

Special issue of *The Minsk Times* devoted to Ice Hockey World Championship 2014

# One plus three

By Igor Sokolov

**Ready for World Championship, three new economy class hotels to open by April 1st, joining Sport Time Hotel, which launched last December: all owned by Europe Hotel**

"In spite of all four hotels being united under one brand, each has its own style. The Sport Time Hotel is designed to welcome athletes while the hotel on Oleg Koshevoy Street is to be called East Time, catering to foreign tourists. The hotel on Kuprevich Street is to be called IT



Hotel complex near headquarters of National Olympic Committee in Minsk

Time, while that on Korzhenevsky Street will be Hold Time," explains the Director of Europe Hotel, Oleg Yermola.

Each hotel should receive demand within its own niche while all will benefit from online booking. Sport Time Hotel is already about 45

percent booked. "We need to work on improving the quality of our services and expanding our spectrum," notes Oleg Yermola. "The Belarusian capital is attractive to those arriving on business, as well as those attending sports events and or coming for traditional tourism."

# True children's art inspired by ice hockey

Visitors to Ice Hockey World Championship this May, in Minsk, may buy commemorative cards with children's drawings

By Sergey Smirnov

The *Children Draw Hockey* contest invited Belarusian youngsters to help promote the sport, as well as healthy living and a sense of patriotism, explains Lilia Ananich, the First Deputy Minister for Information, who chaired the jury for the competition. Children were asked to think of how we are preparing for the forthcoming championship, with the best works to be exhibited in fan-zones during the competition. The best 20 will also be made in commemorative cards, with information on Belarusian hockey players on the reverse.

In total, 452 drawings were submitted for the competition,



Competition jury chooses best works

from all regions of Belarus. Drawings and paintings were created in watercolour, gouache,

oils, ink, coloured pencils and pastels. The competition was judged in two age categories:



7-11 and 12-16. *On Ice*, by Polina Moiseenko, from the Krichev children's school of fine arts, won the younger age group, while Inga Aderikho, from the Vytoki national fine art studio, in Slutsk, took first place among older pupils with her *I Believe in You, Hockey Players of Belarus!*

Jury member Vitaly Ortyukh, who designed the Ice Hockey World Championship 'Volat' mascot, tells us, "Some pictures grab your attention immediately and inspire you to look closer. However, the first impression is the most important. All the pictures submitted bore a strong message, and a lot of energy, making it very difficult to choose our winners."

## Championship will be the best ever

President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko has promised that the forthcoming Ice Hockey World Championship in Minsk will be the best in the history of ice hockey. Mr. Lukashenko made this statement as he met with President of the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) and a member of the International Olympic Committee René Fasel, who's been to Minsk on a one-day visit.

Alexander Lukashenko noted that René Fasel made a great personal contribution to the preparation for the championship. "You visited Minsk many times, offered your advice and helped supervise the work," noted the President. He thanked Mr. Fasel and his colleagues for the huge amount of work and support provided to Belarus during this period. The President of Belarus also thanked Mr. Fasel for the courage that he and the International Ice Hockey Federation demonstrated in relation to Belarus and the World Championship in Minsk. Mr. Lukashenko noted that Minsk is ready for the Championship: the most advanced sports palaces were built to host the event; there are enough additional sports facilities where athletes can train at any time of the year; and the necessary infrastructure was created.

## Transportation to house at any time

By Igor Samoilov

**100 new buses and 50 trolleybuses will appear for the Ice Hockey World Championship, and during the Championship, capital transport will work also at night**

During the World Championship, special routes will be developed in Minsk, and a system of flexible transport support will be applied. "We already have the experience of other events. When sports, or other mass activities, have occurred, we have ensured that a certain quantity of buses concentrate near the venues in order to take people home and to transport them to the metro. Entertainment platforms, these so-called 'hospitality zones', will operate in Minsk during the world event. Activities in these areas will end at 2am to 3am. Therefore, bus and metro availability will be extended. We already do this during New Year's eve, Independence Day and other holidays, so transport workers are ready to work in such conditions," noted Igor Karpenko.

The representative from the Minsk City Executive Committee also said that 14 new hotels will be put into operation in Minsk for the Ice Hockey World Championship. Some of them are already built. "The remaining hotels should be put in commission by the end of March. Today, works on these objects are more active. It is planned that in April these hotels will work in test mode and, by the end of the month, they will be receiving visitors who have come for the championship," Mr. Karpenko noted.

# Postcard exchange campaign

By Svetlana Semenova

**On threshold of Ice Hockey World Championship, Belpochta (Belarusian Post) prepares special selection of stamps and postcards**

An international online project encouraging people to exchange postcards and stamps is becoming increasingly popular, with Belarus ranked 6th worldwide for its number of dispatches, among 230 countries with registered users. Already, over a million postcards have been sent from Belarus, promoting greater knowledge of our beautiful country: vital in our Year of Hospitality.

Belpochta has produced two new selections of cards and stamps



to encourage the campaign: up to five postcards can be sent at the same time, at a nominal tariff, so five cards and five artistic stamps are included in the selection.

Foreign participants in the project are sure to be interested in postcards dedicated to the Ice Hockey World Championship in Minsk. The special edition cards will be 20 percent cheaper than usual postcards, to encourage purchase.

# Payment at any time and in any place

By Sergey Smirnov

**Number of cash dispensers to increase, and hours of currency exchange offices' opening extended, during Ice Hockey World Championship**

The National Bank of Belarus is urging banks to increase access to payment terminals, cash dispensers and currency exchange offices during the Ice Hockey World Championship. "All these measures should be provided by the main bank of the country," asserts Lyudmila Stefanovich, the Head of the Department for Bank Payment Cards and Electronic Money Development at the National Bank of Belarus.

The National Bank recommends that banks analyse their number of

currency exchange offices, payment terminals and cash dispensers at Minsk's National Airport and near venues being used for the sporting championship, as well as at railway stations in Minsk and across regional centres. In addition, more facilities are needed at motorway service stations and at fuelling points located along the roads liable to carry fans travelling to the World Championship. Naturally, additional resources need to be directed towards keeping terminals stocked with cash and operating smoothly.

Ms. Stefanovich tells us that the National Bank, like the entire banking community, understands the importance of visitors being able to gain access to funds and use their banking cardse.