



Belkommunmash has already made two Vitovt electric bus models, for use in Minsk, with charging at final stops. They will appear in December, with twenty buses in use by late 2017.

## Domestically-produced electric bus on its route

Belarusian electric transport: supply and demand

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# Decisions are guided by a principle of justice

Even before the adoption of the Decree 'On Prevention of Social Dependency' President Alexander Lukashenko urged thorough monitoring and analysis of application

By Dmitry Kryat

The decree does not intend to force anyone to work. Employment is a human right guaranteed by the state rather than an obligation. However, it is preferable for each person to pay tax, to help finance state expenditure: for defence, healthcare, education and law enforcement. Some fail to work, or to make their contribution, yet still enjoy benefits, alongside their working neighbours.

Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister, Natalia Kochanova, delivered a report to the President, noting that the imbalance needs to be ad-



A Minsk centre, promoting youth employment

ressed, although most goals have been achieved.

Our neighbours are adopting the same attitude, confirming the wisdom of the move, adopted just over a year ago. In late September, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Olga Golodets, told us of the development of a draft law introducing a fee for use of social infrastructure, payable by those unemployed (aiming to motivate employment). Such decisions are guided by a principle of justice.

During the session tackling the application of the decree, the President asked about possible obstacles to implementation, includ-

ing whether the mechanism would inspire those not wishing to work to take up employment (and for those working illegally to register officially). He asked whether authorities keep detailed records of those who should be paying fees and whether enough jobs exist to enable universal employment. He also asked about unemployment figures.

Monitoring has shown that no systematic problems exist in applying the Decree. An initial rush to register with employment services has been met by increased numbers of vacancies. The decree is viewed as a success, stimulating the unemployed to take up jobs. Neverthe-

less, some amendments are proposed.

Those finding themselves in a difficult life situation may be exempt from paying penalty fees, with local authorities overseeing this, under direction from regional heads. The list of categories of citizens exempt from paying the fee is to be extended, to include those who perform alternative services, and athletes registered voluntarily (and without pay) with the national team of Belarus. True equality in society is achieved not only through offering equal rights to citizens but through a common approach towards obligations.

## 'Honeymoon' for EAEU passes and weekdays start

By Klim Salakhov

**Over half of Eurasian Economic Union citizens are in favour of further integration but wonder how it will affect their lives**

The Centre for Integration Studies of the Eurasian Development Bank and the Eurasian Monitoring Agency have jointly presented an annual survey of public opinion among former Soviet Union countries. Polls show that integration is still popular across EAEU territory and in some other countries, with over 60 percent of those surveyed in favour of further integration.

Three percent more Belarusians noted their support for greater depth of integration, against a decrease of 5-10 percent in other EAEU countries. As sociologists note, this is not due to growth in the number of opponents of the idea but owing to the fact that more persons previously indifferent now register their opinion.

"The 'honeymoon' of Eurasian integration has come to an end," comments the Director of the EDB Centre for Integration Studies, Yevgeny Vinokurov. "Citizens are now more often pragmatically appreciating the results of unifying processes and seeing how they affect their lives."

The number of EAEU supporters in Armenia has fallen to 46 percent; according to experts, this is the result of Armenians' dissatisfaction with their allies' position regarding Nagorno-Karabakh and the conflict with Azerbaijan.

## Partners for business

Russian regions' visits to Belarus include that by Irkutsk Region delegation, headed by Governor Sergey Levchenko, who is keen to expand potential of co-operation

By Vladimir Khromov

Last year, our bilateral trade with the Irkutsk Region totalled \$115 million. Belshina trade house operates there, as do dealerships for our machine building enterprises. As yet, we lack joint production ventures, but this sphere is coming to the fore. The President of Belarus is convinced, "We need to find reserves to boost volumes of bilateral trade. Trade is the basis of relations, so we must find these resources, whether we want to or not. These reserves do exist."

Since regional interaction cements inter-state collaboration, we need to decide which direction to pursue.

The Irkutsk Region is rich in coal deposits, so may need our heavy-duty dump trucks and other special machinery, manufactured in Bela-



Sergey Levchenko

rus. The Irkutsk Region also plans to develop its agriculture; more than 70 percent of its machinery is out of date, making purchase of a new fleet desirable. It's also expanding housing construction, including re-vamping old properties, creating a huge need for lifts. Mogilev's lift making enterprise could step in, as could our builders, since Irkutsk lacks enough skilled professionals. Timber processing is another possible area, since the region is rich in forest, yet lacks its own timber

processing industry. Belarus has experience in establishing and modernising such enterprises, as well as in agricultural production. Clearly, the field for co-operation is great.

"Let's move in the direction that we chose in 2015: to boost trade turnover between Belarus and the Irkutsk Region, as well as between Belarus and Russia. We criticise our union, and now foreign countries have started to wonder the purpose of the Eurasian Economic Union, as our trade is declining. We understand that this is abnormal but, now, others have started to criticise us and doubt the usefulness of our integration association," noted the Head of State.

The Irkutsk Region delegation visited several Belarusian enterprises and returns home with a solid package of proposals on co-operation.

## Good prospects for the bank

By Alexey Fedosov

**Russian Vnesheconombank extends loans to enterprises in Belarus through its daughter company, helping drive Belarusian economy**

The state is keen to develop interaction, as the President noted on meeting the Chairman of Vnesheconombank, Sergey Gorkov.

Mr. Lukashenko praised the corporation, saying, "I publicly assure you that you'll always be able to rely on the support of the President, the Government, and the National Bank. I hope you'll work with us and our companies, individuals and legal entities as you do in Russia. Belarus should be like Russia for you."

Mr. Gorkov assured the President that the bank's attitude reflects exactly this position, with plans for major collaboration, including credit programmes with the largest enterprises. A credit line worth \$10 billion is set aside for the construction of the Belarusian nuclear power plant.



Sergey Gorkov

Vnesheconombank is keen to create an integration platform for development, filled with expanded investment co-operation, export activity and the financing of joint innovation projects. Exports are sought not only to Russia, but to third countries, with various incentives created, including customer financing.

Belarus welcomes such approaches, as noted at the meeting: collaboration between Belarusian entities and Vnesheconombank is an example of real integration, inspiring further, mutual beneficial work across other areas.



# Improving our neighbourly relations for mutual benefit

As the tone of Belarusian-European dialogue changes, Poland finds itself at the forefront, as confirmed by Marshal of Polish Senate Stanislaw Karczewski, on his visit to Minsk, negotiating with heads of Belarusian Parliament and meeting President of Belarus

By Vasily Kharitonov

Chatting with Mr. Lukashenko, Mr. Karczewski stated that Warsaw appreciates Belarus' policy of calm and balance, pursued domestically, and abroad. The internal component is understood as a careful attitude towards international and inter-confessional concord, to which the Poles also adhere.

Belarus is viewed as a place of stability and security within Eastern Europe, and is known to have always adhered to these principles, despite this being previously overlooked by some partners.

Even issues dealt with speculatively by some politicians, and which have previously contributed to tensions, are now being discussed calmly.

The Marshal agreed with the President of Belarus, saying, "With the interests of Poland and Belarus in mind, we have nothing to quarrel about. We've always lived in friendship and concord, and have a shared history. Poland may have questioned our common history, and aspects relating to our population, but I'd like to assure you that we'll always be ready to respond openly to queries."

Mr. Karczewski continued, "History shouldn't be changed to please politicians, or because of current events. We must comprehend our history as accurately as possible so that



Alexander Lukashenko and Stanislaw Karczewski meet in Minsk

we cannot be accused of ignoring the lessons of our past."

The Marshal also supported Mr. Lukashenko's judgement that political interaction should match that of business collaboration. Our two countries have long been implementing successful joint projects, in Poland and in Belarus, creating dialogue of mutual understanding.

Minsk and Warsaw agree that trade-economic relations could be more intensive. The guest suggested using Polish tactics of conducting regional forums with partnering countries. During such events, regional

heads set up contacts with large representations of business circles.

Mr. Karczewski also tackled topics raised recently by the Deputy Prime Minister of Poland, Mateusz Morawiecki, during his visit to Minsk: joint Belarusian-Polish transport and infrastructure projects, including as part of the Silk Road Economic Belt Chinese concept.

Clearly, these initiatives are well-considered, being part of Warsaw's long-term dialogue with Minsk. Belarus is in favour, as the President told his guest, asserting that all topics are open for discussion between neigh-

bours, and that constructive initiatives are welcome. The Marshal of the Polish Senate visited Belarusian colleagues and took part in a session of the Council of the Republic. Senators ratified an agreement between our Belarusian and Polish governments, regarding education co-operation.

The Council of the Republic and the Polish Senate signed a joint declaration on co-operation in Minsk, with both upper houses eager to develop inter-parliamentary dialogue, to strengthen friendly relations between our two nations.

The Chairman of the Council of

the Republic, Mikhail Myasnikovich, speaking about the visit and the results of negotiations, announced, "We've brought our views closer in many respects, finding mutually beneficial solutions. The most important thing is that we've agreed to maintain regular contact. We hope that constructive interaction between Belarusian and Polish parliamentarians will have a positive effect on the development of National Assembly contacts, and with parliaments across the EU."

He added, "In 2017, our country will host a range of important international events, including a session of the OSCE PA. A host, we're preparing for these forums and have initiative proposals. We believe that our voice will offer a constructive contribution to pan-European issues. Europe is our common home and we take shared responsibility for its security and prosperity."

Mr. Myasnikovich underlined that Belarus is seeing intensified political dialogue with Poland, "With mutual interest this year, we've managed to achieve much in the sphere of political contacts and economic collaboration. We're ready to expand interaction across all areas," he asserts.

The parliamentary delegation of Poland, headed by Stanislaw Karczewski, also met the Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, and toured the National Academy of Sciences.

## We definitely need success stories

By Nina Romanova

**Marshal of Senate of Republic of Poland, Stanislaw Karczewski, gives a brief overview of our nations' co-operation**

*I'm delighted that my visit crowns a year in which we've resumed relations and are back on track regarding co-operation and the building of trust. I'd like to note the actions of Poland's new government, which took the first step in March, when the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski, visited Belarus. I fully agree with his statement that neighbours should be engaged in dialogue, even if they differ in their points of view on some matters. Over the past few months, we've not only engaged in dialogue, but have sought areas that unite us; there are more of these than we may realise. Poland sits on the EU border, while Belarus does so for the EAEU. We share one transport route, from east to west, with much potential for benefit. There's nothing wrong in wishing to generate income, and having our own position. On the contrary, it would be strange if we didn't take this*

*into consideration. Our peoples and countries are close, culturally and linguistically, and we share several centuries of history, without major conflict.*

**It's said that intensified Belarusian-Polish relations are thanks to dialogue between Belarus and the European Union. Isn't it logical for sovereign states, including Poland, to determine relations with closest neighbours against a European context?**

*For 25 years, Belarus has been a sovereign state, and we need to respect its choices, even if we don't agree or consider these to be controversial. The European Union is currently living through a crisis, as its elite appear not to hear or see the concerns of ordinary people. It's not solely a European phenomenon, as this year's presidential election in the United States proves. Simultaneous crises (including the escalation of terrorism and religious fanaticism that has entailed a flow of immigrants, as well as the economic recession and financial crisis) have led to traditional, democratic institutes no*



*longer being able to address all social problems. The state should return to basics: public security; freedom of action; and a helping hand to those in need.*

**Vice-Speaker of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland Ryszard Terlecki, who recently paid a visit to Minsk, told me, "The position of Belarus is important. We, in the European Union, are interested in Belarus' participation in certain decisions in Europe." Which situations require Belarus' input and is Warsaw ready to consider our opinion?**

*Minsk recently showed its capacity to contribute to securing stability and security in this part of Europe. I regret that some Minsk Agreements regarding the conflict in Ukraine*

*are yet to be fulfilled. I'm confident, however, that the situation would be much worse without these agreements. Belarus demonstrates a certain model for the meeting of cultures of East and West, which can be implemented in harmony and peace.*

*Belarus needs to take advantage of this in its international and regional activity.*

**While the rest of the world is constructing economic free trade megazones, co-operation between the east and west of Europe could be better. What are your thoughts on the 'integration of integrations', as put forward by the President of Belarus?**

*Co-operation and integration are valuable. The EU has, so far, followed a principle of maximum integration. However, these days, it's important to be flexible. I prefer that we co-operate where possible and beneficial. I do not, however, view this matter as dogma. People are the most important element; as far as I know, President Alexander Lukashenko often says the same thing. It's an approach that appeals to me.*

**Recently, in Minsk, at the Belarusian-Polish forum, Deputy Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki declared the economic openness for Belarus. Your visit demonstrates political openness, but what can we expect to follow?**

*We need success stories showing that our meetings are not just high-level contacts and visits, but bring real benefits and results for our two nations. The major aim of my visit to Minsk was the Council of the Republic's ratification of the agreement on co-operation in education, signed this summer. The agreement will deliver real benefits and launch new opportunities for both sides. It will regulate the arrival of Polish teachers in Belarus and will provide a chance for youth exchanges between our countries, while strengthening inter-university co-operation. Joint economic projects are planned, as are the basis for integration, bringing our nations closer than a hundred words could do. It's the logical progress of modern international relations. We just need to gradually put this into practice.*



# Careful and well-thought-out consideration is essential

By the dawn of 2017, the heads of EAEU states will have signed a new common Customs Code; until then, the draft agreement continues to be analysed

By Vladimir Velikhov

The Customs Code needs to comply with Belarus' national interests, as Mr. Lukashenko noted at a session dedicated to discussing the document. He explained, "This document should be thoroughly elaborated, so that not a single Belarusian citizen, including myself, questions our Government (responsible for drafting and considering the Code) on the benefits of the Code, and why some aspects appear worse than before. Whatever compromise the Code carries (inevitable in certain respects), we cannot allow the socio-economic situation in Belarus to deteriorate."

The previous document dates back to 2010, and much has changed since, with the Customs Union evolving into the Eurasian Economic Union. In the process of establishing the new integration structure, issues have arisen regarding the customs sphere. This has resulted in the adoption of sixteen inter-state documents, eliminating gaps in the old Code. There is a long-felt need to bring into a single act previously adopted norms and new regulations.

The document has received close attention, Belarus having an extremely open economy. We produce far more than we consume, making export vital as a source of income. Naturally, imports are also important, and transit has its role to play. Belarus' geographical location, at the crossroads of trade routes, makes efficient transport corridors essential. All are regulated by customs legislation, which aims to improve the system. It cannot afford to fail, in any respect. Mr. Lukashenko is convinced that scrupulous assessment of all details is necessary, saying, "Everything should be properly considered and co-ordinated with ministries and departments. It's necessary to involve all specialists, even those with opposing points of view. We must communicate the provisions of the document to them, as well as to the citizens of our country. This should be done immediately, in order to give people time to voice their opinion on potential benefits and disadvantages."

Our partners have a rather pedantic attitude towards elaborating the new Customs Code. In 2015, when the draft was being developed,



At Peschatka automobile checkpoint, on Belarusian-Polish border



Senior customs inspector Dmitry Rebkovets

EAEU members fed back 1,500 remarks and proposals. As the Code has 460 articles, it follows that

there would be three amendments for each. Since the Code affects the share of funds reaching each mem-

ber state's budget, it's in the interest of each member to scrutinise the Code closely.

Other topics of inter-state interaction have been discussed, though indirectly connected with customs legislation, such as the fall in trade turnover within the EAEU (down by about 40 percent last year and by a further 15 percent this). Objective economic problems are apparent but the union was created to compensate for this, giving us much to ponder.

The Government, and top executives, must speak out regarding the draft Customs Code. Mr. Lukashenko has urged analysis of its proposals, so that we may address remarks to him before the document is signed.

## When it's obviously good to be online

By Yevgeny Kononovich

**The creation of e-government in Belarus has been discussed for several years, with steps now being taken to bring the idea to life. Many of us already pay utility bills online, or submit our tax declaration. We might make an appointment with the doctor, or buy a ticket for the cinema or a plane journey. We can even chat with officials in virtual space: all are initial elements of e-government.**

Within five years, it's expected that all administrative procedures will be available online, with use of digital signatures. The convenience is obvious, saving public time visiting diverse offices and agencies, and also saving state cost (while avoiding human error/influence). In theory, the administrative system is becoming more open and accessible. What about in practice?

According to the UN, our country is placed 49th (out of 193 states) in world rankings for e-government development. As of August 1st,



Informatics penetrates all aspects of life

2016, Belarus is up six positions on its ranking of two years ago. The trend looks positive but experts are cautious, with experts viewing our high ranking not as the result of wide penetration of electronic services but the availability of advanced telecommunications infrastructure.

"Individuals have access to only a small number of e-government procedures so far," explains Vadim Mozheiko, of the Liberal Club. "Belarus is now at the information stage

of e-government development. State agencies simply provide people with information via the Internet unilaterally."

We now need to shift to the next — interactive — level, whereby public services will be fully available online and information will be stored in large databases. For utility services, consumers need to see not only the final cost but the real costs detailed by category, allowing them to analyse efficiency and see where communal

workers are underperforming.

Human Constanta advocacy initiative expert Andrey Sushko mentions Estonia as an example. You can register a legal entity in just seven minutes online, or open a bank account or start a business. For contracts, digital signatures can be used with partners.

In Georgia, the Houses of Justice offer a range of public services online, including issuing identity cards and marriage certificates and registering a business or property. Each operator in the House of Justice serves as an information broker, determining what a citizen needs. They also accept documents, converting them into digital form, for onward delivery.

All these services can be obtained online, sitting at your home computer. In Estonia, this is done using a universal identification card (like a passport) to login to websites of banks, governmental organisations and hospitals. Citizens can access four thousand services, including to purchase a fishing license or pay for public transport. To interact with the state and with each other, the govern-

ment has enabled digital signing of documents, resulting in almost 200 million such virtual signings so far.

A similar system operates in South Korea, where an ID-card acts as a single electronic key: its holder is determined by scanning a fingerprint. Using this card, it's possible to access public service centres and self-service terminals.

The biggest obstacle to the development of e-government in Belarus is conservative thinking. According to statistics, only 2.5 percent of the population quickly master innovations and study electronic services. However, the realisation that innovations make life easier can convince people. At present, ministers and heads of governmental agencies are being encouraged to blog.

"Public institutions' use of social networks to answer citizens' requests is a major step towards developing e-government," Mr. Mozheiko says. "It's important for state bodies to be open and transparent with citizens. Officials need to understand that taxpayers' money is funding their work, and communication with ordinary people is an integral part of their job."



# Your petrol, and our ideas

## Belarusian electric transport: supply and demand

By Vasily Kharitonov

No one wants to live in a smog-filled city, but transport is essential. Clearly, we need to address the issue of harmful emissions and one answer is electric transport, following the global trend. In 2015, there were 1.26 million electric vehicles worldwide, with China and the USA leading, and Europe making its way.

The number of such vehicles is ever growing, with sales expected to comprise 30 percent of the total by 2030. Many cities are moving towards 'clean' transport, with electric taxis now the norm in Beijing, Madrid, Barcelona, Dublin, Kiev, Kharkov, Moscow and Sochi.

Internal combustion engines, burning precious hydrocarbon fuel, work at just 30-40 percent efficiency, while eco-friendly electric vehicles gain 90 percent efficiency. In December, the first Vitovt electric buses will appear on Minsk streets, assembled at Belkommunmash. Meanwhile, specialists at the Joint Institute of Machine Building, at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, are developing the first domestic electric car. We have the expertise necessary.

The NAS' Joint Institute of Machine Building is a central figure and consolidator, bringing together experts in developing electric transport, with eco-goals. It's a global trend that Belarus is delighted to follow.



In the cabin of an electric bus



The passenger compartment of an electric bus

A domestically-produced electric vehicle is to be assembled using BelGee's Geely passenger car as the basis, explains Candidate of Technical Sciences Sergey Poddubko, the Director General of the Joint Institute of Machine Building. He notes, "Creating a commercial electric vehicle is economical, as almost all manufacturers have discovered: Volkswagen, Citroen and Peugeot. They all produce passenger vehicles using electricity, in pure form, and as hybrids [running on traditional fuels and electricity]."

BelGee is assembling vehicles at its enterprise in Borisov, and a large factory is being constructed to produce cars, between Borisov and Zhodino. The Belgee Electro shares the same design but

bears the logo of a green leaf. Structurally, all electric vehicles are similar, using an electric motor, a control system and battery. However, each producer adds 'secret' expertise.

Mr. Poddubko tells us, "We've developed our own complex algorithms for the control system: multi-level, intellectual and using micro-circuit systems. We've created our own electric motor and are set on creating our own battery too, in co-operation with the Scientific and Practical Centre for Materials Research at the National Academy of Sciences. We're using graphenes and already have a prototype battery, which looks promising, demonstrating high efficiency in the lab, at a lower

cost than analogues. So, the domestic electric vehicle will be purely Belarusian-made."

This is important, since the legislation of the Customs Union sets conditions for industrial assembly, demanding at least 70 percent localisation of components. The Belgee electro certainly fulfils these criteria.

Our electric vehicle will be able to achieve speeds of 90kmh, with one charge allowing 150km of driving. It's quiet, which is actually as much of a problem as an advantage, since pedestrians tend not to hear such cars approaching. Noise is being added artificially to compensate. Naturally, such cars are cheaper to run than petrol or diesel cars, and are easier to maintain. Components are hermetic, not requiring labour-intensive technical maintenance.

Nevertheless, there are two significant disadvantages hampering development worldwide: the lack of infrastructure for a network of charging stations and current high prices.

"At present, electric vehicles cost more: a commercial Belgee costs around \$13,000 while its electric variant is about \$30,000. The

considerable difference is explained by the application of new technologies and materials, and the absence of mass production of components. However, their price is quickly falling. Batteries are improving, as are the engines themselves," notes Mr. Poddubko.

He believes that, when production reaches a commercial scale, the cost will become affordable, adding, "Electric transport abroad is often manufactured to order, for example by cities wishing to reduce pollution. There are often tax preferences offered at state level for such transitions, alongside subsidies and cheaper costs for charging, to stimulate the development of this type of transport. Unfortunately, we don't have such a practice yet. I hope to see that change in the future."

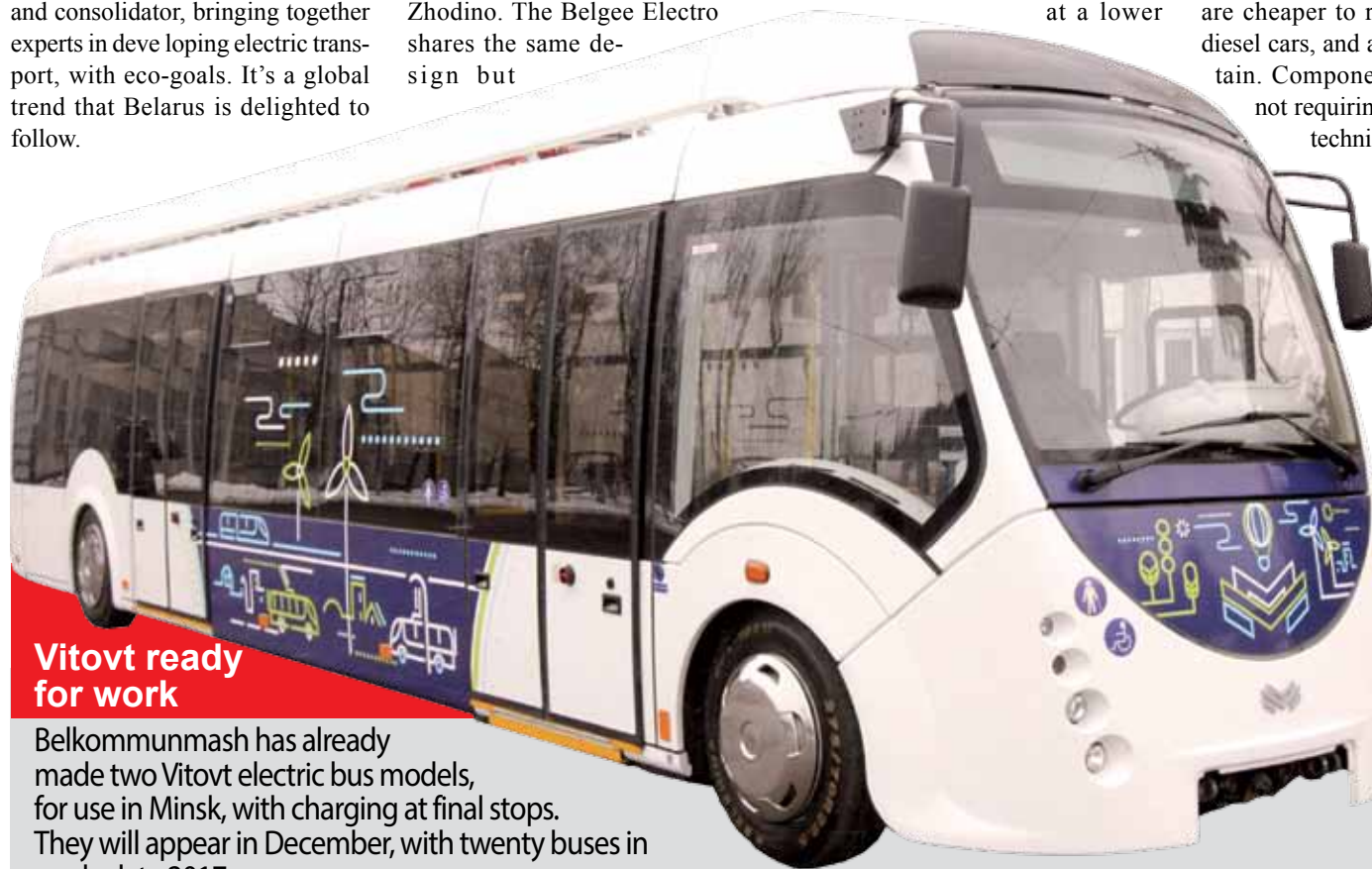
Those initiating the innovation are keen to see cities support fleets of electric taxis, using domestic electric vehicles, offering preferential terms and setting up a network of charging stations.

Minsk is already taking steps, having purchased around a dozen buses running on gas-motor fuel, which release less harmful emissions. Electric cars with good characteristics are vital. Vehicles are being assembled by the end of this year, for trial in spring 2017. If everything goes according to plan, by late 2017, these will be launched to the public.

### Offline

An ordinary socket can be used to charge an electric vehicle but urban 'charging' infrastructure is essential, and currently lacking in Belarus. Only a few charging stations are operational as yet: a free station in Minsk, and those at fuelling stations in Oshmyany and Gomel, as well as at the 57th kilometre of the M6 motorway. This makes it impractical to take a longer journey in Belarus by electric car.

Belenergo has been studying various scenarios, since the development of electric transport would help integrate the Belarusian NPP (nuclear power plant) into our energy system. Legislation isn't imposing any restrictions, and commercial charging can be established by anyone. However, existing tariffs for electricity and the absence of preferences make it unprofitable.



Vitovt ready for work

Belkommunmash has already made two Vitovt electric bus models, for use in Minsk, with charging at final stops. They will appear in December, with twenty buses in use by late 2017.

## Growth parameters clearly linked to reality

Consumer price index within year's forecasts, notes Economy Minister Vladimir Zinovsky, referencing our macroeconomic stability and our ability to repay debt in timely manner

By Alexey Fedosov

The Government and the National Bank are in line to repay foreign debts within the agreed schedule, notes Mr. Zinovsky. In 2016, the refinancing rate was reduced three times; accordingly, there is a

margin for 2017 economic growth.

As regards prospects for increasing the national average salary to \$500 next year, as voiced by the President on meeting representatives of the Russian regional mass media, Mr. Zinovsky considers this to be a difficult task but solvable for

some industries. At present, the average salary stands at around \$370.

"Achieving \$500 is a very difficult task. However, as regards some sectors of the economy and economic activities, this is solvable and can be realised next year," the Minister noted, adding that, in

2016, due to lack of oil refining, GDP could have fallen to 97.4-97.5 percent of its former level. Three months ago, a figure of 98 percent was forecast.

Mr. Zinovsky tells us that the country won't reconsider its economic forecast for 2017, even with

limited oil supplies. He sees real possibilities to demonstrate good results in the industry which has emerged from the recession, with minimal stocks of finished goods in warehouses. Positive trends are also being observed in agriculture and construction.



# Place within Earth orbit

First Belarusian satellite for remote sensing of Earth in orbit for four years

By Vladimir Yakovlev

Technologies are developing so rapidly that, almost immediately after launch, Belarus began working on a new satellite, with more outstanding parameters. The technical specifications for Belarusian satellite (BKA-2) are nearly ready, according to Sergey Zolotoi, Director of the Research and Development enterprise Geoinformation Systems, of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. Mr. Zolotoi is the chief designer of the Belarusian space system for remote sensing of the Earth.

“The technical characteristics of the satellite are clear, and draft contract documents are almost ready to be agreed. The satellite will boast outstanding parameters, at least four times better than those of the first satellite, and able to achieve a broader range of tasks. The Belarusian satellite is scheduled to launch by the end of 2019,” comments Mr. Zolotoi.

The plans appear feasible. After all, a whole space industry has been set up in Belarus. It includes companies developing and producing crucial equipment for spacecraft, a full-scale system for receiving and processing information from space and satellite control, research organisations for developing space technologies, and higher institutions training specialists.

Information obtained from orbit is being used in a variety of industries: in geodesy and cartography, for making plans of towns and cities, and identifying unregistered buildings; for the Ministry of Emergency Situations, in detect-



In the control complex of the National System of Satellite Communication

## SPACE BRANCH OF BELARUS

Today, at near-Earth orbit:

**BKA-1** — Belarusian space satellite for remote Earth sensing

**Belintersat-1** — Belarus' first telecommunications satellite

**Launch:** July 22nd, 2012  
**Weight:** 400kg  
**Working lifespan:** 5 years, extended until 2018

**Launch:** January 15th, 2016  
**Weight:** over 5.2 tonnes  
**Working lifespan:** 15 years



**International Space Station (ISS)**  
Featuring video-spectral apparatus created by Belarusian scientists, for the forecast and analysis of natural phenomena and technogenic catastrophes.

It will provide a complete range of modern satellite communication services across Europe, Africa and Asia

Within the territory of the Minsk Region, the following are operational:



The BKA-1 Flight Control Centre

The National System of Satellite Communication and Broadcast of Belarus, including the Belintersat-1 ground control complex and a TV portal

ing forest fires; and in agriculture, for predicting yield and maturation of certain crops.

Having its own satellite, Belarus is no longer obliged to buy sat-

ellite images from abroad, saving about \$9 million. It does not take long to recoup the cost of development and operation. However, some tasks require higher resolu-

### MT REFERENCE:

The first Belarusian satellite for remote sensing of Earth was successfully launched from Baikonur cosmodrome on July 22nd, 2012, on the Russian space launch vehicle. At present, BKA-1 provides space imagery for more than twenty organisations, which are accountable to more than ten Belarusian ministries and institutions, as well as to a number of foreign customers.

tion, which is where the new BKA will prove useful.

BKA's core equipment for high-altitude observation is being made by Minsk company Peleng, which also equipped the first satellite. Its aerospace products have been flying on Russian craft for several decades. Mr. Zolotoi tells us that the camera, which boasts resolution to 0.7m, has passed tests. An even more sharp-sighted device is possible, though more expensive. Optimal resolution would be 0.5m, allowing topographic maps to be made at a scale of 1:10,000.

## Ten HTP software companies among leaders

By Alexey Fedosov

**Ten residents of the High-Tech Park are now listed among the world's largest software developers, according to the Software 500 rankings, released by Software Magazine**

Ten of the world's largest software developers, as ranked on the Software 500 list, have daughter companies and development centres registered as resident at Belarus' High-Tech Park.

EPAM Systems is ranked 107th in the Software 500 list, while Bell Integrator is placed 213th, IBA Group is 281st, and Itransition occupies 368th place. Coherent Solution is placed 393rd, SoftClub is 409th, Artezio Company is ranked 416th, Intetics is 419th, Oxagile is 456th, and IHS stands in 482nd position.

This year's Software 500 rankings are the thirty-fourth, reflecting the latest in global software development, looking not only at revenue but at personnel numbers and other information.

## Children create New Year symbols

By Olga Yemelyanova

**Around 2,000 New Year souvenirs being created at Mogilev's Vocational College, by youngsters with special needs**

Experienced teachers are working with students to create symbols welcoming 2017, explains Oleg Bakhonovich, the director of Mogilev's Vocational College. The little red-cheeked roosters being made by the youngsters are charming, and involve hours of work, made with love. Orders have been received from numerous enterprises, organisations and institutions across the Mogilev Region, as well as other regions of Belarus.

The roosters are also selling well within the college, orders having been made by teachers and students even before the first souvenir was completed. The souvenirs are a calling card of the college, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this December, and has been making the handcrafted gifts for many years, not only for New Year, but for various other festivals and events.

Students even make prizes for contests and for gift-giving at official receptions. Around 900 pieces are in its repertoire, each becoming a high quality collectors' item. The National Bank, the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre, regional executive committees and Belarusian Railways have all liaised with the college to commission souvenirs.

## Belarusian style holidaying

By Boris Orekhov

**Belarus acknowledged best country for agro-tourism, according to Russia's National Geographic magazine**

Online voting at the magazine's website over the past two months has resulted in Belarus topping the ratings, receiving 25 percent of votes. Italy was placed second (22 percent) and France third.

Belarus' agro-tourism is rapidly

developing, drawing on age-old farming traditions and an eco-approach. Like mushrooms after good rain, farmsteads are emerging. Over the past decade, their number has grown hugely: from 34 in 2006 to 2,300 in 2016.

“Modern tourism in Belarus is based on rich folklore and ethnography; travellers can learn all about these aspects during their farmstead stay,” comments the Director of the Tourism Department at Belarus' Min-



Agrotourism has many fans

istry for Sports and Tourism, Yelena Perminova. “In addition, our country occupies a prime location at the centre of Europe, at the crossroads of major

transit routes. The state is rendering direct support to agro-tourism as an effective method of preserving and reviving folk traditions and lifestyle.”



# Ancient route from the Varangians to the Greeks explored

Money, jewelry, ceramics and the remains of ancient craft workshops... A unique archaeological monument from the 9th-10th century was found in the village of Kordon in the Shumilino District.

By Daria Dolgozhdannaya

As Olga Levko, head of the expedition says, this settlement will be number one in Belarus for its scientific value, "In terms of importance and the time period to which the complex can be dated, it is one of the most important archaeological sites in Eastern Europe, among which is Gnezdovo in the Smolensk Region and Shestovytsa near Chernigov. Now we also have a similar site — at Kordon. We have been looking for traces of ancient times for a very long time. Something was found on multi-layer monuments of the period from the 6th to the 13th century. While here we have whole object of the 9th-10th centuries.

Olga is the Head of the Centre for Archaeology and Ancient History of Belarus at the Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences. The Doctor of Historical Science and Professor has undertaken dozens of archaeological expeditions. Since 1976, she has been exploring Vitebsk, where in 40 years she was only lucky enough to find two halves of the Arabic dirham. A colleague of the scientist, Tatiana Babenko, found one single 14-faced weight. While in the village of Kordon during excavations there were about 30 loom weights found, 50 dirhams, buttons, bracelets, belt strips, and a neck cross in the Scan-



Archaeologists make unique discoveries

dinavian style, Oriental beads and other small items. A total of about 600 individual finds in one season! And all these items can be dated to the 9th-10th century. There are no traces of later settlements there.

During that period the Varangians arrived from the North, burnt originally existing villages, mixed with the local population and continued to jointly develop these areas. Olga Levko says, "Before today we only knew about emerging migration from the South to the North during the first Millennium AD, while after excavations in the Kordon we can say that simultaneously there was movement from the North to the South, as we have fixed dates on materials of the third quarter of the 1st Millennium AD when a craft workshop was located there.

The fact that Kordon was an ancient town with a settlement near it, was briefly mentioned in the notes of Alexander Levdanskiy, organiser of first BSSR scientific and archaeological expeditions, who explored the bank of the Zapadnaya Dvina River in 1933. Several years ago, on the websites of 'black diggers', it was possible to see a large number of Scandinavian items, which, as it turned out, were found somewhere in the Vitebsk Region. Last year we managed to find out where. And this summer, a large expedition was organised in Kordon, and excavations at four sites were held.

Bracelets and belt strips, matrices for their manufacture, special furnaces in which metal was melted, show that jewelry manufacture was organised there, and most likely it

was the Varangians who organised it. The archaeologist says, "Tatiana Babenko found a boat-shaped bracelet in Vitebsk, such bracelets were manufactured from silver in Scandinavia. While in Kordon we found a form which was used for jewelry casting. Many of the weights we found show that the population traded actively. While 14-faced loom weights of different weights prove the fact that locals were North-Europeans; as one face of the item averaged about 3.5 mm. The Varangians used them for weighing precious metals.

West-Slavonic ceramics were also found in Kordon. Olga suggests that these items appeared here by river along with Pomeranian Slavs from the Novgorod Region and Pskov Region. "It is interesting that in Vitebsk, in the same layers of the



9th-10th centuries, we found ceramics of the southerners who reached us by the Dnieper. It turns out that migration of peoples from different areas was happening simultaneously."

Moreover, three Roman silver coins from the 3rd-5th centuries were found, which had previously only been seen in the South of Belarus.

Before excavating the next layer, archaeologists, with the help of metal detectors, check the previous one, and remove the rest of any finds. On the day we met, researcher of the Institute of History of NAS of Belarus, Pavel Kenko, was doing this job. While we were talking to Olga, he finished the job and brought his findings to show us — Arab dirhams, jewelry scales, half-length shirt, weights, bells, buttons. He admitted that he has never seen such items, "When we clean and process all the items, we will take their photos again, and then will deliver the items to the Museum in Vitebsk, or the Museum of the Academy of Sciences, which have necessary conditions for storage of these objects. We would not like to split the collection."

Scientists claim that Kordon most fully reveals the period which has been least studied in Belarus. The archaeologists are planning further excavations.

## Resettlement of fallow deer

Fallow deer have returned to Belarus: 64 bucks, 165 does and 71 fawns were recently released from Krasny Bor Reserve, where they have been adapting since last January. They are now spread through forested areas in the Rossony and Verkhnedvinsk districts, though the fallow deer are still being fed at specially equipped sites.

By Dmitry Umpirovich

Some species are unique to our lands; in the Middle Ages, fallow deer were considered to be park animals but then completely disappeared. Constant wars, poachers and varmints killed them off.

"In the 20th century, there were attempts to re-introduce fallow deer but these proved less than successful.

However, in the early 2000s, scientists conducted research and developed a programme of fallow deer resettlement in our country. During



In harmony with nature

the first stage, animals were kept in open air cages, in Ostrovets and Lepel forestries, and at Pripyatsky National

Park," notes Pavel Veligurov, a research officer of the theriology laboratory at the Scientific and Practical Centre for

Bio-resources of the National Academy of Sciences.

He adds, "The first attempt to release fallow deer into the wild happened rather by accident at Baranovichy forestry. A fallen tree destroyed the open-air cage, setting free thirty fallow deer. No one knows what happened to them. At Krasny Bor, everything was done scientifically, following guidelines. Fallow deer can survive despite conditions in the north of Belarus being less than perfect for them."

## Pushcha again has its marshes

By Andrey Mityukov

**Diky Nikor marshes, in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha, are being reclaimed by Pruzhany enterprise following an assessment by the National Academy of Sciences, working with Polesiegiprvodkhos JSC. Work was initiated by APB-BirdLife Belarus public organisation.**

The organisation's specialist, Victoria Tereshonok, tells us that the project is vital to the Pushcha's ecosystem, in Belarus and Poland. She comments, "The full effect will take fifty years to become evident but we should see early signs by spring, when the floods begin. We'll find

out how effectively the new dams and bridges are holding back the water and will measure its level. This should benefit the forest, which has dried out, due to moisture being lost along soil reclamation canals. The fauna should benefit, and there will be more ducks and curlews. We hope that, within a few years, rare aquatic warblers will return."

The drained marshes cover over 7,000 hectares, with 1,163 hectares in the Pruzhany District chosen for repeated marsh formation. The cost (including assessment) will total around 75,000 Euros, with financial assistance provided by the Frankfurt Zoological Society. Land reclamation should take around three months.





# Hundreds march against twin bombings in Turkey

Hundreds of people have marched to Istanbul's Beşiktaş Football Stadium in a show of unity against Saturday's twin bombings

The number of victims has risen to 39 after one survivor has died from his injuries in hospital. At least 155 people were wounded in what appears to have been a co-ordinated attack.

An offshoot of the banned Kurdistan Workers Party, a group known as the Kurdistan Freedom Hawks (TAK), has said it carried out the bombings on its website.

Turkish President Recep Tayy-

ip Erdogan visited some of the injured in hospital.

He has vowed to fight what he called 'the scourge of terrorism to the end', and promised that the attackers would pay a 'heavy price'.

In remarks directed at pro-Kurdish politicians, a warning went out to anyone showing sympathy towards the attackers.

In recent months thousands of Kurdish politicians have been de-

tained, including dozens of mayors and the leaders of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), parliament's second-biggest opposition party, accused of having links to the PKK.

The crackdown against Kurdish politicians has coincided with widespread purges of state institutions after July's failed coup, which the government blames on followers of a US-based Muslim

cleric. Saturday night's blasts — a car bomb and a suicide bomber — have shaken a nation which is still trying to recover from a failed military coup and a number of bombings this year. They include one in June, when around 45 people were killed and hundreds wounded as three suspected ISIL militants carried out a gun and bomb attack on its main Ataturk Airport.

## Greek economists fear the financial future

**Eurozone finance ministers have agreed to a modicum of debt relief for struggling Greece, but there is division on the exact reforms required to hit fiscal targets**

The Eurogroup has met to assess how far the country has advanced with reforms before the next tranche of loans are released.

A second review looking at potential changes to Greek labour laws is still ongoing. Napoleon Maravegi as is Professor of European Economics at the University of Athens, "Once the second review of the programme is completed too, and one way or the other it will be completed, things will get better. We will see improvement in the investment environment, QE, return to the financial markets. In a couple of years we will feel this in our pockets. But don't get the idea that we are talking about a state of prosperity."

The ECB believes that the 3.5 percent target for the budget surplus excluding debt-servicing costs is achievable within the bailout time frame. The Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said in June, "It is absolutely impossible to maintain a primary surplus of 3.5 percent after 2018 if we are not to drown the Greek economy." Now the government has made a 180 degree turn and has committed to this target for the foreseeable future."

Economists fear the constant tax hikes are killing business and with it the Greek economy. Ordinary Greeks feel shackled by the bailout and burdened by debt, frustration and anger.



## Both sides in FUROM election claim victory

**Macedonia's parliamentary election appears virtually tied with both sides in the former Yugoslavian Republic claiming victory**

The governing conservative coalition (VMRO-DPMNE) is thought to be slightly ahead but the gap is by just over one percentage point. Still their leader Nikola Gruevski thinks it's enough.

"With this result VMRO-DPMNE is the winner of this election in Macedonia," the veteran nationalist leader told supporters. Meanwhile, the opposition led by the Social Democrats (SDSM) are having none of it. They believe they have

scored more than the conservatives in the bigger cities giving them a one seat advantage in parliament.

"Respected citizens celebrate. Enjoy life as the regime has fallen," said leader Zoran Zaev.

The snap election has come after Nikola Gruevski stepped down in January from his post as prime minister following an EU-brokered deal to stop the political crisis surrounding a corruption scandal.

Zaev accused the government of wiretapping tens of thousands of citizens and released recordings of supposed wrongdoings. Gruevski and the VMRO-DPMNE party have denied any culpability in the affair.

## Sanders piles pressure on Trump over jobs at rally in Washington

**Donald Trump may have been elected with the help of blue-collar workers who felt left behind by globalisation, but it looks like the honeymoon could be short**

Just up the block from Trump's new hotel, low-wage federal contract workers who were on a one-day strike, gathered to demand Trump stop all federal contractors from 'stealing the pay of workers who serve America', according to Good Jobs Nation, a campaign that is supported by community and labour organisations. They accuse the companies of violating health, safety and wage violations.

Senator Bernie Sanders warned federal contractors not to hide behind Trump and promised the president-elect a tough labour fight.

"We're telling Mr. Trump and anybody else that when millions of us stand together, we are going to win. Nobody is going to stop us," Mr. Sanders told the crowd.

Sanders is piling the pressure on Trump to keep his promises on jobs and wages.

Democratic congressman Keith Ellison who is running for



the chairmanship of the party, rejected the notion that Democrats in Congress now need to give Trump a chance.

"This is not about cooperating with Trump, this is about cooperating with the people. Listen, we got too much focus on what some politician or big businessman is up to. The focus needs to be on the people, right?"

Also at the rally, Hollywood actor Danny Glover lashed out at Time Magazine for declaring Trump the 'Person of the Year'.

"It is irresponsible to make

him 'Person of the Year'! Based on what? Based on the fact that he won the Electoral College? Based on the fact that he lied to people? Based on the fact on all the stories of what he has done to women and what he thinks of women? Based on the fact of his racism? A racist? That's the 'Person of the Year'? I'm appalled!"

The blue-collar workers who were instrumental in Donald Trump's election victory now want action, and they want it fast. Trump needs to deliver to keep these workers in his camp or else.





At National Art Museum exhibition

# Bright exhibits for connoisseurs

## National Art Museum hosts works of art and encourages dissemination of learning

By Veniamin Mikheev

The number of items, hidden in the funds of the National Art Museum (in other words 'storage rooms'), incomparably exceeds the number of those chosen for a permanent exposition. Sculptures are kept underground, behind thick iron doors, in dim cool light, while numerous canvases are standing in rows, with masterpieces of decorative-and-applied arts 'hiding' somewhere in the shadows. Each treasure is photographed and registered in special books and documents, having the equivalent of a 'passport', even though many stay unseen for years. Meanwhile, others — the fortunate few — spend more of their 'life' on show, greatly admired by visitors.

An opinion exists that a museum is a cemetery of art: artworks get to the cellar and do not return from there. Fortunately, this does not refer to the National Art Museum of Belarus.

The first reason why the museum's basic exposition is so small (compared to the total number of works stored in it) is impossibility to exhibit all of them. The storage rooms of the National Art Museum of Belarus comfortably keep more than 30,000 works of art. It is difficult not only to exhibit them; visitors simply won't be able to examine them all. Such 'heavy artillery' of 30,000 artworks, open to the public, would not have any conceptual meaning.

Meanwhile, an exposition is a detailed, systematic, scientifically verified and harmonious story about a particular period of history of arts to which it is devoted.

Museums have long used categorisation of expositions, showing us how the museum's classification system works. For example, arts and crafts pieces are divided by material: into ceramics, wooden artefacts, and those made from metal, and fabrics.



Rich exhibition of artefacts



This principle of exposition formation by art museums is called an 'academic range' and primarily relies on scientific history of arts.

To see even a tenth of the full archive of the National Art Museum would amply demonstrate its capacity.

The second reason why most exhibits of the museum are kept in storage rooms is that the 'demonstrational' function, however paradoxically it may sound, isn't the most important.

Naturally, some items are less interesting to the public than others. A great many are kept not for their beauty or originality but purely for preservation and investigation, to expand our knowledge, and aid re-

search. Few realise how much time is spent on such work behind the scenes: scrupulous study, to bring context to the whole.

Major funds of the National Art Museum of Belarus keeps sculptures — delicate molds whose 'fathers' are original masterpieces of Egyptian, Sumerian, Greek, Roman and medieval Gothic art. These have been created in the oldest reproductive workshop, located under the Louvre. The workshop, which was founded in 1794 — just several years before the Louvre itself, under influence of the Enlightenment, aimed to enhance its educational function.

Some of the 1950s molds stored



Near I. Aivazovsky's picture

in the museum recently went on display, alongside full-scale sculptures and reliefs, covering the rich history of the Ancient World. They joined the collection in 1976, thanks to Nadia Khodasevich-Léger (1904-1982), a Belarus-born figure of the 20th century art, who was married to abstract artist Fernand Léger. Having visited the USSR in that year, she made a gorgeous gift to the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus (at that time the State Art Museum of the BSSR, headed by Yelena Aladova), presenting these molds as a gift.



Molds from Louvre

The idea of museum as a temple of the art has been entrenched in human culture long ago. One of the main museum tasks is to demonstrate cultural and artistic achievements of the humanity as full as possible. Like the temple it strives for giving an opportunity to visitors to feel something that is timeless as well as to touch fragments of the Truth, reproduced by artists and sculptors of the past.

L'atelier de moulage (or the workshop of molds) demonstrates a particular art form in itself: the reproduction of sculptures, using the imprint of originals. The process has been known since ancient times, aiming to preserve cultural heritage and enable it to be reproduced.

Ancient Rome reproduced Greek masterpieces in bronze using the method, as did Renaissance artists, working from sculptures unearthed during excavations.

In the East, in particular, it's considered important to preserve and perfect techniques, following long-established canons. Knowledge, aesthetic originality and sequence of narration are vital. Museum workers in Minsk are engaged in such work, as we can now see in the *Ancient World: Replica of Beauty* exhibition.



# In order to dance well, it is necessary to learn to speak

Grand Prix of 29th International Modern Choreography Festival, *IFMC-2016*, in Vitebsk awarded to soloist of Central Song and Dance Ensemble of Army of China Yuchen Yao

By Olga Kruchenkova

The miniature *My Meridians* was staged for him by choreographer Zhang Qiang who won the *IFMC* ten years ago. For eight and a half minutes, the Chinese artiste told a very clear story: looking back at the past, we ponder the choices we could have made, avoiding torture and grief. We pay a price for our freedom of action.

The concept was embodied perfectly, using music, light and movement in harmony: a feat not achieved by every entry. The jury chairman, Beijing Dance Academy Professor Xiao Suhua, commented, "More or less worthy works reached the final. The technique of dancers and dance is much higher than it was six years ago, when I was in Vitebsk. However, some works lack meaning and depth."

Xiao Suhua was delighted that judges awarded not only points but feedback. First prize of \$3,000 went to the *After Before* joint project, performed by the Choreography Chair of the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts, with Mat-



**Six Dances premiere, performed by Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus**

sey Kuzminsky. The dance told of the life of refugees. Second place (of \$1,000) was shared between *Second Floor*, by Yekaterina Vodzyanskaya and Anatoly Vodzyansky, and *Four Images of Sin* by the Tabile Modern Ballet, both from Kiev. Third place went to an entry from

Tallinn.

As always, contemporary dance trends were discussed during the festival. What is new quickly becomes old, with innovation sought continually. At competitions, this is especially relevant, with choreographers being keen to stand out.

According to the Chairman of the Advisory Council, Larisa Barykina, every performance was worthy, but there were no grand sensations to speak of either. She explains, "It shows clearly that all have learnt basic skills and concepts, and all move well. Nearly fifteen

years ago, we didn't see so many well-trained people in Vitebsk. Now, having mastered the body 'alphabet', it's necessary to learn to speak. Anyone can declare to be a choreographer of modern dance, unlike in other kinds of dancing. As a result, individuality has disappeared from

the stage, and incompetence and non-professionalism progresses. We began with extreme tolerance, allowing all to speak, since every personality is unique and has the right to express itself. However, I think people should ask themselves whether they really have anything to say, when a thousand spectators are watching and listening. Emotion is vital to modern dance, so we shouldn't be ashamed to show it. You need to do more than move to the music, or portray an aspect of global suffering. Such dance cannot bring answers."

Well-known choreographer Radu Poklitaru tells us, "Young authors address themselves to global themes instead of speaking about something concrete. My first-year students like to stage dance on the theme of the night sky, yin and yang, the Divine, angels and demons... They are inspired by the philosophy of the Earth. It's easier to reveal any philosophic theme while telling the story of one person or about relations between a couple."

Next year's festival in Vitebsk will be the 30th. We hope for grand innovations!



**Vladimir Alekhnovich**

By Olga Kislyak

The granite monument to Lenin has moved to Lyskovshchina from Krugloe's central square, where everything started. When, in 2008, the monument was dismantled, there was much discussion about where to send it. The leadership of the local town-planning committee — PMK-266 — had the idea of setting up a museum in the district — unrivalled in the region — and to collect exhibits that were dear to us all in Soviet

## Hello from the glorious past

Lenin's statue inside and at the entrance, a full collection of works by the leader of the world's proletariat, a pioneer tie, an Olympic bear on a badge, glass milk bottles... The museum of the Soviet epoch that has opened in the Krugloe District's Lyskovshchina village, already boasts around 5,000 exhibits. According to its organisers, this is only the beginning. Back to the USSR — the official title of the museum — is unrivalled in the Mogilev Region, the exhibits presented here come from all around the country, not only from the Krugloe District.

times. This unusual museum, opened just a month ago, is visited by tourists from various cities and countries. The guestbook contains records left by the Justice Minister, Oleg Slizhevsky, alongside guests from Kazakhstan and Chile. Remarkably, the Czech guests only recognised Marshall Malinovsky on the poster depicting talented commanders: Rokossovsky, Zhukov and others. The Czechs were very excited as 'Malinovskaya' Russian vodka is still sold in their country.

The Deputy Director of PMK-266 enterprise, Vladimir Alekhnovich, explains, "We had the idea of creating a hall of Soviet trade in the museum, which will showcase Soviet food products. We're already collecting the exhibits: old scales, Soviet counting frames, posters that used to hang in salesrooms, string

bags, even true 'Russkaya' vodka. One old woman agreed to give it to us. She has been keeping the bottles in the cellar for many years and even the price is still on them: 3 Roubles 62 Kopecks."

Mr. Alekhnovich is among those actively collecting exhibits for the museum. One of these is especially precious to him. This is a baby carriage, bought in 1958, in which he was pushed. His parents went to Leningrad to buy it especially. Mr. Alekhnovich's sister also used this carriage... He doesn't remember the cost but he knows that the first Soviet video tape recorder 'Elektronika VM-12' cost 1,200 Roubles. Many people only dreamt of having such an item, as it was too precious. The average salary was 100-120 Roubles while a 'Moskvich' car cost three 'Elektronika' devices.

Those who had this device at home remember that, when it worked, it was as hot as a stove. The device was used by some to start their businesses: people gathered friends and acquaintances at home and took a fee from them for watching foreign movies which weren't available in cinemas.

The museum of the Soviet era also has a collection of Soviet cameras. The Head of PMK's Legal Department, Nikolay Kurnosov, who often conducts tours for guests, shows me one of the rarities, "This is a 'Kiev' camera that cost from 200 to 300 Roubles. It had expensive optics. In Soviet times people took it when they travelled abroad to take pictures to remember their trip. Usually however, they sold the camera there and this paid for the trip."

'Neman' and 'Rekord' TV sets,

radio receivers, printing and sewing machines, diskless telephones, gramophones and vinyl discs, wall clocks of various brands and models... There are lots of curious exhibits here that return visitors to their childhoods and some to their adolescence. Not everything goes on display, another part of the building is still undergoing repairs. Several new halls will open here when the repairs are complete. One of these will house a 'Soviet school' with desks, book bags, globes, a blackboard and white chalk. There will also be a hall of Soviet medicine with metal syringes and medical devices from the time, as well as a hall of musical instruments, popular in the USSR.

No doubt the museum will be extremely popular: many recollect the past and here they will be even able to touch it absolutely free of charge.



# National record is broken in Canada

Belarus' national team claims two bronze at FINA World Short Course Swimming Championships, in Canadian Windsor

By Kirill Karin

Belarusian swimmers Pavel Sankovich, Ilya Shimanovich, Yevgeny Tsurkin and Anton Latkin were placed third in the mixed relay 4x50m, covering the distance within 1:32.49, and setting a new record for Belarus (previously 1:33.21).

Ilya Shimanovich finished tenth in the 50m breaststroke, with a time of 26.43 seconds, while Belarusian Yulia Khitraya swam the 50m freestyle within 24.69 seconds, ranking nineteenth. The mixed relay medal is the second for the national squad of Belarus at the World Championship. Pavel Sankovich claimed bronze in the 50m backstroke.

Men's national team leaders Pavel Sankovich and Yevgeny Tsurkin failed to reach the finals of the 100m butterfly, coming tenth and fourteenth



Pavel Sankovich, Ilya Shimanovich, Yevgeny Tsurkin and Anton Latkin, on medals podium

in the preliminary round respectively.

Pavel Sankovich, one of the leaders of the Belarusian team, gave a result of 23.03 seconds, behind winner Japanese Junya Koga, with a time of 22.85 seconds, in the 50m backstroke. Silver went to Jérémy Stravius of France, who clocked 22.99 seconds. Pavel was just two centiseconds behind the national record of Belarus in this distance, as set by him at the World Cup stage in Singapore: 23.01 seconds.

Ilya Shimanovich, 22, only took eighth place at the World Short Course Swimming Championships but has established a national 100m



Pavel Sankovich

breaststroke record, of 57.28 seconds.

Meanwhile, in the mixed relay 4x50m freestyle finals, Belarusians

Anton Latkin, Artem Machekin, Yulia Khitraya and Alexandra Gerasimenya took sixth place.



Legends' Race 2016

## Chance for country to show its worth

By Semen Bondarev

**Executive Committee of International Biathlon Union, chooses Raubichi Republican Centre of Olympic Training to host IBU Summer Biathlon World Championship in 2019**

Raubichi is to host the IBU Summer World Championship for the first time, having proven the suitability of its facilities: for athletes, and spectators. For the past two years, Raubichi has hosted the Legends' Race, involving veteran biathletes, to general approval, from participants and international experts alike. Since 2010, the Summer Biathlon World Championships have included roller skiing and competitions in sprint, pursuit and

mixed relay. Raubichi hosted the IBU Youth/Junior World Championship in 2015 and is viewed as a possibility to host World Cup stages in the future.

The schedule for tournaments is set until 2018, so any further applications must be for World Cup stages after 2019. The President of the International Biathlon Union, Anders Besseberg, notes that Belarus has applied to host World Championship events in mid-January 2020 and 2021, alongside Ruhpolding and Anterselva (which are likely to be successful in gaining their hosting licences). He is keen to see January Cup stages held in Belarus. Meanwhile, Belarus has the chance to show its worth in hosting junior World championships and IBU Cup stages.

## New twist in coaching career

Belarusian specialist Victor Goncharenko officially appointed head coach of Moscow's CSKA football club, replacing Leonid Slutsky

By Igor Svitov

The Belarusian's contract is to last two years, with an opportunity for extension, as noted on the squad's website. The first part of the current Russian Championship saw Victor Goncharenko, 39, heading Ufa club, ranked eighth after seventeen rounds, with twenty-five points. CSKA is positioned third, boasting thirty-two points.

Victor began his coaching career with BATE Borisov, which became the champion of Belarus six times in a row (2008-2013). It has three times won the Super Cup (in 2010, 2011 and 2013) and the Belarus Cup once, in 2010. Having left Borisov, Goncharenko headed to Russian clubs: Kuban from Krasnodar (2013-2014), Ural from Yekaterinburg (2014) and as



Victor Goncharenko

assistant to Mr. Slutsky for CSKA (2015-2016) before moving to Ufa.

Among the possible successors of Mr. Goncharenko as Ufa coach are Alexander Yermakovich, who is the current head coach of BATE Borisov, and the former coach of Spartak Moscow and Arsenal, from Tula, Dmitry Alenichev.

## Basketballers learn their European Championship rivals

By Alexey Grishin

**Prague hosts draw for group stage of 2017 European Women's Basketball Championship**

The Belarusian national women's team, under the leadership of new coach Natalia Trofimova, in preliminary group B, will face Italy (on June 16th), Slovakia (July 17th) and Turkey (June 19th), in Hradec Králové. Group A comprises Hungary, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and Spain, while Group C brings together Serbia, Slovenia, France and Greece, and Group D is composed of Latvia, Belgium, Montenegro and Russia.

After the first stage, winners of groups will receive tickets to the quarterfinals. Teams placed second and third will meet in play-off matches on June 20th, for the right to receive four more tickets to the quarter-finals. The semi-finals will take place on June 22nd, with medal games scheduled for June 23rd. The decisive match for the championship title, and the match for bronze, will be held on June 25th, in the Czech capital.

Belarusian basketballers debuted at the European Championship in 2007 in Italy, claiming bronze. They have finished fourth twice (in 2009 and 2015), once fifth (2013) and once in ninth place (2011).

## First medals for aerial ski jumpers

**Belarusian freestylers win three awards at first stage of Europe Cup, in Finland's Ruka**

The two day event, with medals presented at the end of the second day, saw Sochi-2014 Olympic medalist Anton Kushnir claim silver, with 197.39 points. Russia's Maxim Burov took first place, with 215.32 points, while Belarusian Maxim Gustik snatched bronze, with 191.77 points.

In the women's tournament, Belarusian Alexandra Romanovskaya became the silver prize-winner, with 168.69 points, behind Australian Danielle Scott, on 187.96 points.

Many of the strongest aerial ski jumpers traditionally take part in the first stage of the Europe Cup. However, leading freestylers from the USA and China were absent from the event this year.

Belarus' national team is taking part in the first stage of the World Cup, in Beijing, hosted on December 17th and 18th. Meanwhile, a later World Cup stage is being hosted by Belarus, on February 25th, at Raubichi.

The World Championship, being held in Spanish Sierra Nevada from March 6th until March 19th, 2017, will launch the main part of the season for our skiers, under coach Nikolay Kozeko.





Literary readings held in Minsk to mark 125th anniversary of birth of Maxim Bogdanovich, near the poet’s monument

EXHIBITIONS			THEATRES		
<b>NATIONAL ART MUSEUM</b> <i>20 Lenin Street</i> Until 19 <sup>th</sup> December. <i>On Screen and Behind</i> Until 30 <sup>th</sup> January. <i>Celestial World on the Earth</i> Until 5 <sup>th</sup> February. <i>Russian Pictorial Art of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century</i>			<b>BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE</b> <i>1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square</i> 15.12. Macbeth 16.12. About Love 17.12. The Queen of Spades 18.12. The Marriage of Figaro 19.12. Turandot 22.12. A Masked Ball; Portraits. Izabella Yurieva		
<b>HOUSE OF PICTURES</b> <i>89/3 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 8 <sup>th</sup> January. Konstantin Muzhev and Yevgenia Muzheva: <i>Movement</i>			<b>BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE</b> <i>44 Myasnikov Street</i> 19 and 20.12. Jane Eyre		
<b>EXHIBITION HALL OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM</b> <i>9A Bogdanovich Street</i> Until 13 <sup>th</sup> March. <i>Noisy Feathered Rainbow</i>			<b>MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE</b> <i>5 Volodarsky Street</i> 15.12. Bridegrooms 16.12. He and She; Tricks of Khanuma 17.12. With a Wave of a Wand; Viva Commedia! 18.12. A Husband Leaves His Wife 20.12. Testosterone 21.12. The Visit 22.12. Lady for a Day		
<b>MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY</b> <i>12 Karl Marx Street</i> Until 22 <sup>nd</sup> January. Exhibition of carnivorous plants			<b>REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA</b> <i>44 Kropotkin Street</i> 16 and 17.12. Kolyady Rendezvous 18.12. Adam’s Jokes		
<b>OUTLET</b> <i>44 Zhukov Avenue</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> December. Exhibition of reptilians: <i>Tropics</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> January. <i>Hidden Reality</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> January. <i>Quintessence: To See the Unseen</i> show-exhibition			<b>BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE</b> <i>20 Engels Street</i> 15.12. Gospel from Judah 17.12. Moydodyr (Wash’em’clean) 18.12. Pippi the Longstocking		
<b>BOOK MUSEUM OF BELARUS’ NATIONAL LIBRARY</b> <i>116 Nezavisimosti Avenue</i> Until 22 <sup>nd</sup> December. <i>Light Trace</i>			<b>MINSK CONCERT HALL</b> <i>5 Oktyabrskaya Street</i> 18.12. Adventures of Young Hare Pif 18.12. Thank You, Margo!		
<b>NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF BELARUS</b> <i>12 Karl Marx Street</i> Until 20 <sup>th</sup> December. <i>Love is Flight</i> Until 15 <sup>th</sup> January. <i>Time of Silent Stars: from Black-and-White to Red</i> Until 29 <sup>th</sup> January. <i>Belarusian Trade in History</i> Until 28 <sup>th</sup> February. <i>Time of Miracles: Winter Holidays and Entertainments</i>			<b>CENTRAL HOUSE OF OFFICERS</b> <i>3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street</i> 15.12. Close Your Eyes and See		
<b>ARENA CITY</b> <i>84 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 1 <sup>st</sup> February. <i>IllyuzIum</i> interactive entertaining exhibition of illusions and 3D pictures			<b>MODERN ARTS THEATRE</b> <i>5 Oktyabrskaya Street</i> 16.12. Mad Money 17.12. Comedy about Penny Pincher 18.12. Cinderella’s New Year Ball; Cinderella		
<b>NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTS</b> <i>47 Nezavisimosti Avenue</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> December. <i>Art Capital: from France to Belarus</i>			<b>YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE</b> <i>7 Engels Street</i> 16.12. Kolyady Night 17 and 18.12. Paulinka 20.12. The Pinsk Gentry 21.12. The Boor 22.12. Two Souls		
<b>SPORTS PALACE SQUARE</b> <i>4 Pobediteley Avenue</i> Until 15 <sup>th</sup> January. <i>Minsk Christmas Festival</i>			<b>THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS</b> <i>13 Pobediteley Avenue</i> 15.12. Robbery at Midnight 16.12. Pygmalion 17 and 18.12. An Unnamed Star 19.12. Master and Margarita 20 and 21.12. No One Ever Said Life Would Be Easy		
<b>CAT MUSEUM</b> <i>11 Dzerzhinsky Avenue</i> Until 31 <sup>st</sup> December. <i>New Year Season in Cat Museum</i>			<b>Учредитель:</b> Учреждение Администрации Президента Республики Беларусь «Редакция газеты «Советская Белоруссия». Ул. Б. Хмельницкого, 10 <sup>я</sup> , Минск, 220013 <b>Регистрационное свидетельство № 62</b> Выдано 02.03.2009 Министерством информации Республики Беларусь <b>E—mail:</b> times@sb.by		
<b>BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS</b> <i>32 Nezavisimosti Avenue</i> 17-19, 21-22.12. Mystery of Magic Chest			<b>Редактор</b> Виктор Михайлович Харьков <b>Объём издания</b> — 3 п. л. <b>Адрес редакции:</b> ул. Киселева, 11, Минск, 220029 <b>Телефон редакции:</b> +375 17 290 68 31; +375 17 290 61 13 <b>Тираж:</b> 1,935, <b>Заказ:</b> 1837		