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Festival of historical reconstruction, *Knighthood in All Times*, held in Minsk

Minsk first mentioned in chronicles 950 years ago, with good reason

The first mention of the city, in the *Tale of Bygone Years*, dates back to March 3rd, 1067, and is connected with a bloody battle on the River Nemiga. 950 years later, on March 3rd, 2017, Minsk hosted a festival of historical reconstruction, *Knighthood in All Times*.

Appreciating calm, order and security

By Alexey Fedosov

Police ensure proper level of public security in Belarus, notes Alexander Lukashenko, speaking at solemn session marking 100th anniversary of establishment of Belarusian police

“Objectively assessing the work of the Interior Ministry, we can say that the Belarusian police force ensures the necessary level of public security while confidently controlling the situation. It can prevent the aggravation of criminal situations and can protect society, and each citizen, from criminal activity,” noted

Mr. Lukashenko.

The Head of State commented that the country’s guests are delighted by Belarus’ natural and man-made beauty, while highly appreciating its tranquillity, order and the safety of our streets, be these in the cities, towns or villages. “Life is safe here. Not all developed countries can boast the same,” said the President.

Mr. Lukashenko believes that we shouldn’t become complacent, however, since much remains to be addressed, including international and transnational crime.

He noted that the work of internal affairs authorities is always in

the limelight. “The police force is the most important state institute: the higher the Interior Ministry’s prestige, the weightier the authority of the law and the stronger ordinary citizens’ faith in justice,” said the Head of State.

The President noted that order is impossible without human decency. “This primarily refers to the professional and individual faultlessness of police employees. The bar is high but each person employed by internal affairs authorities should know that, in protecting the lives and rights of people, they must respect their dignity and reputation,” stressed the

Belarusian leader.

The Head of State added that the first years of police establishment, during the time of the formation of an independent Belarus, were held under conditions of almost complete economic meltdown and degradation of all spheres of society.

“Crime and weakness of power was typical of the tumultuous 1990s. The Belarusian people needed protection and a reliable shoulder. We’ve managed to return public confidence in tomorrow, and have ensured public order, while restoring the authority of the state,” asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

The President underlined that, since its establishment, the Belarusian police has gained authority and nationwide support, through its deeds. “We can say, without exaggeration, that the history of internal affairs authorities is a heroic chronicle of dedicated and selfless service of the Fatherland, by generations of its best sons and daughters,” said the Belarusian leader.

According to Mr. Lukashenko, huge responsibility for security and the stable development of Belarus lies with the Interior Ministry and all law enforcement structures.

Esprit de corps cherished by adherence to principles

A solemn march by subdivisions of the Interior Ministry — dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Belarusian police — has taken place in Minsk. The procession featured over a thousand people and forty-six vehicles and motorcycles.

By Vladimir Velikhov

As the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, said during his speech at the solemn parade to mark the 100th anniversary of Belarusian police, bodies of internal affairs are highly appreciated by the whole nation. “In Belarus, we’re proud of everyone who protects the esprit de corps. They are a model of honesty and commitment to principles. We appreciate true professionals who worthily perform their duty. You aim to embody the best human qualities: responsibility, courage and readiness to help at any moment,” he said.

The Head of State noted that — while preserving the best traditions and experience — modern policemen successfully maintain a high level of law and order in the country. They



Interior Ministry’s machinery from various times

face major challenges to strengthen Belarus’ security. “Success depends on clarity and coherence of action, the ability to correctly analyse the situation and take weighted decisions. Crime retreats only when all elements of the law enforcement system operate efficiently. Accordingly, while strengthening our bodies of internal affairs, we’re improving other components of national security. Only if combined will these transformations produce the necessary results, which our society expects,” the President noted.

Mr. Lukashenko added that, over recent years, law enforcement agencies have created many glorious pages in their history. At all stages, this history has been an example of bravery and courage. At the beginning of the 20th century, policemen managed to combat banditry, working in hard conditions. They received everlasting glory during the Great Patriotic War and in post-war hard times. “With deep respect and gratitude, we remember all those who — sparing no effort — guarded the law and citizens’ interests. Veterans — who endured many trials — are an example of honest service to the Motherland. We



Modern motorcycles at parade

heartily thank them for their deeds,” the Head of State stressed. He also expressed his confidence that personnel of the Interior Ministry will continue to effectively solve tasks, serving the country with honour. Mr. Lukashenko wished everyone peace, good health and successes in working for the benefit of Belarus.

On the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Belarusian Police Force, Interior Minister Igor Shunevich met foreign delegations of law enforcement agencies, while accepting congratulations from colleagues from Azerbaijan, Vietnam, Georgia,

Qatar, China, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the United Arab Emirates, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan, and representatives of the Office for the Co-ordination of the Fight Against Organised Crime and Other Dangerous Types of Crime on the CIS Territory.

“The common task of law enforcement agencies around the world is to protect human life and health, while protecting people from encroachment on their property. The key to success in the fight against crime, including transnational, is the effective interaction of law enforcement bodies in

various countries, based on joint efforts, co-ordination of our activities and the friendly nature of interagency relations,” Mr. Shunevich said.

On behalf of himself and all personnel at the Interior Ministry, he thanked participants of the meeting for the high level of law enforcement co-operation and mutually beneficial and reliable partnership. “We’re jointly confident in moving towards the eradication of crime and ensuring the security of our countries and peoples,” he added.

Mr. Shunevich awarded heads of foreign law enforcement agencies with commemorative medals for their co-operation with Belarus’ Interior Ministry agencies, and for their personal contribution to strengthening friendly relations with the Belarusian Ministry, as well as effective co-operation in organising international events in the field of crime prevention, law enforcement and public safety.

The Serbian Police Director, Vladimir Rebić, noted the great honour of receiving an invitation to celebrate such a significant date in Belarus. “This once again confirms the closeness of relations between Belarus and Serbia, as well as our desire to develop them further. I was very impressed with the festive concert, where I learnt more of the history of police formation. I was struck by the solemn march,” he said, adding that he is delighted by his communication with heads of Belarus’ Interior Ministry, discussing several important issues.

The Chief of Latvian State Police, Ints Kuzis, noted that it was particularly interesting for him to attend the celebrations, since the Latvian police force will celebrate its 100th jubilee next year. He added that the close proximity of our two countries involves partnership to address common challenges and threats.

Where mutual interests meet

President of Georgia, Giorgi Margvelashvili, pays official visit to Belarus

By Vasily Kharitonov

In April 2015, during the visit of the President of Belarus to Georgia, the heads of our two states determined goals for developing our business interaction, aiming for trade turnover of \$200m.

At that time, our bilateral trade was modest. Alexander Lukashenko's trip to Tbilisi, and then Batumi, saw the organisation of a joint business forum, helping drive forward our mutual desire for collaboration. As a result, our trade turnover has risen considerably: by 63 percent last year, despite global economic instability, when all markets have been suffering. However, we only attained half of our target turnover.

Welcoming the President of Georgia to the Palace of Independence, for a return official visit, Mr. Lukashenko told Giorgi Margvelashvili that he has a vital role to play in strengthening the upward trend in our trade. Mr. Lukashenko underlined the openness of conversation, after negotiations in a narrow format. Previous talks in Tbilisi were warm, building trusting relations between the presidents of our two countries, as they discussed the challenges of today, within the world arena. The heads of our two states spent more than three hours tête-à-tête determining areas for co-operation, for later discussion during an extended format meeting.

Georgian agriculture is, probably, the main focus for our joint work. The country boasts a favourable climate, fertile soil and hard-working



Giorgi Margvelashvili and Alexander Lukashenko have much to discuss

Alexander LUKASHENKO:

Georgia is an important and promising partner for Belarus in Transcaucasia. Diplomatic relations between our countries, established more than twenty years ago, are known for their high degree of trust and mutual understanding. Our interaction has progressed well across all areas. We plan to continue working with dear Georgia.

people. However, it lacks technologies to ensure efficient farming. Mr. Margvelashvili stressed that around half of the country's population generates its income from farming, according to official statistics. Unofficially, the figure could differ. Disappointingly, the agrarian sector produces just 9 percent of GDP, with Georgia relying heavily on imported foodstuffs: a situation that the country's leadership is eager to correct.

Mr. Lukashenko assured his colleague that Belarus will do all it can to share expertise, including setting up joint agricultural production, and offering technical maintenance of machinery. Belarus is well-placed to supply the latest agricultural vehicles, as well as setting up joint assembly produc-

tion and service centres. The south of Georgia is particularly favourable for farming.

Meanwhile, Belarusian specialists are ready to help modernise lifts in blocks of flats. There are plans for joint construction of an ice rink and biathlete stadium, at Bakuriani ski resort. Belarus is also ready to supply machinery for sewing official uniforms and for the supply of food products, to security agencies.

There are many points of coincidence, as the Georgian President stressed. Interstate dialogue is a guarantee of successful implementation of our plans. Minsk and Tbilisi may have chosen different foreign political vectors, Georgia focusing on European integration while Belarus has chosen Eurasian integration, but this presents no obstacle to meaningful dialogue on bilateral co-operation.

Our two countries are similar in courting no enemies, despite having a firm idea of national interests. They don't stand in the way of others' choices, being sympathetic to paths of independence, and respecting diversity. We each find our own strategies of governance and development, as is our sovereign right. Our inter-state dialogue is based on mutual understanding and respect.

Co-operation between Belarus and Georgia has gained momentum across all areas, noted the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, as he met media representatives after negotiations with the Georgian President, Giorgi Margvelashvili.

The Head of State expressed confidence that the opening of the Belarusian Embassy in Tbilisi, last

December, will facilitate stronger co-operation. "In recent days, contacts have been activated between our governments, regions and enterprises. Most months, our two states exchange delegations across some sphere or other. Importantly, this close interaction will bring results in the trade-economic sphere," noted the President of Belarus.

Mr. Lukashenko also stressed the readiness of Belarus for further development of co-operation with Georgia across a wide range of areas: the agro-industrial complex, design and construction of sporting facilities, supplies of various Belarusian technologies and light industry goods, the creation of joint ventures, development of interaction in the humanitarian sphere, and tourism. "You've never been a 'stranger' to us and won't be. All our experience is at your disposal; we'll do all we can," asserted the Head of State.

The President of Georgia noted that a whole range of issues had been tackled during negotiations, aiming to intensify Belarusian-Georgian relations. In particular, in the spheres of trade, tourism, culture, and education.

"I'm pleased that Belarus will strengthen relations with Georgia and will use the potential that exists between our states to ensure better standards of living," stressed the President of Georgia.

Giorgi Margvelashvili thanked Belarus for its strong support of Georgia and promised that bilateral relations will only reinforce in future.

Partners always ready to offer their shoulder

By Alexey Fedosov

Belarus ready to share its experience in helping Vietnam maintain security

On meeting the Vietnamese Minister for Public Security, To Lam, Alexander Lukashenko noted that Vietnam is a vigorously developing Asian country. "Over the past ten years, we've created the material foundation and the basis of our relations, tripling our bilateral trade. Moreover, we've outlined a serious roadmap for the development of our relations.



To Lam

This makes Vietnam one of Belarus' priority partners in Southeast Asia," asserted the President.

Mr. Lukashenko stressed that stability and security are the main areas of focus for law enforcement agen-

cies, and are key factors in Vietnam's vigorous development. "We're ready to share our best practices with our friends in Vietnam. You should know that the Belarusian government, and I personally, will provide comprehensive assistance in this field," emphasised the President of Belarus.

The Head of State also pointed out the importance of personnel training. "If you're satisfied with the Belarusian system of personnel training, we're ready to do our best to help you introduce the system, or certain

elements of it, in Vietnam," assured the President. Mr. Lukashenko deems it necessary to ensure the free movement of people from Vietnam to Belarus and vice versa. "At the same time, we must stop 'bad' people and join efforts in the fight against crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. We have certain experience. If you need it, we can share it with you," he noted.

To Lam thanked the President of Belarus for the meeting and conveyed greetings from the leadership of Vietnam. He also remarked

that, this year, the countries celebrate the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations and praised the positive effect of previous top-level visits.

Experts note that the necessary legal framework has been created to support the activities of law enforcement bodies in Belarus and Vietnam, enabling them to resolve operational and service tasks. Interaction with Vietnam is regulated by an agreement on legal aid and legal relations in civil, family, labour and criminal cases, and agreements have been

signed on co-operation between the law enforcement agencies of our two countries.

Our countries regularly exchange visits in various fields and collaborate in personnel training. Several groups of Vietnamese specialists have received training at the canine centre, in Belarus. Vietnamese specialists have also been studying at the Interior Ministry Academy of Belarus, including at the International Training Centre on Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.

Worthy ideas realised

State awards shouldn't be bestowed in a perfunctory manner, asserts President Alexander Lukashenko on visiting National Scientific and Practical Centre for Organ and Tissue Transplantation at Minsk's 9th City Clinical Hospital

By Vladimir Khromov

While visiting the Scientific and Practical Centre, the Belarusian Head of State viewed developments proposed in 2016 for receiving State Prizes in Science and Technology. Mr. Lukashenko stressed that the distribution of state awards should not be bestowed in a perfunctory manner. Otherwise, truly precious R&D products and accomplishments may fall off the radar. "I want to be fair and just, and objective," he said. "We're planning a serious science-related meeting, aiming to investigate all developers. If we fail to choose laureates of the state award, we'll continue collecting information, as the significance of science is enormous, deserving recognition. We'll think it over and you can make proposals to me. Of course, we can't give everyone a state award, as it would devalue their worth. However, people deserve encouragement."

Mr. Lukashenko has instructed the Presidential Administration to analyse the economic benefits of scientific projects which have received state awards in previous years.

Mr. Lukashenko spent time viewing those projects which were proposed for the State Prizes in Science and Technology last year, including those relating to organ transplantation, industry, engineering, agriculture, oil, construction, technologies and history. Many feed into import substitution. For example,

a team from the National Academy of Sciences has established a bank of genetic resources of agricultural and forest plants, working towards state food and biological security. Mustard seeds can now be cultivated in Belarus, so that importation is no longer needed for the production of flavourings.

Works by Belarusian designers have been acknowledged, with a team from the Brest State Technical University developing metal construction materials used in building Vitebsk's Summer Amphitheatre, Mogilev's Spartak Stadium, the National Olympic Committee building, Minsk-Arena and other facilities. Recently, Belarusian specialists designed a dome for the Tretyakov Gallery.

The President viewed the latest medical technologies at the Centre, examining its intensive care and transplantation units and its laboratory of cell technologies. He chatted with patients, including children, presenting them with souvenirs and wishing them good health and success in later life.

The Head of the Centre, Oleg Rummo, reported to the President on prospects for the further development of transplantation in the country, including the gradual renovation and restructuring of existing hospital beds. For example, there is to be a new cardio ward and Minsk City Centre of Cardiosurgery is to launch.



YURI MOZOLEVSKIY

In the Centre for Organ and Tissue Transplantation

The Scientific and Practical Centre is engaged in the development and promotion of new technologies, as well as the education and training of prospective staff, while co-operating with foreign partners. Transplant departments operate in

almost every regional centre of Belarus. Despite this, Minsk's Centre is very much in demand, with its services being popular with domestic and foreign patients. The latter have risen more than five-fold in volume since the Centre's opening in 2010.



Meanwhile, exports of medical services have increased 25 times.

As regards the number of transplantations, Belarus leads in the CIS. In 2016, it occupied tenth place for its level of organ donorship, ahead of Germany, the UK, Japan, Poland and the Republic of Korea.

Viewing developments proposed for 2016 state awards, the President showed interest in research into *The Roots for Belarusian Statehood: The Lands of Polotsk and Vitebsk in the 9th-18th Century*, which reveals the process of how the Eastern Slavonic territories were formed.

According to the Head of the Centre of Archaeology and Ancient History of the Belarusian Institute of History of the National Academy of Sciences, Olga Levko, studies show that the Belarusian state system began to take shape in the middle of the 9th century, with the creation of Polotsk.

Polotsk became a centre for local nobility, while Novgorod and Kiev invited the Vikings to settle. Polotsk became part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Rzecz Pospolita, later, before developing independently.

Mr. Lukashenko asserts that the country is creating new textbooks, which will reflect our latest understanding of how the Belarusian state was formed. He underlines, "We must report the truth, introducing it into the minds of our people. If there is certain nationalism, it is healthy nationalism."

Definitely working hard for public benefit

By Alexander Pimenov

26th summer session of OSCE PA will reinforce role of Belarus in world politics and security, notes Chairman of House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, speaking at first meeting of Republican organising committee, dealing with preparation and conduct of Minsk session

Mr. Andreichenko notes that the event will be the first held in the country at this level, requiring much work. He comments, "It will enable us to enhance the role of Belarus in world politics and security and the development of political dialogue with parliamentarians of other countries while opening new opportunities to promote the national interests



of our country and expand trade-economic co-operation."

The National Assembly of Belarus has taken part in the work of the OSCE PA since 2003. Over this time, many resolutions initiated by Belarus have been adopted. Mr. Andreichenko is confident that

the forthcoming session, featuring around 600 delegates from 57 countries (Europe, as well as Canada and the USA), will bring results.

According to Mr. Andreichenko, the House of Representatives has already begun preparations, including relating to funding. With

the Foreign Ministry, the agenda of the session has been elaborated, as approved by the leadership of the Parliamentary Assembly. The meeting between President Alexander Lukashenko and the OSCE PA leadership is scheduled for July 5th, 2017, with a welcoming address by the Head of the State during the opening session.

Recently, Vienna hosted Belarus' presentation of its economic, investment and tourist potential, at the winter session of the OSCE PA. Foreign parliamentarians were able to see the development of the largest domestic manufacturers. Final approval for the programme will be made during a visit by the OSCE PA President Christine Muttonen, in mid-March, when she will be signing an agreement with the National

Assembly, on the conduct of the 26th session in Minsk.

The summer session of the OSCE PA will be held in Minsk from July 5th-9th, dedicated to strengthening mutual trust and co-operation for the sake of peace in the region. An intense programme is planned, including a session of the OSCE PA Standing Committee. General committees will meet to discuss political issues and security, economic issues, science, technology and the environment, and democracy, human rights and humanitarian issues. A plenary session is also scheduled, alongside official receptions. A tourist programme is being prepared for foreign guests, with visits to the Museum of Great Patriotic War History, Mir and Nesvizh, as well as general sightseeing tours around the capital.

Powered by hand

Gomel inventor Mikhail Vaga, a Belarusian National Technical University student, spent several years perfecting his unique phone charging device, powered by hand. Having invented and built it, he's now looking for buyers, as he explained to people gathered at Yunost Palace of Children and Youth Creativity.



By Olga Valchenko

Two-dozen programmers and engineers looked at the young man incredulously, clearly sceptical about the commercial viability of the invention. "I made many mistakes initially," admits the inventor. "I collected just \$700 for production, via my first crowd-funding site. I failed to plan my marketing efficiently."

Young Mikhail has invented a device to power electronic devices when no power outlet or portable charging is available. His *HandEnergy* has a

metal rotor inside, and converts kinetic energy into electricity.

Demonstrating its use, he says, "We set the initial rotation and then twist, before turning by hand to support operation." It offers 5 volts and a current of 1 ampere. By turning the 380g device for twenty minutes, you can gain a charge of up to 10 percent on your smartphone battery,



ONLINER.BY

Mikhail Vaga

with more possible if you continue. The process takes around 30 percent longer than when charging from a wall outlet. Mikhail created software and used an accelerometer to turn his *HandEnergy* into a joystick.

"Numerous patents and inventions are collecting dust on shelves as their authors fail to sell them wisely," explains Mikhail. "I want to set up serial production." The young man has received many proposals for the purchase of his idea, from China, Germany and Belarus. However, he's decided to establish his own production, seeking initial capital through crowd-funding online. When the invention received little response, Mikhail revised his approach to marketing.

"It's important to set intermediate goals: create first and then see if the appearance and practicality can be improved. Then, ponder the market-

ing. I gathered a team of associates: some write texts and others take photos and shot videos. We've created a very high level English video presentation, so that the presentation of the device on the crowd-funding site is as widely accessible as possible," he says.

The second attempt has proven successful: 832 customers have registered, placing orders of various sizes, and 71,000 Euros have been collected. The first small batch of charging simulators will be dispatched to buyers in May. By late summer, Mikhail's team plan to produce a large batch. At the moment, the device is selling at 79 Euros but, in the future, the inventor plans to cut this to \$50. Mikhail believes fear is unproductive: not long ago, his idea existed only in his imagination. Now, he's seeking office space.

Hunting technologies

World news agencies are reporting some interesting news, as Dallas Federal Court has ordered Facebook to pay \$500 million in damages, for stealing technology. The lawsuit was filed by a company claiming that its early innovation was copied by Oculus, for the production of virtual reality glasses. Not only the sum of the fine is impressive but the fact that such a solid global corporation as Facebook is not averse to stealing the ideas of others — even at the risk of being brought to court. This demonstrates the importance of high technologies in successfully competing in the market. The stakes are high.



By Alexander Pimenov

As the President recently noted, speaking of the state programme for innovative development for 2016-2020, national growth relies on this sphere.

Economist Alexey Belyaev comments, "Facilitated development of high-tech sectors should be at the heart of our economic strategy, including information and communication technologies and aerospace, nuclear energy, bio- and nano-industry, pharmaceuticals, tool building and electronics.

All promising developments need to be immediately implemented in production. The fourth global industrial revolution has already begun, revolving around robotics, automation services, 3D-printing and the digital industry. Belarus is traditionally strong in the IT sector, so we should stand firm, using it to drive forward other sectors of the economy."

The State Committee for Science and Technology has announced the most important projects within the new state programme: production of optoelectronic technologies

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Overall, the state programme includes seventy-five projects, aimed at new production in construction, engineering, chemistry, medicine, energy, agriculture and other spheres. The country should launch over seventy high-yield production facilities by 2020, focused on exports, while about 9,000 new jobs are planned.

as the basis of thermal-imaging laser systems, at Minsk's Vavilov Plant; the introduction of new chip manufacturing technology, at Integral; production of small diesel engines, at Minsk's Motor Plant; construction of a battery factory in the Brest Region; and of a new nitrogen complex at Grodno Azot. Meanwhile, the Institute of Microbiology will pilot production of enzymes for making pharmaceutical substances and the latest diagnostic tools.



ALEXANDER STADUB

Country's military industry speaks for itself

By Sergey Sechin

May will see Minsk host *MI-LEX-2017* International Exhibition of Arms and Military Machinery, the eighth such forum, attracting all those interested in military technologies

Representatives of the State Military-Industrial Committee promise to surprise visitors, notes Chairman

Sergey Gurulev, telling us, "We're already launching serial production of lightly-armoured vehicles for various purposes and of various classes, for radar-location, surveillance and firing. Some will be on show at *MI-LEX* and will feature at the parade of Minsk Garrison troops, honouring Independence Day."

Mr. Gurulev is especially proud of the 'Caiman' armoured vehicle, designed to take part in reconnaissance and sabotage operations, as well as responding to emergency situations. About 90 percent of its components are Belarus-manufactured and it features two types of machine gun (installed on the base chassis), as well as a grenade launcher, satellite communication and a remotely controlled module. Tests are scheduled for February and March and, back in December 2016, its performance received praise from famous Swedish actor Dolph Lundgren, who took a drive in the 'Caiman'.

Belarus' own multiple-launch rocket system, 'Polonez', is among last year's military-industrial innovations. Mr. Gurulev explains, "This year, we'll increase the shooting distance of the rocket system from 200km to 300km, with 85 percent of components produced locally."

The State Military-Industrial Committee has presented a line-up of the latest radar-location stations and electronic warfare devices, as well as improved armour and a unique IP-telephone for use in the field. Close interaction between the science and military-industrial sector confirms the image of Belarus as a country with a high level of intellectual capital.

Millions of people seen in stadiums, sport gyms, and on running machines

Major campaign to battle bad habits began in 1990s in Belarus

By Irina Svirko

All ministries and departments have been involved in the national campaign to promote physical culture and sports, as detailed in the five-year programme for socio-economic development and in the national strategy for sustainable development. Much has now become government policy, encouraging healthy living through involvement in sports, giving up bad habits, healthy eating and preventive medicine.

One in five Belarusians take regular physical activity, and the target is ‘one in four’ by 2020. It seems highly likely that we’ll meet the goal, having thousands of new and upgraded stadiums, offering ice rinks, cycle tracks, roller tracks and various pitches and courts for games. There is even an area for parkour in Minsk.

Over the past twenty years, Belarus has built about twenty ice palaces, and thousands of amateurs countrywide now play ice hockey. The Night Hockey League, and Minsk Ice Hockey Amateur Championship, the Amateur Hockey League, and the ‘Golden Puck’ tournament have



proven popular, as have various other Republican competitions.

The country has also revived School Olympics in each district, and Minsk hosts a winter swimming championship. This year, Russians from Orel, Ivanovo and other cities took part.

Sports holidays have been traditional in Minsk and across other cities, dedicated to Victory Day and Independence Day, on July 3rd. On

these days, the centre of the capital becomes a huge stadium, filled equally with athletes and spectators.

Belarus is seeing a huge trend for running, with a great many races held annually; Minsk’s international half marathon is among them. ‘Follow-Minsk’ group, on social networks, allows members to receive advice from professional athletes, who encourage would-be joggers. Hundreds of people run in city parks and school

stadiums in the evenings.

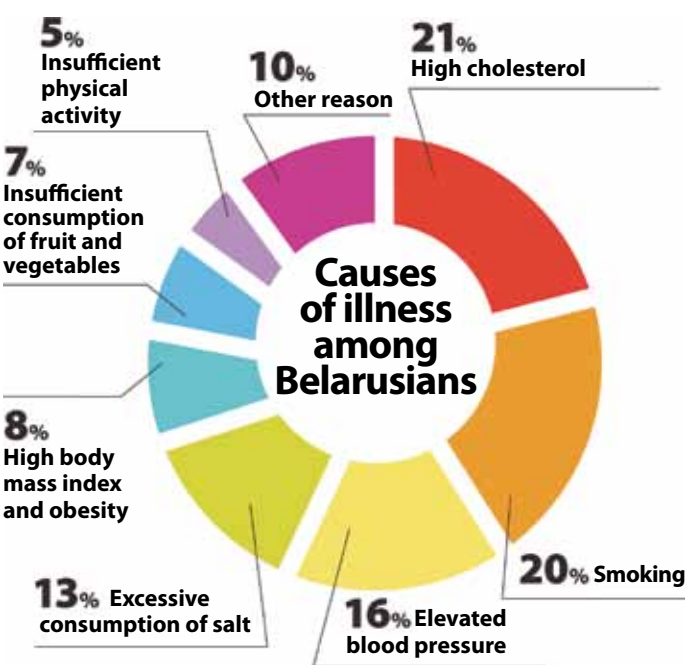
Since 2009, Minsk authorities have been encouraging the capital in being ‘bike-friendly’, promoting a healthy lifestyle, easing the strain on public transport and improving the urban ecological environment. There are 200km of cycle tracks in Minsk, with 600km planned. Pavements are often divided into pedestrian and cycle sections.

“Just 1 percent of Minsk’s bike

to work, however,” says Yuri Vazhnik, Chairman of the Board of the Belarusian Transport Association. “Statistics are encouraging though, since the number of cyclists in Belarus has tripled over the past five years.”

‘Attacks’ on bad habits are occurring on all fronts, with people responding to surveys which show that the main reason for early death in men is an unhealthy lifestyle. About one-third of the adult population smokes, with the highest percentage among young people and the middle-aged. Alcohol consumption is also quite high, at over ten litres per capita annually.

Belarus has banned tobacco advertising, with cigarettes no longer displayed in shops: customers are rather given a catalogue-list. For several years, drinking beer on the street has been banned, and it’s forbidden to sell alcohol or cigarettes online. The Interior Ministry recently suggested legislating that alcohol be sold only to people over the age of 21 years. Public opinion polls show that 75 percent of the population supports tougher anti-tobacco and anti-alcohol campaigns.



Darya Domracheva's online store

A good dress is an invitation card

By Semen Bondarev

Our famous biathlete Darya Domracheva did not fade into the shadows after the birth of her daughter. After a short break, she began training and even performed at World Cup stages. Meanwhile, she has also worked on a treat for her fans and opened her own online shop selling clothes and souvenirs.

“I hope that wearing a t-shirt or item of clothing with the biathlon print will en-

courage the wearer to push themselves to run one more kilometre, setting small personal goals, or finally buying that gym membership. Sport becomes much more pleasant if you’re wearing something you feel confident in,” the athlete said.

Describing the story behind the idea, Darya recollects how she grew up in a family of architects, “Since childhood my parents instilled a love of creativity in me. I’ve always liked to invent things, to create, to design in a broad sense. I wanted to add a spe-

cial zest and individual features to sports outfits which I wear most of the time. In addition, it was important for me to think up something that could motivate people to exercise.”

During the creation of the clothing collection she was inspired by her love of biathlon and sports style. “I have no special training, but, with a little knowledge of the computer software, I learned how to reach a desirable result. It helped me to explain ideas to designers.”

It is curious that for shoot-

ings of the catalogue, Darya invited not professional models, but her fans. The biathlete has a firm belief that those who are beautiful inside are beautiful outside. Interestingly, everything produced for the online shop is made in Belarus. Darya Domracheva is not only patriotic on the ski track, “It was important for me to show to Belarus and the rest of the world that with the proper approach and attention to detail, it is possible to create quality items with prints that don’t disappear after two washes, even in Belarus.”

The city of Polotsk changing its status

By Yelena Begunova

Country’s oldest city celebrates new status

The *Polotsk — Youth Capital of the Republic of Belarus 2017* Republican holiday gathered thousands of guests from around the country, including numerous foreign tourists. Celebrations marked the transfer of the honorary title to the city, from Baranovichi. Celebrations were evident all around the city: at St. Sophia’s Cathedral, at Boris’ stone, at the Jesuit Collegium, at the Lutheran Church, at monuments to Vseslav the Magician, Francysk Skaryna, and the letter ‘Ź’, and at St. Yevfrosiniya’s Monastery. Every street was alive with excitement.

Guests had much to see, with Polotsk-Steklovokno’s Palace of Culture hosting the opening ceremony of the holiday, with young entrepreneurs and scientists from the Vitebsk Region receiving awards. Moreover, the *Keeping the Theme: Recharge!* youth project was launched.

Dozens of interesting projects for young boys and girls have begun in the Polotsk District, while the *Together We Are Belarus!* forum has gathered members of educational institutions, as well as those from enterprises and organisations around the city and the country, suggesting creative ideas. Polotsk will be a major venue for campaigns through 2017.

Princess Rogneda was broad-shouldered and blue-eyed

The medieval princess' image in cinema and memory is woven from myth and legend. To distinguish between fact and fiction, our *MT* reporter visited Zaslavl (not far from Minsk) — where Prince Vladimir's wife spent her last days.

By Vasily Malashenkov

Murder attempt by jealous wife

Rogneda was sent to Zaslavl after her attempt to kill the sleeping Vladimir. This scene was shown in Andrey Kravchuk's blockbuster film about the royal couple. However, the situation was not exactly true to life. "The Prince sent Rogneda to Zaslavl after his baptism as his conversion meant he was only allowed to live with one wife - the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor, explained Tatiana Goranskaya, who has worked as a senior research officer at Zaslavl's Museum of Folk Craft for many years. "When his new wife — Princess Anna — was on her way to Kiev, Rogneda tried to kill Vladimir because of her jealousy. Their son Iziaslav was about six years old. The boy tried to protect his mother from his father and even managed to pick up a sword. His new faith stopped Vladimir from executing them both, so, he decided to send his wife and son to Rogneda's native Polotsk lands. In the film, this event is shown as happening before Iziaslav's birth."

Vladimir bestowed fiefdoms to his wives and sons: these were outposts on borders of Kiev. Scientists are aware of over a dozen such settlements, some of them named after his sons. Zaslavl, for example, takes



Shot from the film



Cross erected in Zamechek, a possible place of Rogneda's tomb

its name from Iziaslav — Rogneda's son. The city was built specially for them. Vladimir offered the proud princess the opportunity to marry any of his noble warriors, but she refused and went to her new home alone with the child.

Rogneda was guarded by mercenaries against possible suitors. Archaeologists have unearthed fragments of several sashes of noble Hungarian knights. The tradition of hiring them (not only Vikings — as featured in the film) existed before Vladimir's ruling.

Pagan or Christian?

In the film, Rogneda's father is a Viking. The characters speak in the language of Vikings. Rogvold was foreign but we have yet to confirm whether he was Scandinavian. This is a disputed issue. If it was true, he probably left his homeland because of his faith as most Vikings were pagans. Christianity was disapproved of. Rogneda may have

been a Christian, confirmed by her desire to marry Yaropolk: historians believe that shortly before death, Vladimir's brother was going to be baptised. In Zaslavl, the princess became a nun which may also indicate her early baptism.

Was it true love?

Rogneda learned to ride a horse and hold a sword from childhood. She was effectively able to stop a galloping horse and enter a burning house. "The Princess of Polotsk was not a fragile woman. She was most likely broad-shouldered and muscular," Ms. Goranskaya says. "Although, apparently, the real Rogneda was also blue-eyed and blonde — like the actress Alexandra Bortich who played her character."

It's not yet clear whether the scene of violence over Rogneda is true: when Vladimir — after the capture of Polotsk — abused the princess in the presence of his



The River Knyaginka is named after the proud Polotsk princess

soldiers and her parents. This story is taken from the more recent annals which should not be trusted too much. It's unknown whether Vladimir and Rogneda loved each other. There is also no evidence that the princess bore him several more children.

Unknown tomb

According to legend, Rogneda was buried in Zaslavl. However, nobody knows the exact place. There is a story that the princess' grave is situated near the Transfiguration Church. The local stone cross is indeed very old, but historians believe that the remains are not buried there but on Zamechek (Zamchishche) — the oldest Zaslavl settlement.

Historian Yuri Zayats unearthed the remains of a strong two-storey house there, which used expensive utensils and other household items from the Byzantium period. It is likely that, Rogneda and Iziaslav lived there. A stone cross, erected

in the early 1990s, is situated in the middle of the settlement. Local people call it the princess' grave.

Miraculous tears

It is believed that two rivers — Knyaginka and Chernitsa — are named after Rogneda in Zaslavl. The first name indicates the woman's nobility and the second stands for her monasticism. The town has the Chernaya (Black) Mountain: it was previously used as a house for pagans but a monastery was later built there. People say it was constructed specially for Rogneda, but no excavations have confirmed the rumour. After her death, the monastery was virtually 'swallowed' by the lake. After the princess' death, several springs miraculously emerged near Zaslavl — called 'Rogneda's tears'. Before the revolution, the town was a health resort — visited by noble ladies and gentlemen to recuperate and gain vitality from the miraculous water.

5G paving its way to a more connected future

Even though it does not even exist yet as a working system, 5G is this year's hot topic at the Mobile World Congress technology show in Barcelona

It is the next generation wireless network for smartphones and connected gadgets, due to be rolled out over the next few years to give faster download speeds and revolutionise our everyday technology:

Matt Branda, Director of 5G Technical Marketing with Qualcomm, notes, "5G is not just going to be about faster speeds, but it is going to let mobile networks connect to a whole range of industries, devices

and services. Not only is it going to connect people to each other but also connect the world around us. So whether it's vehicles, drones, healthcare — they are all going to be connected by this 5G network."

Lower latency

Speed of data transmissions is the crucial element — delays are known in the technology world as latency.

Bruno Jacobfeuerborn,



A man tries out VR glasses at the Telefonica stand during the Mobile World Congress

Chief Technology Officer with Deutsche Telekom, explained to Euronews: "5G is about latency, managing latency, we can promise just 25 or 10 milliseconds. Second: ultra-high broadband, 10 gigabits per second, and the last factor is having massive Internet of Things, what means bil-

lions of senders."

Tech experts predict it will allow for developments like virtual reality experiences that are much closer to real time and even artificial intelligence, though in the future hyper-connected world the hope is humans will still be in charge.

Remote surgery

Roger Cheng, Executive Editor of the *CNET* magazine and website, explains, "We are talking about real time connection. The best example someone has given to me is a surgeon performing a surgery in one country with robotic hands in another country."

Cuba's annual Cigar Festival overshadowed by poor weather and Trump presidency

Cuba is showcasing one of the products it is most famous for

The island's annual Cigar Festival draws hundreds of buyers from around the world to party and tour plantations and factories. Cuban officials say demand is soaring, even as a combination of poorly timed rains and drought have hit tobacco crop yields over the past couple of years.

Luis Sanchez-Harguindey, co-president of Habanos SA, which distributes and exports cigars on behalf of the Cuban government, explained, "The last two years have not been good, but it has not only affected us. It has affected all producers right around the Caribbean. This year though has been fantastic and despite the poor weather conditions, we have been able to con-



tinue to increase our business."

Sales of Cuban cigars rose 5 percent last year to the equivalent of 419 million Euros. Habanos, which makes brands including Cohiba, Monte Cristo and Romeo y Julieta, said it expects moderate

sales growth this year as it continues to tap the Middle East, Asia and other new markets.

Political uncertainty

Cuba was counting on a boost in sales to the United States —

the world's biggest cigar market — after President Barack Obama opened up relations with the country though he was not able to end Washington's half-century trade embargo, but the election of Donald Trump has cast doubt over that. Last October, the Obama administration removed limits on the amount of cigars American travellers could bring home.

Habanos Vice President of Development Javier Terrés said this made little difference to overall sales but it would help brand recognition in the United States. Wholesale shipments there would require the US Congress to lift the embargo, a move that looks uncertain under Trump, who has threatened to reverse the detente.

Saudi Arabia's oil price target revealed

Saudi Arabia wants crude oil prices to rise to around \$60 a barrel this year

Around \$60 is the level the Saudis and their Gulf allies — the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Qatar — believe would encourage investment in new fields but not lead to a jump in output by US shale oil producers.

An agreement last November by OPEC and other major producers to pump less pushed up prices by \$10 a barrel and appears to be holding, but analysts expect benchmark Brent crude to be short of \$60 this year, averaging \$57.50 dollars a barrel. In recent weeks it has been trading around \$56 a barrel. The problem for the traditional producers like Saudi Arabia is that the break-even price for US shale oil producers fell last year to an average of \$35 per barrel, according to a report from consultancy Rystad Energy issued earlier this month.

US shale producers started to step up production again when crude prices first topped \$50 a barrel in May 2016.

SpaceX to send first tourists around the Moon

SpaceX is to launch a tourist trip around the Moon next year

The CEO of Space Exploration Technologies Elon Musk says the two paying customer trip will use a space ship currently under development for NASA astronauts. The launch of the first privately funded tourist flight beyond the orbit of the International Space Station is tentatively targeted for late 2018.



The journey will circumnavigate the Moon in the first 'human mission' since the Apollo 17 launch in 1972. It's not being revealed who the customers are or how much they will pay to fly on the week-long mission but apparently not from Hollywood.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Artistic truth obviously tolerates no falsehoods

Exhibition of famous Belarusian artist Svyatoslav Fedorenko — *My Belarus: Annals of an Era* — showcased at Minsk's Mikhail Savitsky Art Gallery

By Veniamin Mikheev

The exhibition featured works from collections at the National Art Museum of Belarus, the Yakub Kolas Literary-Memorial Museum, the Museum of Belarusian Literary History and the Great Patriotic War History Museum. Over eighty pieces are on display, with most painted since the 1970s.

Last year, the artist celebrated his 70th birthday. His thematic paintings, portraits and landscapes use installation methods and realism, while giving us a chronicle of Belarusian history. Using multi-figure compositions, the author compares events from various times and eras. His main characters are the outstanding figures of Belarusian culture and history — such as Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya, Francysk Skaryna, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Kastus Kalinovsky, Yanka Kupala, and Maxim Bogdanovich. The painter's images stand out for their deep psychological insight, achieved via a subdued colour palette.

“Svyatoslav Fedorenko is full of creative drive, even now. The present show demonstrates his energy, temperament and potential,” notes the Deputy Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Artists, Leonid Khobotov. “Mr. Fedorenko thinks on a major scale, touching upon acute topics.”

For the exhibition at the Mikhail Savitsky Art Gallery, pictures were collected from many museums. Mr. Fedorenko's show is a pictorial chronicle.

“A quarter of a century ago, the Soviet Union collapsed and, simultaneously, socialistic realism ceased to exist as an art form. However, from the 2000s, a new wave of social art has been revived. Mr. Fedorenko demonstrates the strength of this style and the powerful school of Soviet art,” underlines art critic Kirill Melnik.

Speaking of his views on art, in



Svyatoslav Fedorenko believes it's his duty to write a picture about his father

an exclusive interview, Mr. Fedorenko tells us:

I was born in Mogilev and my father was my first teacher of painting. He did not simply show me how to work with gouache and watercolours but how to hold brushes and taught me how to understand the beauty of our native land. I remember making sculptures from clay, which I collected from the bank of the River Dnieper. Art penetrated my life naturally; I can assert that I had no hesitation in choosing my profession. After my fifth year at school, my father took me to Moscow, where I entered the secondary art school at the Surikov Institute. The Tretyakov Gallery was situated across the street and we were allowed to enter free of charge, so I spent a lot of time there. Vasily Surikov was my favourite painter.

You graduated from the Belarusian State Theatre and Art Institute and began lecturing at Akhremchik Gymnasium-College of Arts. How many artists have you mentored?

I have a single record in my employment book: I devoted 39 years

to teaching. I had many pupils — including some well-known masters, such as Rygor Sitnitsa, Andrey Smolyak and Oksana Arakcheeva. Some of my former pupils — who are now established artists — have brought their children to me to study the basics of realism. These children



have also become painters. I'm not lecturing any more but I still follow 'a strict schedule', as was common for me for two decades. I wake up at half past five in the morning but go to my workshop now rather than to the college. I fully devote myself to my creativity.

You've created many works within your *Legends of Belarus* cycle, featuring Yevfrosiniya Polots-

kaya, Francysk Skaryna, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Kastus Kalinovsky, Yanka Kupala, and Maxim Bogdanovich...

These people are the 'cement' holding together the nation, giving stability to the state and focusing on its people. Before painting, I immerse myself into the material. If I'm drawing a writer's portrait, I study their creativity. For a thinker, I try to understand their philosophical views. This is necessary to ensure artistic truth.

Your series of Chernobyl-related works is a separate and bright page in your artistry. It's a challenging topic but certainly important. We must preserve the memory of those who died, helping to tackle the tragedy. Did you experience Chernobyl personally?

As a teacher, I took my pupils to cities across the Soviet Union. We visited museums and galleries, combining leisure and practice. On April 26th, 1986, when the nuclear plant exploded, we were in Kiev. As an artist, I felt the impact of being close



Works at exhibition

to the epicentre of the tragic event. Happily, we didn't suffer physically ourselves, but many people we knew were affected. I felt that I could and should tell their stories, so I later visited the Belarusian regions caught under Chernobyl's black wing. I read many accounts from liquidators and tried to imagine whether I would have been able to be as brave. As a result, my series appeared — focusing on the heroism of ordinary people.

Your *Virgin's Cover, On Reactor* pictures use a great deal of yellow, equating with anxiety.

This colour is known as strontium yellow. Do you see the link? It was no coincidence I thought, that the name of the paint was that of the deadly element.

The exhibition showcases paintings featuring Minsk...

Yes, one is 'Spring of Release', depicting the post-war years, in Minsk. I wished to show people in love with their city, raising it from the ruins and healing its wounds. It shows various moods. Despite all hardships, people are glowing with happiness. The picture demonstrates that the war has ended, we've endured, and are now building a brighter future.

Place for Belarusian stand already booked

By Vladimir Mikhailov

Poland invites Belarus to take part in international book fair, to be held in Warsaw in late May

The official invitation from the organisers of the event has been given to the Information Minister, Lilia Ananich, by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of

Poland to Belarus, Konrad Pawlik. The Warsaw Book Fair is Poland's largest event. Mr. Pawlik expresses confidence that the Belarusian stand will occupy an important place at the fair, saying, “We're convinced that Belarus' participation will be very successful: a landmark, as is fitting in this year of celebrating the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing.”

According to the diplomat, Poland was pleased with its participation in the 24th Minsk International Book Fair in February. This forum became an important event for Polish publishers and authors, presenting more than 200 editions, to great interest.

Ms. Ananich is convinced that Belarus' participation in the Warsaw Book Fair will help develop bi-

lateral relations. The two sides are keen to plan an intense programme.

Ms. Ananich and Mr. Pawlik have discussed Belarusian-Polish collaboration in sharing information, saying that residents of both countries are interested in keeping abreast of news in the other. Polish audiences have access to the Belarus 24 TV channel and Poland is keen to see Polish TV channels broadcast

in Belarus, particularly the Kultura (Culture) channel. Participants of the meeting have expressed interest in establishing interaction between television companies.

It's hoped that Poland will sign an inter-governmental agreement on co-operation regarding printing and information. Ms. Ananich notes that this would send a good signal to the media sphere.

Genre is enjoying a renaissance

By Irina Svirko

Belarusian State Philharmonic soloists Natalia Kotova and Valery Borovikov have been working together for almost two decades. As the leading Belarusian pianist duet, their concerts are well known domestically and abroad. Here, they tell us about their four handed performances.

A duo relies on kinship and subtle interaction of souls...

Natalia: As a rule, educational establishments train pianists as solo performers but we have to share the music we play and audiences' attention. This is difficult but pleasant. It's interesting to enjoy this artistic relationship and co-operation. As in any other ensemble, participants must understand each other and work like a family. You'll only endure if you're united in your aims.

Valery: It's very important not to blindly follow principles — as if you understand nothing. You need to make concessions to your partner, although the latter might later realise their mistake. Some arguments aren't worth having. It's better to enjoy respect and understanding, professionally and personally. Otherwise, it will be reflected in your music and your duet will fail. This is vital, even where both soloists are excellent performers.

Piano duets are always enchanting, though it's rare that true masters join forces in this way



Pianists Natalia Kotova and Valery Borovikov have played as a duet for almost twenty years

Natalia joined the duo immediately after graduating from the Conservatory, while Valery was already quite an experienced soloist. Did you manage to quickly find a common language?

Valery: Yes, we did. Knowing many other duos, this was truly a rare case. In the beginning, we often conceded to each other, as was correct.

However, as time passed, we were able to express ourselves more frankly, having come to an understanding.

Natalia: There's been a piano duet at the Philharmonic since 1980. Valery Borovikov is one of its founders and a permanent member. Performers and composers worldwide admire his transcriptions for two pianos. When I joined this

small team, in 1998, I kept my eyes and ears open, to absorb everything new. I've never experienced rejection; we work in harmony. Without it, we wouldn't have managed to continue for so many years.

Don't you ever argue when offering feedback?

Valery: Of course, we discuss professional issues but never cross the borders of

politeness. I wouldn't say we quarrel; rather, we try to find the right solutions together, exchanging impressions after concerts. We avoid petty squabbles. Everyone knows what has happened on stage, so there's no need to stir up bad feeling. We learn from our mistakes, and move on.

You spend all day together — at rehearsals, con-

certs and during tours. Do your families feel jealousy?

Natalia: It's our job and everyone understands this. Our duo lacks conflict and our families are tolerant.

You give concerts at the Philharmonic — playing two pianos simultaneously. You also often tour small towns, where local halls offer a single, old piano...

Natalia: It's true. We tour the country often and this situation does occur. Definitely, two pianos are better, as audiences can enjoy a more spectacular show. It's not always convenient to play a single piano with four hands, but it's possible. We sometimes have to play on instruments of not the best quality but we never shy away from this. Meeting with audiences is the main part of our work, spreading our love of music. Our mission is to enchant people with music, and to show them how to enjoy it. Accordingly, we choose programmes to suit the audience: children, young people or adults. We're delighted to enjoy a warm response; our concerts are usually received enthusiastically.

Valery: Actually, piano duets are extremely popular today. There's probably not a single musical school without one or two such ensembles. Teachers and students alike play. There's an increasing number of touring duets too, as the genre is enjoying a renaissance.

All continents under circus top

Minsk International Circus Festival scheduled for September

By Natalia Ivanova

"We've decided to follow the principle of the Olympics, with all continents represented in Minsk," states the Belarusian State Circus' Artistic Director, Vytautas Grigalyunas. "We're already negotiating with various countries. Pleasingly, many are speaking of our circus with admiration, accepting invitations eagerly."

It's not yet decided who will represent our country at the festival. A contest has been announced among artistes, to make the final decision. Organisers are convinced that only the worthiest will perform, since Belaru-

sians will be judged by an international jury, as well as a public jury. Several legendary artistes of global fame have already agreed to participate.

The public jury will comprise top officials and celebrities, with the latter looking at the show with 'amateur eyes'. Recognition will take the form of the Audience's Sympathy Award and a prize given by the children's jury, with gold, silver and bronze awards for solo performers and those in groups.

The Belarusian State Circus recently launched a new programme: *Show of Giant Fountains: An Amazing City*. Belarusian audiences enjoyed a similar



New circus programme

show two years ago, as the artistic director of the project, Lada Sarnatskaya (also known as clown Dolly), reminds us. She asserts that the programme has undergone significant change, including a breath-taking performance, without safety net, from Oleg Spigin, with his balancing

act on a ladder. There are also acrobats who perform on a trampoline, under pouring rain. Interestingly, most performances are associated with water. Overall, the programme includes over six hundred colourful fountains, with laser installations enhancing the visual effects.

Expertise in Yakub Kolas' rich legacy

By Olga Korneeva

Visitors to Yakub Kolas State Literary Memorial Museum take a quiz on their knowledge of Yakub Kolas' legacy, for International Mother Language Day

Ten Points for Kolas! was held at the museum, involving a dictation exercise based on Yakub Kolas' works. Participants had to decide from which work the extract is taken, as well as recording the dictation correctly. Those with top marks received free souvenirs from the museum.

People's Poet of Belarus Yakub Kolas devoted his life to promoting domestic culture, helping found our contemporary Belarusian language and literature. Several months before his death, the poet wrote his famous appeal, on the critical state of the Belarusian language, saying: 'Language is our nation's greatest spiritual wealth. It reflects the history of the nation, its labour, its struggle, its grief and joy, its nature, its love and anger.'

Three medals over three days

Three various medals earned by Belarusian track-and-field athletes at European Athletics Indoor Championship, held in Belgrade

By Semen Bondarev

On the first day of the championship, shot putter Yulia Leontyuk claimed bronze, sending the shot 18.32m in her first attempt. Another Belarusian shot putter, Alena Dubitskaya, was ranked 7th. The same day, Alina Talay won silver in the 60m hurdles.

Alina was in the lead for a long time and could have won, but lost to her long-term rival Cindy Rohleder, of Germany. "I wanted to defend my European championship title, but am pleased with silver. This year, I changed coaches, so it takes time to see results. I'm happy to have claimed a medal," noted Alina, speaking after the race. In the semi-finals, Ms. Talay



Alina Talay (second on the right) in final race



Pavel Seliverstov (R)

showed her best time among all entrants (7.86 seconds).

High jumper Pavel Seliverstov, 20, brought the third medal for Belar-

rus. In the finals, Pavel was close to clearing 2.30m but knocked off the bar, leaving him with a jump of 2.27m — enough for bronze.

This season, Pavel Seliverstov's best result was 2.32m, on February 11th, at the tournament in Czech Trinec.

In the medals standings for the 2017 Europe Winter Championship, Belarus is ranked 17th, with three medals.



Stanislav Bozhkov's victorious finish

Double success in international race

Minsk bicycle club celebrates debut win of season, capturing first place in team standings in first category race — La Tropicale Amissa Bongo — in African Gabon

By Kirill Karin

The brilliant victory in the third — 'royal' — stage of the international multi-day bicycle race of the first category, La Tropicale Amissa Bongo, in Gabon, brought a yellow shirt to Stanislav Bozhkov, who rides for Minsk's continental team. Fellow team member Eduard Vorganov

finished among the top three.

After two consecutive third places, the Minsk cyclists began the third, longest and most difficult stage of the Tour of Gabon by taking the lead from the very start. Their tactical team work in the last kilometres, and especially at the finish line, resulted in double success: Stanislav Bozhkov won the sprint, ahead of

experienced French Thomas Voeckler, while Eduard Vorganov finished third. Second place went to Algerian Abderrahmane Mansouri, while the Frenchman came fourth.

After three stages, the Minsk club leads in the team standings of the Gabonese race, while Stanislav Bozhkov is ranked first in the multi-day competition.

Results of the season finally summed up

By Igor Svitov

Maxim Gustik earns silver in Aerials World Cup finals in Moscow

In the qualification round, Gustik, as a leading Belarusian team member, performed best. Sadly, in the finals, his jump was less complex than that of his rival from China, Hang Zhou, leaving him with 110.97 points, behind Hang Zhou with 125.22. Third place went to Maxim Burov of Russia. Meanwhile, Stanislav Gladchenko of Belarus was placed 20th in the final standings and Pavel Dik, finished 25th.

In the World Cup overall standings, first place among the men is occupied by Chinese Guangpu Qi (boasting 400 points), followed by



Maxim Gustik

Mac Bohonnon of the USA (328) and Anton Kushnir of Belarus (308 points). Kushnir, a Sochi Olympic champion, has won three stages in aerials this season but failed to take part in the competition at Raubichi Sports Complex and that held in Moscow because of health problems. Maxim Gustik earned 275 points and was ranked fifth.

Zealously defending athletes' interests

By Alexey Grishin

2012 London Olympic rhythmic gymnastic bronze medallist Lyubov Cherkashina is elected President of Athletes Commission, within International Gymnastics Federation

Lyubov Cherkashina has replaced Jani Tanskanen, who held the post for seven years. The world champion in gymnastics, Mr. Tanskanen, was recently elected to the FIG Technical Commission, so decided to resign.



Lyubov Cherkashina

"For the past seven years, I've been doing everything possible to ensure athletes' voices have been heard in the FIG. The interests of sportsmen are close to my heart, being the most important aspect of my new position as a member of the Technical Committee. I congratulate Lyubov on her election and am quite sure that she'll zealously defend the interests of athletes," he said.

Ms. Cherkashina thanked the Athletes Commission of International Gymnastics Federation (FIG) for their trust in her, saying, "I want to thank Jani for his excellent work. He's demonstrated how it's necessary to protect the interests of athletes at the highest level. I'd also like to thank Committee members for electing me and for their support. I'll use all my powers to promote gymnastics; it's the most beautiful sport in the world."

Lyubov Cherkashina will be fulfilling the duties of the president until the next elections of the Athletes Commission that are due to take place wither in December 2017 or in early January 2018.



Minsk State Linguistic University hosts *Miss MSLU 2017* contest

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS
20 Lenin Street
Until 12th March. *The Age of Anton Barkhatkov* Until 13th March. Exhibition of Yulia Gaidukova's pictorial works: *Adoration of the Simple* Until 14th March. *Byalynitsky-Birulya's Memorial Landscapes* Until 16th April. *Radziwills: Fates of the Country and the Family*

NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF BELARUS
12 Karl Marx Street
Until 9th April. Vladimir Mulyavin: *Heritage of Great Maestro* Until 9th April. *MirRazh* Until 16th April. Interactive exhibition: *Anatomy of Miracle* Until 1st June 2017. *From Romanian Dinary to Belarusian Rouble*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS
116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st March. *Captured Moments* Until 31st May. Exhibition of wax figures: *Miraculous Travel*

TSEKH
16 Oktyabrskaya Street
Until 19th March. *Music without Borders*

MUSEUM OF MODERN BELARUSIAN STATE
38 Karl Marx Street
Until 31st March. *Belarus and China: 25 Years of Successful Co-operation*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF MODERN ARTS
47 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 28th March. *Loshitsa Diary*

EXHIBITION HALL OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM
9A Bogdanovich Street
Until 13th March. *Noisy Feathered Rainbow*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY
117 Kazinets Street
Until 12th March. *Birds in Winter*

MUSEUM OF THEATRICAL AND MUSICAL CULTURE HISTORY
5 Muzykalny Lane
Until 24th March. *Guitars of Past Epoch*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN FOLK ART
Raubichi village
Until 30th April. *Wedding of Western Polesie*

LOSHITSA ESTATE
8 Chizhevsky Lane
Until 1st May. *Embroidered Beauty*

MUSEUM OF MINSK CITY HISTORY
2A Gertsen Street
Until 31st. March. *Minsk's Horse Railway*

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THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE
1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
09 and 10.03. Nutcracker, or Another Christmas Story 11.03. Queen of Spades 12.03. Laurencia 14.03. The Tsar's Bride 15.03. Spartacus 16.03. Iolanthe

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE
7 Engels Street
09.03. Abduction of Europe, or Ursula Radziwill Theatre 10.03. Two Souls 11.03. People of the Marshes 12.03. Office 14.03. The Black Lady of Nesvich 15.03. School of Taxpayers 16.03. The Seagull

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE
5 Volodarsky Street
09 and 15.03. Testosterone 10.03. Lady for a Day; He and She 11.03. Bridegrooms 12.03. Singer 14.03. Taming of the Shrew 15.03. Husband Leaving Wife 16.03. Caught in the Net

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS
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BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE
44 Myasnikov Street
14.03. Blue Cameo 15.03. True Story of Lieutenant Rzhevsky 16.03. Once in Chicago

MODERN ARTS THEATRE
5 Oktyabrskaya Street
11.03. Mad Triangle

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA
44 Kropotkin Street
09.03. Adel 10.03. Grandfather 11.03. White Angle with Black Wings 12.03. Golden Heart; Feint-Kruaze 14.03. Circles of Paradise 15.03. This Is Life 16.03. Everything Is She

BELARUSIAN REPUBLICAN YOUNG SPECTATOR'S THEATRE
26 Engels Street
10.03. Little Tenderness 11.03. Thumbelina 12.03. Road to Bethlehem 15.03. An Intimidated Apostle 16.03. Belarusian Vaudevilles

BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE
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10.03. Interview with Witches 11.03. Puss in Boots 12.03. Aladdin and His Magic Lamp

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