Saints. "Times were difficult, but we built this church. Let it always symbolise our sovereignty. It tells everyone who wishes to think ill of us that we won't



Honouring Christmas

ever again allow ourselves to be placed under the boot," asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

The church crypt holds soil from various corners

where Belarusian soldiers fought, as the President reminded everyone, saying, "History can't be changed and can't be forgotten."

There's no better defence than to remember our tragic past. We appreciate peace, because we've witnessed the grief and horror of war, as no other nation in the world has done. Belarusians have experienced much of this, so we appreciate peace, and we call all nations to embrace friendship and co-operation. In this mission, our Belarusian nation and our church have always been united."

Mr. Lukashenko again congratulated everyone in attendance, wishing the congregation good health. He said, "Let our land welcome more babies. It's very important for us. May they have a happy childhood and live a long and interesting life. All depends on us. May our beautiful and strong Belarus be always prosperous in the world, due to our brains and hands. Striving for this, we should do all we can. I'd like to underline this, on this bright holiday of Christmas, and call upon you."

As is traditional, Mr. Lukashenko lit a Christmas candle and presented a Nativity icon to the Memorial Church of All Saints. The icon was made in the workshop of St. Elizabeth Convent, using the ancient method of crushing gems and stones (such as pearls, calcite, marble, jasper, azurite, lazurite, and malachite) which are then fixed using glue.

Mr. Lukashenko received a special edition of the Gospel made at the time of the consecration of the high altar of the Memorial Church of All Saints, in memory of all who've given their lives to protect their Homeland.

Truly in high spirits

By Alexander Pimenov

Poll by Information and Analytical Centre under the Presidential Administration, conducted from December 4th-17th, looks at expectations of Belarusian citizens for 2019, indicating spirit of optimism

Regarding their mood as the New Year begins, 64 percent of respondents noted feeling in a good mood and optimistic, while 28 percent had no particular feeling, and just 5 percent voiced pessimism.

Belarusians appear to have largely positive expectations of 2019, with 73 percent viewing the future with optimism, believing that 2019 will be a lucky year for the country. Only 13 percent voiced an opinion that hard times are ahead.

The majority of those voicing optimism were aged under 30 years (87 percent) while 78 percent voiced a belief in the



advent of personal success in the coming year, against just 7 percent who think that they'll have a hard year.

As regards New Year wishes, most declared a desire for improved health and material status (42 and 39 percent respectively), while a smaller percentage have plans to improve their housing or use

of leisure time, or plans to change their lifestyle.

Remarkably, 30.5 percent of those aged between 18 and 29 plan to start a family, wanting to give birth to a child in 2019.

A thousand people were surveyed, with statistical uncertainty not exceeding 3.1 percent.

Major plans were outlined

By Olga Korneeva

Parliamentary delegation headed by Chairman of France-Belarus Friendship Group of the French Senate, Charles Guene, to visit Minsk in 2019



Belarusian and French MPs are set to discuss a wide range of issues relating to bilateral co-operation, notes the press service of the Council of the Republic. "Special attention will be given to strengthening inter-parliamentary collaboration and to the parliamentary dimension, with the aim of expanding trade-economic ties and investment partnership between our two countries."

The visit will be held at Belarus' invitation and will pro-

note the implementation of agreements reached during the November 2018 meeting between the Chairman of the Council of the Republic, Mikhail Myasnikov, and the President of the Senate of France, Gerard Larcher.

The working group on co-operation with France was set up in 2018, via the Council of the Republic and the France-Belarus Friendship Group of the French Senate, working to expand interaction between our twin cities. This includes establishing direct contacts between businessmen, and developing bilateral relations in such areas as investment, agriculture, and the environment.



Ice hockey tournament which is rich in wonderful suspense and warm meetings of good friends

Minsk hosts 15th Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus

Fifteen years ago, inviting ice hockey amateurs and veterans to Minsk, organisers were initiating a great new tradition. Today, Chizhovka-Arena is again seeing full houses, with audiences keen to see stars of Olympiads and world championships. Many have spent more than one season with NHL and KHL clubs and their names are familiar with many generations of fans. Some participants of the *Golden Puck* tournament are newcomers, beginning their journey but sharing their love of the sport, at the informal world championships for ice hockey amateurs.

The official opening ceremony took place last Thursday evening, with the President of Belarus addressing participants and guests, as ever, reminding everyone that the first match of the Christmas tournament took place fifteen years ago. He commented, "This tournament is unique, vividly demonstrating that

sport unites nations despite political crises and disagreements. Most importantly, Minsk's ice is bringing together ice hockey devotees, strong in health and spirits who desire to make the world better."

The President noted that this year is special for Belarus, due to its hosting of the 2nd European Games in summer. Meanwhile, attention has been on the Christmas tournament. The President commented, "With each passing year, the geography of the tournament has expanded, with the number of entrants increasing. To avoid offending our friends, we've even changed the format of the competition this year."



Of course, such events encourage friendships. Sport is the best form of public diplomacy and the New Year ice hockey event in Minsk is a perfect opportunity to show Belarus to the world. Foreign guests can see with their own eyes how our country lives, enabling them to speak honestly of Belarus to those at home.

It's pleasant that participants of the tournament eagerly join the Republican charity campaign, *Our Children*, distributing gifts and chatting with youngsters, to create unforgettable memories. This year, athletes visited children's orphanage #7 in Minsk, donating Br32,000, thanks to the organisers: the President's Sports Club and the Belarusian Ice Hockey Federation.

Alexander Lukashenko thanked foreign players for their generosity and kindness towards our children,

saying, "You inspire children's faith in people, helping them feel necessary and happy. Of course, by your example, you encourage them in following a healthy lifestyle and promote a love for sport. It's no accident that the final of the Republican *Golden Puck* competition is a 'companion' to the amateur ice hockey tournament, which is also a good tradition."

Mr. Lukashenko congratulated the participants of the competition and sporting amateurs on the New Year and Orthodox Christmas, asking the athletes to bring their most spectacular play.



PARTICIPANTS OF TOURNAMENT HAVE THEIR SAY

15th Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of the Republic of Belarus features many championship veterans of the ice, yet the Minsk event remains special to all

Former captain of Dinamo Minsk, Jozef Stumpel of Slovakia, pleased to find himself in the thick of things again:

For me, participation in the Christmas tournament is a new experience. I've never performed at similar competitions in Slovakia. In previous years, I wanted to arrive in Minsk for the Christmas tournament but failed, due to various circumstances. I'm pleased that, this year, I've managed to make it. The organisation of the tournament is wonderful and I've enjoyed using Chizhovka-Arena facilities. I was last in Minsk eight years ago and the city has greatly improved since then.



Sergey Varlamov first arrived in Belarus as part of the national team of the International Ice Hockey Federation, playing in the NHL for the Cagliari Flames and the St. Louis Blues. He went on to play for Dinamo Minsk and has a very serious attitude towards the Christmas tournament:

It's evident that such competitions promote ice hockey. With full houses, it improves the chance of young audience members perhaps deciding to go into the sport themselves. The tournament is notable in having so many famous participants.



Tell us about those participants...

It's great to establish ties and meet old friends. Official meetings are important, as they bring together almost the whole leadership of the International Federation but, for me, I can't help looking at members of the Belarusian team (such as Sergey Stas and Oleg Antonenko) and being excited to meet them again on the ice. There are so many whom I've played against previously. The goal isn't just to win but to show the beauty of the game, entertaining our spectators.

When I was invited to join the IIHF team, I immediately agreed. Previously, I didn't have the opportunity, as nobody invited me, although I play regularly in the Ukrainian amateur league, and our squad is often among the prize winners. Of course, the entourage and level here are slightly different.

Topic to be continued on page 10



Time of tangible aspirations

Time moves on, with the Christmas and New Year holidays not only an optimistic tradition but defining our forward path — personally and as a nation.

Standards of living determine the political and economic 'success' of each passing year, with 2018 continuing the upward trend. Our financial market has remained calm, with inflation within forecasts and the Rouble rate being fairly strong.

Investment is at the centre of any modern economy, allowing development. Without it, little can be achieved, regardless of enthusiasm. Perhaps, the most notable example of investment co-operation has been seen with China, as demonstrated by the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park — now with forty-one residents. Meanwhile, Belarusian products have significantly advanced on the Chinese market and Chinese investments are thriving in Belarus.

Last year, the IT sphere also enjoyed progress. The foundation for its development was laid during the signing of a decree creating unprecedented conditions for the digital industry, as the world media noted. The decree came into force in March 2018 and the economic effect has been obvious. Within just nine months, High-Tech Park exports have amounted to almost a billion Dollars, and the number of residents has grown to five hundred.

Economically, the past year has been challenging, with the Rouble under pressure and our enterprises battling for exports, due to unprecedented levels of competition. However, Belarus' high-tech industries and services are growing stronger, which bodes well for the future.

On a different note, Minsk hosted the *Junior Eurovision Song Contest* in 2018, placing it in the spotlight internationally, and receiving much praise for its organisational level. Belarus is known for its independence, including in its foreign policy. It has worked to try and resolve the conflict in the east of Ukraine, with Minsk hosting negotiations and promoting peacekeeping. Belarus is keen to reduce tension on the European continent, initiating the Helsinki-2 idea. So far, European politicians are cautious but it's obvious that the initiative hasn't gone unnoticed.

Last year also saw the country mentioned by international publisher *Lonely Planet*, joining a top-10 travel destinations list. The publisher noted that Belarus will be hosting the 2nd European Games this year. Meanwhile, the GOBankingRates financial and consulting portal listed its top 50 countries according to cost of living, with Belarus appearing in 27th place. The site states that Belarus has a 'backdrop of enchanting nature, palaces and fortresses' that make visitors 'feel as if they're in a fairy-tale', while the cost of living is 66 percent lower than in New York.

According to a report by the United Nations Children's Fund, Belarus has entered the top 10 countries worldwide for low infant mortality. In turn, the World Bank's *Doing Business 2019* ranking places Belarus 37th among 190 countries. According to a study conducted by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Centre, 68 percent of Russians consider Belarus to be the most successful country within the CIS and Alexander Lukashenko tops the confidence ratings for leaders of CIS member states. *National Geographic Traveler* magazine awarded Belarus in the 'Agrotourism' nomination, ahead of Italy, Brazil, China and the United States, thanks to a reader vote.

These great facts speak for themselves. Another year has passed and so much has happened. We can only guess at what tomorrow brings, and put our best foot forward as the new year begins.

By Victor Kharkov

Bilateral prospects seem truly favourable

Export potential of Bellesbumprom enterprises presented at Forum of Polish Investors in Minsk

By Oleg Bogomazov

The 10th Annual Economic Forum of Polish Investors in Belarus has seen Bellesbumprom Concern enterprises presenting their export and production potential. The event brought together representatives of the Polish Embassy to Belarus, as well as those from various ministries and departments, and from business circles of our two states. Belarusian-Polish economic relations came under discussion, alongside the entrepreneurial and investment environment, and mechanisms of protecting property rights in Belarus.

Speaking of the potential of the branch and collaboration between Belarusian manufacturers and Polish companies, the Deputy Chairman of Bellesbumprom Concern, Mikhail Kasko, tells us that Belarus has a strong basis for developing wood-processing and the paper-and-pulp industry, having significant forest resources. Forests account for 9.6 million hectares across Belarus, covering almost 40 percent of territory.



Already, over 2,000 wood and paper companies are operating in Belarus, with the largest as part of Bellesbumprom Concern, producing more than eighty types of wooden goods, with high value added.

Almost 70 percent of those goods are exported, to around sixty countries, with the Russian market foremost, followed by Poland, buying \$95.5 million of goods within the first ten months of 2018 (up 40 percent on the same period of the previous year).

Potential obviously requires embodiment



By Vladimir Mikhailov

Belarus ready to offer preferential terms to Japanese businesses

In an interview with Japanese TV and Radio Company, NHK, Belarusian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei has underlined, "Japan is of huge interest to us. Yes, we're expanding trade-economic interaction, but our potential is far from exhausted. We know how far Japan has advanced in car making, production of household appliances and in high technologies. Therefore, we'd like to ramp up our co-operation and offer ultimate preferences to Japanese businesses, should they decide to operate in Belarus."

At the start of 2018, Japanese travellers gained the option of visa-free entry to Belarus for thirty days, whether entering as tourists, for business, or for humanitarian purposes — joining citizens of about eighty other countries enjoying the same freedom.

Mr. Makei added, "We're closely collaborating on mitigating the negative impact of nuclear disasters. Thanks to Japan, we've implemented nearly forty social projects related to the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. We've also provided aid to Japan in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident. Every year, about 130-150 Japanese children come to Belarus for recuperation."

The Minister touched upon Belarus' collaboration with China, saying that we must advance from simple trade to direct credit and investment interaction. "We're now busy implementing such projects both in our country and in China. One of the biggest tasks is to strengthen inter-regional co-operation," noted Mr. Makei. "Our country isn't large, with just ten million residents; it's like a small village in China! We're liaising with Chinese regions, which is bearing fruit, providing a substantial increase in our exports to China, primarily of agricultural products."

Investments certainly envisage reciprocity

By Oleg Bogomazov

Belarus and South African Republic working on tractor assembly project

Belarusian companies have been successfully collaborating with industrial enterprises in various African countries. One such assembling Belarusian tractors is already operational in Zambia, being fully established with local state finance.

Naturally, Belarusian companies are cautious in setting up overseas branches in the Southern Africa region, to assemble vehicles, machinery and equipment. Businesses are only prepared to accept a certain degree of risk.

Minsk Tractor Works JSC and Minsk Automobile Works are both keen to establish joint assembly enterprises in Angola but are deterred by the terms being offered. These fail to support a long-term presence in Angola, to ensure effective operation of assembly enterprises, including their management.

Innovative export products presented and discussed in Minsk

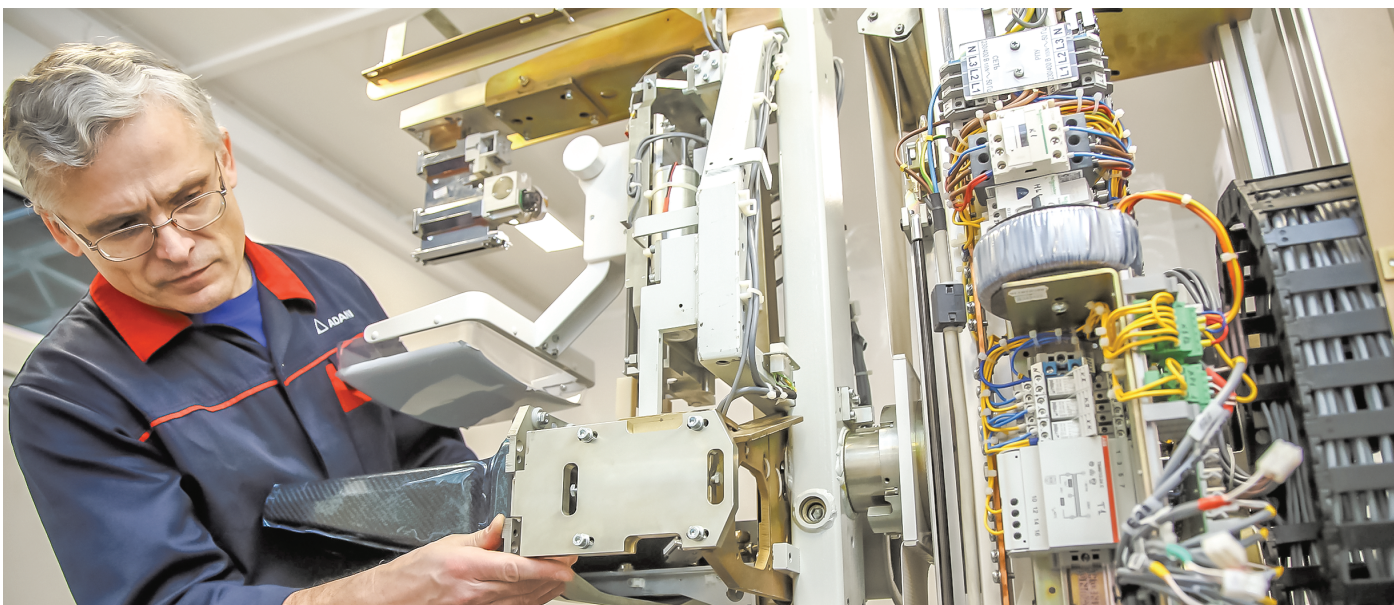
By Mikhail Overyanov

Belarus doesn't boast raw material resources, so it needs to rely on producing high-tech exports, promoting innovative goods to foreign markets, including through the *School of Exports* programme initiated by the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, together with the State Science and Technology Committee. Its recent seminar, entitled *Export of Innovation Produce: Opportunities and Prospects*, demonstrated instruments of support for exporting innovative goods, as well as success stories by domestic manufacturers.

Belarus is rather competitive on the world innovations market, with instrument making, petrochemistry, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment among the most promising areas. New technologies in the sphere of aerial devices and space development are also great sources of export revenue. Moreover, we're taking the lead in heavy-duty dump trucks; one in every ten tractors worldwide is produced by Belarus.

"Expansion of high-tech goods supply has always been the main focus," stresses Vladimir Ulakhovich, the Chairman of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He adds, "Since 2016, we've seen the highest figures."

Last year, 24 percent of non-resource exports were provided by non-state-owned enterprises. Additional measures of support and promotion are needed, however, as underlined by Alexander Shumilin, the Chairman of the State Science and Technology Committee. He states, "It's not easy to create high-tech goods but it's even more complex to



High-energy accelerators allow inspection of supsize containers and vehicles, as made by Adani Company

Freely convertible ideas are suggested



Demand for innovations is ever growing

enter the world market with them. It's vital that state and private enterprises have parity. One of the largest exporters, whose goods are supplied to sixty countries worldwide, is privately-owned enterprise Adani. There's every indication that high-tech businesses can liaise with the state to tackle joint tasks."

Steps taken to stimulate innovative developments include improvements to the system referring goods to the category of high-tech and

simplification of certification procedure for the real sector of the economy. For example, innovative goods are exempt from profit tax, to help stimulate enterprise.

Mr. Shumilin has named electric buses and the creation of energy-efficient electric transport as examples of successful competitive developments. BELAZ is setting up new production lines to make electric motors, while micro-circuits and new production technologies are to the fore.

Belarus supplies innovative goods to more than eighty countries, including the USA and China, being highly regarded globally. Our atomic force microscopes are exported to Japan, which is a recognised world leader in instrument-making, while Kazakhstan buys our artificial cardiac valves.

Developments displayed at the seminar included an 'intelligent' system to search video records for information, such as could be used with sur-

veillance camera footage, able to rapidly identify someone within a crowd or a car number plate. Meanwhile, optical readers are useful for scanning passports, ID-cards, driving licenses and visas.

The Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics' auto device for plasma generation of atmospheric disturbance has application for medicine, aviation and the automobile industry, enabling sterilisation of medical instruments and implants, as well as reducing the aerodynamic resistance of vehicles. It can even be used to 'glue' materials strongly.

Meanwhile, any bicycle can be transformed into an electric version by installing a motor-wheel made by Optron Instrument-Making Plant (within just five minutes). You can then select your driving mode via any mobile telephone with OS Android.

"Goods' 'life-cycle' has reduced from seven years to just 12-18 months, so we need to innovate quickly, to meet consumer demand," asserts Vladimir Linev, Adani's Director General. "Market success depends on this adaptability, making innovative goods for the benefit of the company and the customer."

Targeting Latin American market

By Alexey Fedosov

National exhibition of Belarus being organised in Argentina this year, notes Chairman of Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Vladimir Ulakhovich, at Latin American Countries. Export Prospects seminar, held in Minsk

Mr. Ulakhovich has highlighted the great potential for co-operation with Latin American countries. From January-August, Belarusian trade with those states reached \$1 billion — up 25

percent against the same period of last year. Belarusian potash fertilisers, BelAZ machinery, and MTZ tractors already have a presence in Latin America, with the market growing dynamically. According to forecasts by financial institutions, over the next twenty years, the number of consumers in the region will reach 800 million. Latin America's import portfolio exceeded \$1 trillion last year, with marketing analysis indicating potential demand for electrical and petrochemical products, measuring in-



struments, and power equipment, as well as medicines. Meanwhile, the agrarian sector of Latin America may

be interested in Belarusian fertilisers and plant growing and animal husbandry technologies. "We've analysed the

import portfolio of the largest countries of South America and found that they import furniture and refrigerators from Europe. We hope there is room for our products there, too," comments the BelCCI Chairman. Speaking about the development of the Latin American market, Mr. Ulakhovich underlines that the countries of the region and Belarus share similar views on the development of international relations, based on equal rights, open relations in the economic sector, and independence of states.

Eleven years of loneliness

Almost 80 countries in the bag: traveller from Canada's video diary of Minsk streets

By Olga Kosyakova

Former Canadian hospice nurse Colin Kennedy, from Ottawa, has visited almost eighty countries in the past eleven years, with his backpack. He's been keeping a diary for the past four years and is currently in Minsk. In collecting 'likes' from passers-by, he feels 'alive'. Our MT reporter chats with him, to learn what inspires his travel bug, and how he manages without a regular salary.

Stories in photos

'You have one life to live' reads a banner next to Colin. He's 'settled' in Masherov Avenue as a street vendor but isn't actually selling anything. Instead, he's sharing his photo-project, which features thousands of shots.

Passers-by lean over them, as I do, to view the places he's already visited. He has a map marked with dots at his feet and, if you like the look of a particular photo, Colin will let you have it (for a small fee). He'll even tell you about the country it relates to, if you fancy visiting.

I choose a 'winter forest' photo and hear that it was taken in Canada. Colin tells me that quite a few people head off on trips after chatting with him, and later send him their own photos.

He deliberately avoids anywhere that's dangerous: with war, famine or epidemics. It's not about fear, but about choosing life, not death, since death originally inspired him to begin his travels.

He explains, "I used to work



Colin Kennedy pleased with his staying in Minsk

as an assistant nurse in a hospice during the day and as a DJ at night. My relatives were dying, one after another. At the age of 32, my friend died from a heart attack. My grandparents passed away in old age and my mother died of cancer. Then, the house we lived in suddenly burned down. I realised how short and fragile my life was and that rou-

tine can make us forget to live. So, I left the world of health care and took a job on a cruise ship, leading the entertainment programme. I was travelling for seven years but then, again, saw how that lifestyle was limiting me, so I began backpacking. I said farewell to work and went out into the wider world. I decided to take a year to wander the

world but I'm still travelling, four years on!"

Colin came up with the photo project to support himself financially and inspire others to travel. "It works, including in your country. I receive 10-50 Roubles daily and so much positive energy. In Grodno, I sold more photos in four hours than I did in other countries over a period of two

years. In Brest, a boy gave me apples. I've found Belarus to be the most generous in smiles and willingness to chat. Nations viewed as 'rich' tend to more 'stingy' in this respect."

His cardboard collection box is filled mostly with banknotes in denominations of 5-50 Roubles, with very few coins. It seems that Minskians appreciate his project.

Ahasuerus' path

Speaking of Belarusians, he tells us, "They're beautiful, wonderful and sincere. You're interested in foreign affairs, politics, economics, and how others live. You need to look inside yourself to understand your value. Americans are rich by your standards, but they're cold. I've experienced much negativity from them. Here, although you're not viewed as 'rich' local people throw money into my box, take my photos and hug me. In this respect, this is the richest country. I experienced this in Singapore and Hong Kong. There was so much energy, warmth and goodness!"

Colin's route includes 193 countries and he's already seen half. Also, he's never been penniless, being frugal and avoiding alcohol and cigarettes. "I don't buy coffee and never take drugs, since those habits 'steal' money. As regards clothing, I just have the necessities. I eat in cheap cafes, spend nights in hostels or camp, depending on the season. I buy only the cheapest tickets."

Soon Mr. Kennedy will go to Africa to attend a friend's wedding and act as witness at the Russian-African ceremony. He personally doesn't believe in marriage but thinks 'love until the end of days' exists.

"I do dream of going to a jewellery store and buying a ring box, saying to my love: 'If you want to grow old with me, let's go through life together'. She opens the box, and there's no ring, but money — which we use to travel around the world. She puts a simple chain on my finger, and I do the same. I don't appreciate expensive weddings that end in expensive divorce in 10 years."

I hug Colin goodbye and give him my best wishes that he meets his true love, to accompany him.

No visa required for 79 countries

Belarusian passport ranked 54th most influential by Passport Index ranking, up three places on the previous result

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

A Belarusian passport currently allows the bearer visa-free entry to seventy-nine countries (up from sixty-seven in 2017). Saudi Arabia and Bolivia are ranked at the same position as Belarus.

First position in the rankings be-

longs to the UAE passport (allowing visa-free entry to 167 countries), followed by Singapore and Germany (166 states), and then Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Luxembourg, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Norway, the Republic of Korea and the USA (165 countries).



Russia is placed 38th, while Kazakhstan occupies 53rd position and Armenia and Kyrgyzstan share 63rd place, with Ukraine ranked 28th. The

Passport Index ranking is compiled by a financial consulting company in Canada, Arton Capital, which covers 193 countries and six territories.

How much does knowledge cost?

What should we be teaching today's students? Opinions differ, with some arguing for traditional methods, even defending a classical Soviet education. Others are keen to move to western systems, including the option of private schooling. Of three thousand schools across Belarus, just fifteen are privately run, but does this system have something to offer which shouldn't be ignored?

By Olga Pasiyak

What are the advantages of a private education?

Private educational establishments began to appear in Belarus back in the 1990s. At that time, such schools were run as 'businesses' and, failing to find success, many closed. Owners of those still operational insist that they aren't businessmen, rather being keen on the science of teaching, and finding new, more efficient, methods. They're convinced that it's easier to implement change on a small scale, as discussed at the international exhibition on information technologies in education in Minsk, ITE-2018.

Demand for private education is growing in Belarus, with many believing that anything worth having has a price tag. Newcomers have appeared on the educational market, such as mother-of-three Natalia Iskortseva, who has launched her Stenbridge school, with children sitting at desks from the very first grade. Having worked in the personnel sphere, she noticed how many young people lack team skills, including presenting their point of view and questioning effectively. Her aim is to help promote those skills.

Vera Bykova, whose Apelsin (orange) school launched in the late 1990s, notes that private schools tend to have more enthusiastic teachers and smaller class sizes, while being well-equipped for such subjects as physics and chemistry. Of course, private schools don't exist in a parallel universe. They can form an efficient partnership with the traditional system, teaching the same syllabus, but with different techniques.

While Br1,408 is the average amount allocated per pupil at state schools annually, private schools charge about Br700 per month.

What do teachers think?

Teachers and headteachers of state secondary schools have various opinions regarding privately-owned institutions. Some would clearly be happy to work with classes of fewer than thirty pupils, to allow a more differentiat-



Everything should be harmonious in modern schools

ed approach. However, there are also those who have turned to the state system after finding teaching in a private school unsatisfactory. Sadly, some parents believe that a miracle should be performed regarding their child's learning simply because they are paying for the privilege. In reality, pupils' desire to study must go hand in hand with teachers' professionalism.

Headteacher at Minsk's gymnasium #21, Alexander Kazakevich, recalls one elementary school pupil being removed from his private school to the state system under the pretence that the level of education left much to be desired. According to Victor Pshikov, who heads Minsk's gymnasium #29, parents tend to lack the ability to accurately assess the quality of teaching. He explains, "It's incorrect to define some education as 'elite'. No criteria exist to make that assessment. Probably, the best way to decide if a particular school

suits your child is to judge by how content they are to attend."

Privately schooled pupils experience a different style of teaching. State schools are associated with traditional methods while privately-owned estab-

lishments can be flexible, including offering care outside of regular school hours, which helps working parents. However, large class sizes may actually encourage better communication and socialisation skills.

COMMENT

Private schools have the right to operate, especially where there's demand, since they give parents a choice, states Svetlana Ukleiko, who heads the Main Department for Secondary Education, Pre-school and Special Education at the Education Ministry. She adds, "Paying for education is no guarantee of quality. Some parents return from living abroad for some time and enter their children into the state system, noting their belief in the quality of education being offered. Some are well able to pay for private schooling but choose state education, being confident of the results."

Not all private schools have accreditation to teach senior pupils, so are limited to offering elementary education. Accordingly, they have no responsibility for preparing students for university entrance. Moreover, only pupils from state schools have gained entry to Republican subject Olympiads and research contests.

Belarusian draniki are presented with flair

By Svetlana Savelieva

Belarus presents its produce at International Saveurs du Monde Food and Beverage Festival in French Marseilles

The event brought together representatives of around thirty states, with the Belarusian pavilion organised by the Belarusian Embassy to France in co-operation with the Honorary Consul of Belarus to

Marseilles, Fabrice Rault, and the Belarusian diaspora. Minsk Kristall, Kommunar-ka, Lidskoe Pivo, Savushkin product, Alivaria Brewery and Spartak Confectionery all had stands.

Also showcased were Belarusian tourist opportunities and the cultural heritage of Minsk, including draniki as a national dish (applying for inclusion on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage).

The expo in Marseilles takes place an-



nually for the leadership of the Aix-Marseille-Provence Metropolis, Prefecture

Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the Marseille Mayor's office, and representatives of international and French business circles and culture. It was the second time Belarus has attended the event.

"Participation in the *Saveurs du Monde* festival will facilitate further development of co-operation between Belarus and Marseilles while promoting domestic enterprises and attracting foreign tourists to Belarus," notes the Embassy.



Rare snowfall turns Athens into winter wonderland

Residents of the Greek capital, Athens, woke last Tuesday to rare snowfall as the country shivered in the grip of a cold spell, with sub-freezing temperatures in some regions

The Akropolis hill, national monuments and archaeological sites in Athens were covered with a light dusting of snow and schools in the wider Attica region were closed.

Ice in some northern suburbs turned roads inaccessible, and authorities used gritters to facilitate traffic. Snow has also disrupted some railway and bus service.

Greek meteorologists have dubbed the weather pattern 'Telemachos', pushing temperatures to a low of -20.9 degrees Celsius in the region of Drama in the north of the country.



France to toughen up on undeclared protests in response to yellow-vests

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe has announced plans to introduce legislation that would crack down on undeclared protests, in response to the Gilets Jaunes 'Yellow Vests' demonstrations

Philippe said, "We need to preserve the right to demonstrate in France and we must sanction those who break the law." He added, "That's why the government favours updating the law in order to sanction those who do not respect this obligation to declare protests, those who take part in undeclared protests,

those who arrive at protests with balaclavas."

The new law could be modelled on existing legislation which bans football hooligans from stadiums.

The PM said the measures could begin as soon as February and said the 'thugs' would have to pay for the damages they cause.

The Yellow Vest movement was sparked by unrest over a fuel-tax hike but has since grown into a general discontent with President Emmanuel Macron's leadership, which has been criticised for favouring the elite.

Truck drivers in UK support Brexit despite fears of no-deal chaos

As British Prime Minister Theresa May is scrambling to get her deal through parliament there are fears that a 'no-deal' Brexit could create chaos on UK roads

Despite fears of a no-deal Brexit bringing chaos to the industry, it's not something British trucker Tim Drury worries about, "If we crash out with no deal, the European community and things like that, they'll quickly want to sort the problems out that come with that, because it affects them as much as it does us. That's the important thing to remember."

There's some really strong support for Brexit — regardless of whether that comes with a deal or no deal. But in the wider supply industry, there is a worry that extra border checks could delay trucks, could delay deliveries — and hit business hard, if Britain crashes out of the EU.



Take Britain's automotive industry, for instance — most UK-produced cars are exported, the majority going to the European Union. And Britain imports millions of Pounds worth of parts every day, from the EU, to help make such vehicles.

The UK government says a no-deal Brexit is 'unlikely' — and is taking steps to ensure minimal disruption no matter what the outcome. That includes ploughing millions of Pounds into extra ferry capacity.

Turkey cannot accept Trump adviser's comments on Kurdish fighters

Turkey cannot accept recent comments from US President Donald Trump's National Security Adviser that Ankara must agree to protect Washington's Kurdish allies in Syria, President Tayyip Erdogan said

Erdogan, speaking to members of his AK Party in Parliament, said John Bolton had made 'serious mistake' in calling for a new condition for the US withdrawal from Syria, and that Turkey could never compromise on the issue of the YPG Kurdish militia.

EV startup Byton aims to raise \$500m to fund growth

Chinese-funded electric vehicle manufacturer Byton is seeking to raise at least \$500m to finance growth, valuing the nearly three-year-old company at more than \$4bn

The latest round of fundraising comes as China's government promotes new energy vehicles (NEVs), a category comprising battery-powered and plug-in battery-petrol hybrid cars, to help reduce air pollution and support high technology development.

Byton is keen to primarily attract foreign investors in its latest fundraising and the proceeds will be mainly used to finance the mass production of its first premium electric SUV vehicle — Byton M-Byte and research and development.

Oil tanker explodes and burns off Hong Kong's coast

An oil tanker exploded off Hong Kong's southern coast, killing one crew member and leaving three others missing at sea

Witnesses reported hearing a loud blast that shook windows several miles away.

Authorities said the Vietnam-registered vessel burst into flames as it prepared to refuel. Twenty-one crew members were rescued from the waters.

The Aulac Fortune was built in 2010. Ship tracking data shows it last loaded around 6,660 tonnes of gasoline, most of which was delivered to Guangzhou.



Returning with help from diplomats and friends

By Veniamin Mikheev

The National Art Museum has been working to reclaim lost items of Belarusian culture and arts since the late 1980s, during the days of Perestroika. Painters once reviled have been once again recognised for their talent: Marc Chagall, Kazimir Malevich, El Lissitzky and others from the famous Paris school. After settling in the French capital in the first half of the 20th century, those Belarus-born painters played an important role in the development of art, including Chaim Soutine, Ossip Lubitch, Ossip Zadkine, Robert Genin and Pinchus Kremegne.

“The fact that we’ve acquired Michel Kikoine’s *Still Life* is both important and timely,” notes National Art Museum Director Vladimir Prokoptsov. “It’s another step towards the museum gaining a complete collection of works by Paris-school painters.”

Michel Kikoine’s modest still-life painting in a luxurious frame has been accepted with gratitude by the National Art Museum, with Belarus’ Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Kravchenko in attendance, alongside the Charge d’Affaires a.i. of Belarus to Switzerland, Pavel Matsukevich, and the Honorary Consul of Belarus to Lausanne, Andrei Nazheskin. Also present at the donation ceremony was the Deputy State Secretary of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation, Krystyna Marty Lang, and the Head of the Swiss Confederation Embassy to Minsk, Claude Altermatt.

The return of Kikoine’s work to Belarus is the result of many efforts and is the first such to be held by a Belarusian museum. Those gathered for the special ceremony long admired the canvas, exclaiming on its beauty.

Belarusian museums have been working hard to add such pieces as Kikoine’s *Still Life*, supported by donors and kind friends. The latest addi-

Still Life by Belarus-born Paris-school artist Michel Kikoine added to National Art Museum collection



Still Life by Michel Kikoine immediately attracts attention at new place

tion would not have come to pass were it not for assistance from the Honorary Consul of Belarus to Lausanne, Andrei Nazheskin.

Belarus’ Deputy Foreign Minister, Oleg Kravchenko, noted his thanks to the Belarusian Embassy to Switzerland and the National Art Museum for their co-operation, saying, “It’s especially pleasant that the ceremony was attended by our colleagues from the Federal Department

of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation.”

Our two countries are currently connected by successful political and trade-economic interaction, as well as by the creativity of famous Belarus-born people, such as the national hero of many countries, Tadeusz Kościuszko, and the patroness of art, the Duchess Magdalena Radziwill. Another notable personage is Anna Tumarkina, who was

Europe’s first female professor of philosophy, and, of course, Marc Chagall, whose stained-glass windows are a calling card for Zurich.

Michel Kikoine’s pictures are kept in private and museum collections across France, the USA, Japan, Israel and Russia. Of course, it’s pleasant that his canvas now hangs in our country’s main museum, allowing Belarusians closer familiarity with our famous countryman’s work.

Andrei Nazheskin explains that gaining its return was no easy matter, as the Geneva museum in which it was housed closed, and the canvas travelled to the USA. When Belarusian diplomats in Switzerland learnt that the picture was in Florida, long negotiations began for its purchase — finally crowned with success.

The Honorary Consul of Belarus to Lausanne has been awarded a certificate from the Culture Ministry — as announced by Vladimir Prokoptsov. He comments that the donation of Kikoine’s work is an important step towards compiling a complete collection. After thorough study, the picture will appear as part of a thematic exhibition at the National Art Museum and is to tour other venues. Probably, it will go on show in Gomel, where the artist was born.

Belgazprombank’s corporate collection already boasts five of Kikoine’s works, which are all included on the State Register of Historical and Cultural Treasures of the Republic of Belarus.

MT REFERENCE:

Michel Kikoine was born in 1882 in Gomel and studied at a commercial college and at the Jakov Kruger School of Drawing in Minsk, where he became friends with Chaim Soutine. Together, in 1908, they entered the folk-art school in Vilno, where Kikoine became friends with Pinchus Kremegne. In 1912, he moved in with his cousin, in Paris, becoming a member of La Ruche (the Beehive) — an international hostel for painters, where his friends Soutine and Kremegne were already living.

In 1924, he received French citizenship and, in 1928, exhibited his modern French art in Moscow. During the Second World War, Kikoine was sent to a Nazi concentration camp with his family but managed to survive, eventually returning to Paris. Kikoine set up a studio in Montparnasse and went each summer to the south of France. He died in Cannes in 1968.

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Traditions have become classics

Time moves so quickly that innovations rapidly become traditions. The sporting year in Belarus begins with the Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of the Republic of Belarus, with this year's event being the fifteenth

Looking at our ice hockey history, back in 2010, the finals of the event were hosted at overcrowded Minsk-Arena. Nevertheless, Hannu Virta – the 1995 world champion who is one of the most famous of Finland's ice hockey players, and coach of his country's national team — noted, "It's the first time I'm in Belarus and it's so different to how I imagined. It's a lovely country with friendly people and, certainly, this has been a perfect tournament. I didn't expect the level of competition and participating teams to be so high."

In 2012, Julien Goldstein, a correspondent for *L'Équipe* – the famous French edition — was also generous in his praise, saying, "The arena is fantastic. I've travelled a great deal worldwide and can assure you that similar facilities are found only in the USA and Canada. I've been keen to see what's going on beyond Minsk and its arena, attending matches featuring Dinamo, and going to the Christmas tournament. I've seen the venues you've constructed in other cities and the lessons being organised for children, which show how well-loved ice hockey is. The forthcoming IIHF World Championships are sure to be a real holiday."

In January 2014, Chizhova-Arena launched, hosting the



During the first tournament, in 2005, the team of Belarus defeated Austria 17:4, with the President scoring three goals

Christmas tournament on its small rink, with the semi-finals taking place on the main ice.

Over time, the geography of the tournament has expanded, with squads arriving from the Balkan States, Bulgaria, Croatia, Slovenia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Even the national teams of the United Arab Emirates and China have taken part.

Canadian Phil Esposito — a world ice hockey legend — arrived at our Christmas tournament last January as an honorary guest. He commented that ice hockey unites us, bringing us closer, despite language barriers. Since its launch fifteen years ago, the Christmas International Amateur



Phil Esposito

Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus has featured various 'stars' but, most importantly, it has brought peace and joy.



Meetings long remembered

By Denis Komarov

Participants of Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus take part in charity campaign for orphanage #7

Such initiatives are more important than victories on the ice, but combining the Christmas tournament (which launched fifteen years ago) with the charity project (launched seven years ago) is the perfect combination. Since then, players and organisers from the President's Sports Club and the Belarusian Ice Hockey Federation have visited more than seven hundred children without parental care, in the cities of Minsk, Radoshkovichi and Molochno. This time, the teams have gathered at orphanage #7 in Minsk.

The campaign was able to give a donation of Br32,000, received enthusiastically by the director of the orphanage, Anzhelika Tuzova. She tells us that funds are to be used to equip a sensory room at the orphanage, where children will be able to be alone with their thoughts and hobbies. During their visit, famous ice hockey players chatted cosily with children, playing fairy-tale quests with the youngsters, prepared in advance. Representatives of the Baltic States and China took part in 'Through the Looking-Glass', while the Finns and Slovaks became pirates of the Caribbean, and guests from the Balkans and the UAE became characters in 'Little Red Riding Hood'. Meanwhile, the Swiss and the IIHF team helped youngsters create handmade New Year toys.

According to Tommaso Teofoli, Director of the

Ice Hockey Sector at the Italian Ice Sports Federation, none of the guests expected such an adventure but the surprise was a success. He comments, "I couldn't have imagined what this Christmas tournament would be like but what I've seen has surpassed my expectations. You have a very beautiful country where everything is organised at the highest level, and the atmosphere at the tournament is incredible. We've been saying how great fan support has been during matches, and the current event is simply fantastic!"

Belarusian ice hockey players from the President's team and their friends from Russia took on 'Harry Potter' roles, in the cities of Minsk, Radoshkovichi and Molochno. This time, the teams have gathered at orphanage #7 in Minsk. How many circuits do you run to begin a workout? Have you ever been hit in the jaw? With a puck? Who is the best player in ice-hockey? What speed do you skate at? Naturally, the guests have played so many matches at the highest level that it was a challenge to recall everything, but also a pleasure to remember.

Afterwards Maxim Slysh explained, "Such meetings mean a great deal to us. Believe me, when we were choosing who'd go to the orphanage, everyone was keen. Many Belarusian ice hockey players are involved with charities, without particular reason. Playing for various clubs, I've been to orphanages many times and I know how important this is. I'm confident that we and the children will long remember this meeting."

Not only men on the ice

Minsk hosts 15th Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus

Despite Swiss Pius Weber being the first to score in the Slovak-Swiss match, the Slovaks finally celebrated a 10:4 victory. Meanwhile, the UAE defeated the Balkan States 9:5, the Finns smashed Germany 10:2, and the Belarusian squad beat the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) team 13:7.

Pucks were delivered by Maxim Slysh, Konstantin Durov, Oleg Antonenko, Gennady Savilov, Andrey Astashevich, Alexander Lukashenko and Alexey Titovets, with Pavel Bely and Vyacheslav Lisichkin scoring twice each and Daniel Korso delivering three pucks. The President also assisted three goals. Needless to say, fans were highly excited, created much commotion in the stands.

Daniel Korso was named the best player on the Belarusian squad while Zsuzsanna Kolbenhayer (who gained a hat trick) was recognised the best ice hockey player on the IIHF team. Zsuzsanna is the first woman to appear in the Christmas tournament and is delighted, saying, "It's a great hon-



Zsuzsanna Kolbenhayer and Daniel Korso named best players in Belarus-IIHF match

our to play! It's not the first time I've played with men, having been the first female ice hockey player in Hungary. It would be great to put together an international women's team for the next Christmas event. I think everyone would be delighted to play in Minsk. The organisation of the tournament is fantastic!"

In 2021, Minsk will be hosting the IIHF World Championships for the second time, jointly with Riga. The appearance of IIHF leaders at the Christmas tournament indicates closer ties. After the

match, the opponents swapped generous compliments, with the Director of the Ice Hockey Sector of the Italian Ice Sports Federation, Tommaso Teofoli, comparing the Christmas tournament with the world championships. He praised the level of organisation and thanked the hosts for their invitation. Meanwhile, Gennady Savilov, the Chairman of the Belarusian Ice Hockey Federation, who played on the President's team, admitted, "I'm pleased that I've managed to face world class players, at least at amateur level."

Perfect launch to new tennis season

Arina Sobolenko wins tournament in Chinese Shenzhen

By Alexander Yemelyanov

Arina Sobolenko delighted Belarusian tennis fans in 2018 and continues to raise hopes as the new season begins. Belarus' number one seed has won the WTA international tournament in Chinese Shenzhen, having defeated American Alison Riske (ranked 62nd by the WTA) in the finals — 4:6, 7:6 (7:2), 6:3. The match lasted two hours and eleven minutes and gave Arina her third WTA title.

The quarter-final matches were delayed due to heavy rain, which obliged Ms. Sobolenko to play two games on a single day. Alison Riske was in the same situation but her match against Russian Zvonareva lasted only thirty-seven minutes, due to her rival retiring early, with the score at 0:6, 0:1. Meanwhile, Ms. Sobolenko defeated Chinese Yafan Wang (ranked 70th by the WTA) 6:2, 6:1, in one hour.

In the third game of the first set of the finals, Arina lost her service, allowing Ms. Riske to win the set. In the second, Ms. Sobolenko's game improved, leading to a score of 4:1. In the sixth game, she took play to four break points but failed to realise them. After winning the game on service, Arina earned two set points but again failed to take the set. Fortunately,



ly, during the tie-break, she eventually claimed victory.

The decisive set was similar to the second. Arina began well, leading with two breaks (3:0). However, Alison managed to win one back. When the score was 4:2 in Ms. Sobolenko's favour, she had two match points but failed to take them to the ultimate advantage. Nevertheless, she went on to win three games in a row, claiming tournament victory. Arina Sobolenko won two WTA titles last year: in American New Haven in August and in Chinese Wuhan in September. Due to her successful performance in Shenzhen, Arina is now ranked 11th: her highest placement so far.

President Alexander Lukashenko congratulated Ms. Sobolenko, saying, "This is a wonderful result for the start of the season, and a gift for Belarusian fans and for fans all over the world." The Head of State has wished her and her team strong health, good luck and bright victories in the new year.

P.S. Unfortunately, Arina Sobolenko lost to Petra Kvitova in the first round at the tennis court in Sydney while Alexandra Sasnovich (ranked 33rd in the world rankings) successfully conducted her first match there.

Who's next?

By Ilya Krasovsky

Minsk Automobile Works presents sport truck taking part in Dakar-2020 Rally

The new truck is both powerful and manoeuvrable, while looking spectacular. Without exaggeration, the whole world is watching the Dakar Rally, giving us an amazing opportunity to showcase Belarusian technology. Journalists have already had a chance to view the vehicles competing in the rally, including the post-war bonneted MAZ-205, standing so tall, with reinforced shock-absorbers visible under the arches. The driver, Sergey Vyazovich, is an international class master, winner of titles, and the captain of the MAZ-SPORT-auto team.

Dakar-2018 saw the crew finish second in the overall standings, under Sergey's leadership: the best result in Belarusian history. Moreover, the MAZ-SPORTauto team was the only one to finish at full strength, including Tatiyana (who provides 'behind the scenes' support) and Victoria (the on-the-scene correspondent responsible for information support). The crew have just returned from training in the UAE desert and, on January 6th, set off for Peru, for Dakar-2019.

According to Sergey Vyazovich, the MAZ trucks are perfectly suited to Peru's sand dunes, which have very few high-speed sections. MAZ does have a new truck but it won't take part in the forthcoming Dakar Rally, being tested first in less prestigious rally raids.



Ice is awaiting brilliant masterpieces

By Tatiana Pastushenko

Minsk preparing for European Figure Skating Championship

In January, Minsk will bring together the strongest figure skaters of the continent in a battle for European Championship medals in four categories: men's singles, ladies' singles, ice dancing and pairs. Belarusian Skating Union Chair Yulia Komleva tells us, "Preparations are already in the pre-final stage, with the major organisational elements solved regarding the sporting venue, hotels to accommodate athletes and matters of catering. We're now deciding on the final design of the kiss and cry zone — where skaters wait to receive results on their performance — as well as the uniform we'll choose for volunteers and gifts for participants. These are all pleasant duties."

Hotels nearby Minsk-Arena are to house 150 athletes and, one week before the tournament, the country's major ice rink (always busy



Belarusian figure skaters: Anna Kublikova and Yuri Gulitsky

with amateur skaters, and hosting ice hockey matches, concerts and performances) will be prepared for the European Figure Skating Championship.

Ms. Komleva explains, "Ice used during figure skating competitions differs from that used for ice hockey tournaments or speed skating competitions, as it's softer. Minsk-Arena specialists are well aware of the requirements and standards. In

2012, Minsk welcomed the World Junior Figure Skating Championship, so we do have some experience."

The first delegations of figure skaters will begin arriving in Minsk on January 20th, commencing training on January 21st and 22nd at the speed skating stadium and at Minsk-Arena. Then, on January 23rd, the competition will begin in earnest. Fans will be able to attend from January 21st onwards.

Ms. Komleva comments, "In Japan, where figure skating enjoys great popularity, training sessions are often open to the public, allowing fans to watch top skaters without needing to pay for top-priced tickets. We've developed a loyalty programme, in order to attract as many spectators as possible, but also invite members to attend training sessions. It allows everyone the opportunity to see Europe's best

figure skaters, and tickets are selling well. We're also planning an entertainment programme at Minsk-Arena, with a fan zone, and various extra entertainment features."

She adds, "Members of the Belarusian team haven't yet been determined but we won't perform in the pairs, as Nikolay Kamenchuk and Tatiana Danilova have retired. Our juniors — Darya Ryabkova and Vladislav Gresko — are too young, now training for the World Junior Figure Skating Championship. We do appear in the other categories, however, represented by Alexandra Chepeleva and Maria Saldakaeva in the ladies' singles (both are earning points to go through to the European Figure Skating Championship). Meanwhile, in ice dancing, Belarus will be represented by Anna Kublikova and Yuri Gulitsky, who recently claimed silver at the prestigious international competition in Andorra. I think this success will aid their confidence."



Festivities of the week

Vitebsk Kolyady Christmas celebrations held in regional centre

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS
 20 Lenin Street
 Until 12th January. *Faithful to Belarus*
 Until 13th January. *Latvia is 100: History, Art, Traditions*
 Until 13th January. *Naked Feelings: Sacred Meaning*
 Until 27th January. *Chronicle of Life. Annals of the Country*
 Until 3rd February. *Contemporaries of the 20th Century: Centenary of the Belarusian Portrait*
 Until 1st March. *Collection of Singer Lidia Ruslanova*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS
 116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
 Until 15th January. *Pencil and Brush*
 Until 20th January. *ESTAMP*
 Until 31st January. *Maly Trostenets: exhibition-chronicles of large-scale massacre*
 Until 1st February. *Shop with Cites*
 Until 15th March. *Manifest of Republic*
 Until 7th April. *Fantasy Land*

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM
 8 Pobediteley Avenue
 Until 19th January. *Celebrating Jubilees: Pages of the Past*
 Until 27th. January. *We Are Coming To You, Belarus*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM
 12 Karl Marx Street
 Until 20th January. *China Yesterday and Today: Historical and Modern Chinese Architecture*

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY
 15 Svobody Square
 Until 13th January. *Pharmacy in Old Mansion: History of 18th-20th Century Pharmacy in Minsk*
 Until 3rd February. *Iza Zaslouva and Leonid Galperin*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ART
 3 Nekrasov Street
 Until 19th January. *When Fir Trees Were Tall photo project*
 Until 26th January. *Winter Mood*

TROITSKY SUBURB
 7A Bogdanovich Street
 Until 13th January. *Life with Cool Blood*
 Until 3rd March. *Birds in Winter*
 Until 7th April. *Insects and More*

LIBRA
 37 Nezavisimosti Avenue
 Until 31st January. *Somewhere to the West of Minsk: Daily Life of Western Belarus*
 Until 18th February. *Salvador Dali and Pablo Picasso*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE
 1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
 11.01. The Fountain of Bakhchisaray
 13.01. Major New Year Ball in Bolshoi Theatre
 15.01. Carmen
 16.01. The Firebird
 17.01. La Bohème

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE
 5 Volodarsky Street
 11.01. He and She
 12.01. Inn Keeper
 13.01. Red Hot Mamas
 15.01. Truth is Good but Happiness is Better
 16.01. Private Lives
 17.01. Lady for a Day

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS
 13 Pobediteley Avenue
 12.01. Who Laughs Last
 13.01. My Dear
 14.01. The Same Place Next Year
 15 and 16.01. Wolves and Sheep
 17.01. Night of Anton Chekhov's Miniatures

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE
 7 Engels Street
 15 and 16.01. Cloakroom Attendants
 17.01. Inspector

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE
 44 Kropotkin Street
 11.01. Medea Syndrome
 12.01. Three Giselles
 16 and 17.01. Wisdom Calculator

YOUTH THEATRE
 17 Kozlov Street
 11.01. Double Double
 12.01. New Affair of My Husband
 15.01. The Fool
 16.01. Family Weekend
 17.01. Tectonics of Feelings

BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE
 3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street
 12.01. Three Sisters
 17.01. Sparrow Night

MINSK CONCERT HALL
 5 Oktyabrskaya Street
 12.01. Men Upon Schedule

YOUNG SPECTATORS' THEATRE
 26 Engels Street
 11.01. Savage Hunt of King Stakh
 12.01. Poliana
 17.01. SOS

MUSICAL THEATRE
 44 Myasnikov Street
 11 and 12.01. Last Night of Don Juan
 13 and 14.01. Red Hot Mamas
 16.01. Cleopatra
 17.01. Golden Scattering of Operetta concert