



Socio-political Weekly

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A moment in the match against the Romanian team which was confidently defeated by the Belarusian handballers — 32:22 — in the European Championship qualification

Belarusian handballers to once again take part in European Championship finals

Handball players of the Belarusian national team, after defeating Romania in an away match have ensured their sixth (in a row) ticket to the top tournament: in January 2018, Yuri Shevtsov's team will play in the final stage of the European Championship, due to take place in Croatia

Belarus will always meet its obligations

Military-political conditions, at the present time, in the CSTO zone have become even more intense. President of Belarus expressed the view at a meeting with the heads of the defence ministries of CSTO member states.

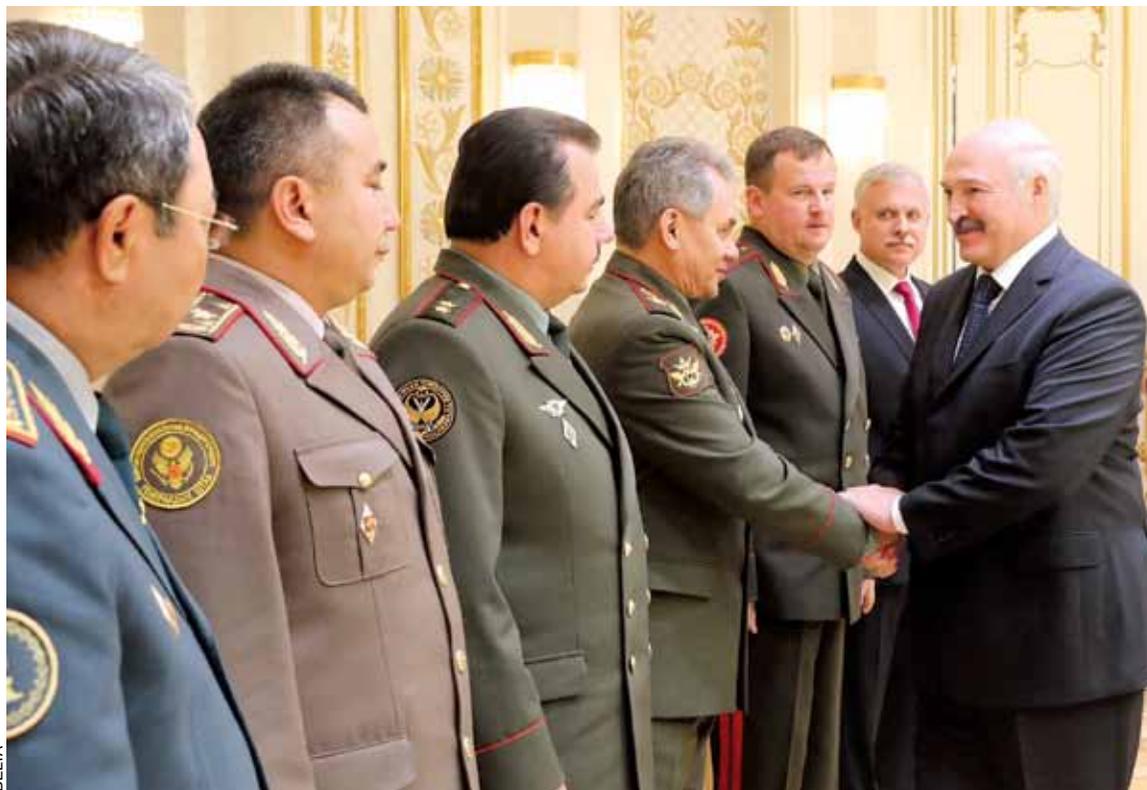
By Vasily Kharitonov

Welcoming visitors, the President of Belarus drew attention to the fact that this year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Collective Security Treaty and the 15th anniversary of the formation of the organisation. “During these years, military-political conditions in the zone of CSTO responsibility cannot be called quiet. At the present time, it is even more problematic,” the President said. “You are well informed on the issues occurring in regions of collective security. I am sure that our estimations of today’s threat levels in various areas of safety coincide.”

According to Alexander Lukashenko, in these conditions, Belarus attaches special significance to the work of the authorised bodies of the CSTO. He hopes that the current session of the Defence Council of Ministers will promote the strengthening of security in our states.

The President reminded the group that when Belarus accepted the Chairmanship of the Council of Collective Security, many initiatives, including in the military sphere, were put forward. Measures for the practical implementation of a Strategy for the Collective Security of the CSTO, the improvement of the system of crisis response, and deepening of co-operation in the military-technology sphere were suggested. “They are brought about by the logical development of the organisation, our view of the solution to topical problems. Today, questions of practical co-operation on securing stability in these regions are at the forefront of our concerns,” believes the Head of State. “We need to understand that securing safety and the activity of the CSTO are interconnected. Separate practical approaches inevitably lead to a slowdown in development.”

Alexander Lukashenko also assured those attending that Belarus appreciates the fact that it is entrusted to protect in a western direction. “As always, we fulfil all our obligations so that any potential enemy does not think that the Belarusian army is not ready and our joint Belarus-Russia alliance is not ready to counter any strike,” the President continued. “We are often criticised, especially Russia, that we rattle sabres. We disagree, but neither myself nor President Putin will accept foreign armies in our countries with such ceremony as was made by the President of Poland



Meeting with the heads of the defence ministries of CSTO member states

when NATO troops were deployed directly near the borders of Belarus, our joint boundary. There are those who constantly carry out exercises along the perimeter of our zones of responsibility. It is they who really rattle their sabres. We draw our own conclusions from these actions, but we do not shout each time something happens. There is the army, there are troops, they carry out training exercises. But we must also be allowed to do this.”

Despite pressure, Belarus-Russia military exercises ‘Zapad-2017’ will be carried out on a large scale, Alexander Lukashenko said, “You know that Belarus, within the limits of the Union State, and within the limits of CSTO is responsible for the western frontier. This is the zone of responsibility of Belarus, and all our army is concentrated on it, together with the Russian Federation. We have developed accurate plans of action for different situations.”

These military exercises ‘Zapad-2017’ will be carried out in the autumn in Belarus. “No matter how we are pressurised, we will carry out these exercises and we are determined to carry out them on a large scale and very seriously,” the President said. “I know, that Russia is of the same opinion. We do not intend to frighten anybody. We don’t need someone else’s riches. We need to train our army and we will train it to protect our territory, our state and our people.”

The Head of State discussed the openness of these exercises, “We will invite all present Ministers of Defence to watch these open exercises, they can consider our possibilities. Our aim is that exercises effectively cover the region of Belarus, and we will try to add scale and versatile character in order that our military men — both Russian and Belarusian

During these years, military-political conditions in the zone of CSTO responsibility cannot be called quiet. At the present time, it is even more problematic

— are familiar with what it is they are protecting and what obligations they have.”

Belarus supports the prompt equipping of Collective Rapid Reaction Forces (KSOR) with advanced armaments and military machinery. Alexander Lukashenko noted that members of CSTO allocated into the structure of KSOR the most combat-ready divisions of their national armed forces, “If we see efficiency in the actions of KSOR and need to, we are ready to add our units and

formations, having directed them to the structure of these joint forces.” The President of Belarus noted for all present that the decision of the Council of Collective Security of CSTO provides for the equipping of KSOR with modern, and compatible armaments and military machinery.

This position is consolidated in the agreement on a Collective Rapid Reaction Forces. According to the President, in practice, this is moving ahead slowly at a speed that is inadmissible. “In this situation, the Collective Forces aren’t reaching their potential, therefore it is necessary to promote progress,” he said. The President also believes it is impossible to delay parties’ concurrence of an agreement on joint technical provision of KSOR CSTO, which is prepared within the limits of the creation of a corresponding system of material-technical support of armies. “Its implementation has practical orientation and will solve many unsettled questions of the provision of the actions of the Collective Forces both during the performance of fighting tasks, and during exercises,” noted the Head of State.

On the initiative of Belarus, in the autumn there will be planned testing of joint preparations of various formations of the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces of CSTO — strategic exercises. During these exercises, it will be possible to estimate the level of preparation of the staff and armies for joint action.

President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, congratulates Xi Jinping, the President of China, on his birthday

“I’m grateful that fate has given me the chance to have a friend who has such sincere and genuine affection for Belarus. Our personal friendship and the friendship of our countries are strong and constant,” reads the message.

Mr. Lukashenko stressed that under the wise leadership of Xi Jinping, the People’s Republic of China is doing its best to fulfil the ‘Chinese dream’ to revive the nation and shape a new image of the great state.

“These efforts rely on the *Belt and Road* concept of joint development that you have proposed to China and to the whole world,” noted the Head of State. “I’m still impressed by the Beijing forum in May. The ideas voiced in your keynote address at the opening of the forum get a new focus in the plans for Belarusian-Chinese co-operation. I’m sure these plans will shortly yield results.”

The President wished the Chinese President strong health, happiness and many years of constructive labour for the sake of China and its people.

Bank increases its portfolio



Sberbank of Russia intends to expand its presence on the Belarusian market and our Government

supports such intentions — as discussed during a meeting of the President of Belarus and Sberbank’s Head German Gref

Alexander Lukashenko addressed the guest, “I am always pleased to meet you. I’m ready to discuss any current problems in our co-operation. Furthermore, you are active in our economic sphere and Sberbank of Russia is an active participant in our market. I think that the field of activity should be expanded, and we will gradually do this.” Mr. Gref praised the working conditions in Belarus as comfortable, stating, “Sberbank is a major market player in Belarus and during the years since 2014 — in challenging times — we’ve been increasing our portfolio. The situation is much more stable now and I believe we’ll finish this year much better than 2015 and 2016. From next year, we plan to produce stable profits. In general, the situation is under control.”

Six tasks for CSTO

President Alexander Lukashenko names six major tasks for the Collective Security Treaty Organisation in modern times

By Vladimir Velikhov

The Head of State made the statement as he met with the secretaries of the security councils of the CSTO member states. According to the President, major tasks include co-ordination of foreign policy activities of the CSTO member states; co-operation of the organisation with the leading universal and regional international agencies; comprehensive strengthening of military, military-technical, anti-crisis and peace-making potentials of the CSTO. These also include the prevention of international terrorism and the illegal drug trade; stabilising migration processes; improvement of the legal foundations and mechanisms of interaction in the organisation.

According to Mr. Lukashenko, the session of the committee is held in complex times. The international situation can be characterised by growing instability, the transformation of relations between the major world centres, and toughening mutual competition. Conditions for the transfer of struggle to outer space and cyberspace are being created.

“NATO is building up military infrastructure near the borders of our countries, the missile defence system is being installed, projects to design precision weapons are implemented. Conflicts, economic and social shocks continue to remain the sources of the migration crisis,” asserted the Belarusian President.

Mr. Lukashenko stressed that the activities of terrorists in Europe

and Central Asia pose an outstanding threat, the conflicts in south-eastern Ukraine and Nagorno-Karabakh are disturbing. Despite emerging positive trends, the situation around Transnistria is not settled.

“Obviously, in these conditions our organisation becomes even more important. Being a multi-purpose organisation, the CSTO has a potential for playing a big role in the future architecture of security on the Eurasian continent,” said the Head of State. He deems it necessary to make timely strategic decisions based on unity and allied solidarity and prepare concerted collective responses to global and regional challenges. It was reported that Belarus presides in the CSTO since October 2016.



Rapid Reaction Forces

During his meeting with the secretaries of the security councils of the CSTO member states, the President made a statement about possible settlement of the conflict in Ukraine without the Minsk format.

He said that the CSTO security secretaries have gathered in the historical hall that hosted the ‘Normandy Four’ talks and where the landmark Minsk Accords were conceived. Unfortunately, the Minsk agreements are not imple-

mented in full. “In recent weeks, they have come under criticism by states who should have sat down at the negotiating table and should have joined this format,” noted Mr. Lukashenko.

“There have been statements that they can do without the Minsk format and find other ways to resolve the Ukrainian conflict,” said the President. “Of course, they can. But it is always more difficult to start from the beginning than to continue with a good thing.”



Tourists gain information on city and country at railway station kiosk

More information for tourists' holidays

Information desk opens at capital's railway station

By Oksana Nevmerzhitskaya

Yelena Plis, the Director of Minsk Information-Tourist Centre, explains that this is a joint project with Mingspravka company. Its specialists will work at the information desk from 8am to 8pm, seven days a

week. “The number of tourists is increasing, especially since the introduction of the five-day visa-free regime. Information desks will help create a more convenient information environment,” she comments.

Everyone can learn more about the town and

the country, while planning their travel route and buying souvenirs, maps and guides. The desk will have Internet access, making it easy to help visitors find information. Another desk is set to open in the Upper Town, near Svobody Square.

Ms. Plis believes it

should launch in time for City Day. “This year (for the first time during the May holidays), the information centre received visitors in the Town Hall. Around 20-30 people usually address us daily but, from May 7th-9th, around 1,000 tourists asked for help.”

Book takes lead in number of translations

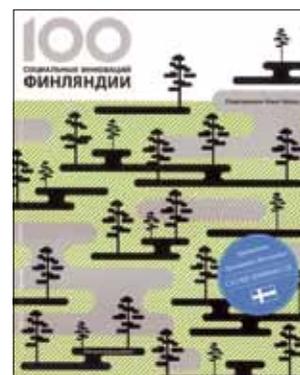
Presentation of Belarusian edition of *100 Social Innovations from Finland* takes place in Minsk

By Olga Korneeva

The book contains various innovations in Finland: from liquorice to Nordic walking, from a children's care manual to winter fishing, from saunas to subbotniks. The unique collection of Finnish social innovations was gathered by public figure Dr. Ilkka Taipale — a parliamentary deputy and founder of the Finnish branch of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

100 Social Innovations from Finland is translated into twenty-seven languages, including Belarusian. An edition is currently being prepared in ten more languages. The book may yet set a record among Finnish editions for its number of translations. It is co-authored by famous Finnish authors of innovations and by those who promote innovative projects.

Dr. Ilkka Taipale noted at the presentation that the edition gathers together the secrets of how Finland —



one of the poorest countries in Europe — transformed into what it is now. He focused attention on six major positions: free education for all (starting from elementary school and finishing with university); equality of women and men; independent municipalities; activity of non-state organisations; consensus in society; and overall trust.

The Finnish Ambassador to Belarus, Christer Michelson, noted that the presentation of the Belarusian edition of *100 Social Innovations from Finland* is part of events being conducted in various countries to mark the 100th anniversary of the country's state independence.

‘People still live here as well as in the rest of Belarus’

Alexander Lukashenko acknowledges the significant progress achieved over the past two decades regarding the rehabilitation of territories affected by the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power station during his visit to the Polesie State Radiation-Ecological Reserve, in the Gomel Region’s Khoiniki District

By Vladimir Khromov

For me, this is a part of my personal and presidential life — though there are mixed feelings, including both pain and positive experiences. I have lived this life with them [the residents of affected areas],” emphasised Mr. Lukashenko.

As in the early years of his presidency, the Head of State regularly visits the Gomel Region, including those areas polluted with radiation. “Much has changed in the last twenty years. People still live here as well as throughout Belarus. This my greatest joy, one of the results of this presidential period, that the Belarusian people have not simply preserved these regions but brought them back to life. This is the main result,” Mr. Lukashenko said.

The President added that the issue of recovery and rehabilitation of the Chernobyl-affected areas is a major part of his personal life. It is here where he had to make the most serious decisions. “When we began to explore the land, there was much criticism. I had to settle near the Pripyat River and build a wooden house,” he said.

The Head of State drew attention to the fact that the results of the work are reflected in the economic indicators. In previous five-year plans, the Gomel Region has doubled or tripled food production in the various areas. “Furthermore, only clean products are bought. There are the strictest controls,” Mr. Lukashenko noted.

While staying in the reserve, Mr. Lukashenko visited the uninhabited village of Babchin; after the tragedy, over 700 people were evacu-



A bird’s eye view of the Polesie State Radiation-Ecological Reserve

ated from there. Some buildings there are now used for the reserve’s needs. The Head of State was informed that — subject to the necessary precautions — a significant part of the region could still be used for different types of economic activity, including woodworking, beekeeping and the breeding of pedigree horses. These areas have already been successfully mastered by the reserve specialists; despite the difficult conditions, clean production is ensured. Mr. Lukashenko personally visited with the farm and tasted honey from the local apiary.

The President ordered further development for the appropriate areas; this will make it possible not only to effectively keep the affected areas in order but also to create new jobs and conditions for the growth of incomes in the region.

He was also given reports on plans to change the borders of the reserve, cutting some territory and more actively involving others in economic turnover. Since the accident, radiation figures have lowered significantly — due to the physical processes of the half-life of radioactive substances. In addition, the scientific research of previous decades can guarantee clean production and the safe development of beef and dairy cattle.

After visiting the apiary, Mr. Lukashenko changed the route — deciding to visit places which have been neglected since their residents’ resettlement three decades ago. In a village on the Polesie State Radiation-Ecological Reserve, he examined one of the abandoned houses.

It is noteworthy that radiation measurements of the clothes and footwear of the President and accompanying

journalists indicated no extra radioactivity after leaving the reserve.

The President also visited the Reserve’s Research Centre, familiarising himself with the organisation of the laboratory, its analysis and control of the radiological situation. He also visited the Reserve’s History Museum.

In his talk to journalists at the reserve, the President shared his attitude to holi-

days. He noted that the issue of a vacation in respect of the President of the country rests on the Constitution. “The Belarusian President cannot have a normal holiday. I have no vice-president and, according to the Constitution, I cannot pass my authority to anyone,” Mr. Lukashenko said. He then added that, even while visiting Sochi for several days, he maintains constant contact with the homeland and is in-



Pedigree horses raised on the reserve

involved with the solution of the most topical issues.

As regards the rest, Mr. Lukashenko does not believe that it should always be connected, for example, with a sea voyage. “Firstly, I do not like warm weather. A rest is a change of scenery and occupation. If you play hockey, tomorrow — chop wood and the day after tomorrow — mow the grass or ski, this is a rest for me. I hate lying on the beach and sunbathing,” he said.

The President also believes that the problem of rising prices will become less of an issue in the near future. “People are still worried about this [growing prices]. However, I believe if we manage to keep inflation at this level, then people will forget about this problem,” Mr. Lukashenko added, stating that he does not exclude the possibility that the inflation level might be significantly lower than the planned figures by late 2017.

The Head of State also noted the downward trend in prices generally in the region: in Russia and Ukraine. “When there is no rise in prices, it is good for people and manufacturers. Producers start adapting to this, begin regulating the prime cost and achieving the normal return on investment,” he added.

INSTRUCTION TO RESTORE RELIC

Alexander Lukashenko instructs to restore the Turov Cross

“We discussed this issue with the Head of the Development Bank, former Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Rumas. I asked him to join the project dealing with the restoration of the Turov Cross and involve other state banks,” said Mr. Lukashenko.

In 1962, during excavations in the town of Turov, archaeologists unearthed four icons dating back to the 12th century. One of them appears to depict Kirill Turovsky. According to scientists, these icons were part of the cross of the Turov Episcopal Church.

“These four icons have been kept by the scientist who found them. They have been preserved and we are ready to use them as we restore the cross, which will happen soon,” underlined the President.

Making friends via trade

Azerbaijani trade house opens in Minsk

By Maria Drukova

According to Belarus' Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei, the event will make relations between the two states even more balanced. At present, bilateral trade turnover primarily relies on exports of our goods. According to the National Statistical Committee of Belarus, last year, we supplied \$135 million of produce to Azerbaijan while imports stood at just \$40 million (a sum which doesn't please our partners). Now, it's expected that goods will be delivered to our country directly, without intermediaries, while the range of the goods will be expanded.

Some of the assortment was presented by more than two dozen companies, at a small exhibition in the trade house located in Minsk, in a multi-functional complex. Included items are pomegranate juice, mineral water, alcoholic

spirits, cosmetics, tinned goods, fruits and vegetables, tea and textiles.

"This is an important event for us," notes the Azerbaijani Minister for Economy, Şahin Mustafayev.

The opening ceremony was attended by a large delegation, which included five MPs, heads of state enterprises and around seventy entrepreneurs.

The decision to open the trade house was made in December 2016. Mr. Mustafayev addressed businessmen



YURI MOZOLEVSKY



YURI MOZOLEVSKY

At the opening ceremony

of the two states, saying that the doors of the trade house are open to everyone. He also reminded



YURI MOZOLEVSKY

Trading house already in operation

representatives of Azerbaijani companies that there is a trade-logistics complex in Minsk whose services can be used.

Mr. Makei called on partners not only to trade with our country but to invest and to create joint productions and mutually beneficial projects, as is done by our companies in Azerbaijan. Around three dozen enterprises with Belarusian capital are operating there, including assembly production of machinery.

"Our country's market will be open to you, as will the Eurasian Economic Union market," Mr. Makei asserted.

Since last May, trade of Belarusian food products has been established via the 'Belorussky' chain of shops. Four supermarkets have opened in Baku, trading goods under the 'Made in Belarus' brand. There are now plans to open two or three more shops selling our produce.

Investments for new innovations

By Alexander Pimenov

Belarus negotiating on the creation of venture funds with a range of countries, including Israel, the USA, Russia and China

"For Belarus, venture capital is a new market. But this is something that our innovation infrastructure is lacking. We are 45th in the world in terms of the generation of new knowledge. We have lots of start-ups, many talented people and ideas, but we need certain funds to help them to make their way on the international market. In Belarus, which is not a big country, such amounts are not available," noted Alexander Shumilin, the Chairman of the State Science and Technology Committee. According to him, it is another matter when Belarus partners up, for example, with China where there is a huge market and knowledge of how to set up a production in an efficient way. "We can generate ideas and make good prototypes, while the Chinese know how to produce them on a mass scale. We

need to combine our efforts," said the Chairman of the State Science and Technology Committee.

In his view, collaboration with the Russian Venture Company is crucial for Belarus. "It's important for us to establish a joint venture fund with Russia because Belarusians do not yet know how to offer shares of start-ups on the international financial markets or stock exchanges. We will be learning these skills from our Russian colleagues," noted Mr. Shumilin. In December 2016, the Belarusian Innovation Fund and the Russian Venture Company

signed an investment partnership agreement 'Russian-Belarusian Venture Investment Fund' to finance promising projects in Belarus and Russia. The fund is 1.4 billion Russian Roubles (\$24.5 million as of May), with contributions on a 50%-50% parity basis.

Moreover, Belarus plans to join with China to set up a venture fund by the autumn of 2017. The size of the fund will be no less than \$20 million.



Gold supply of the state: gradual growth continues

As of June 1st, Belarus' gold and foreign currency reserves exceeded \$5.23 billion. The data already shows explicit dynamics: from January-June, reserves grew by \$311.7 million — or 6.3 percent.

By Veronika Nikitina

The National Bank comments that, in May, the increase in international reserves was due to sale of foreign currency bonds and purchase of currency at exchange auctions. The effect also came from the collection of export duties on oil and petroleum products and increased value of monetary gold on world markets. The National Bank notes that the country is paying off its external debts on time and in full.

Financial analyst Vadim Iosub outlines the main reasons for the increase in gold reserves since the beginning of the year, saying, "There are many, including receiving a tranche from the Eurasian Fund of Stabilisation and Development, and from trading in securities. The most stable reason is that, on the foreign exchange market, supply exceeds demand, due to people being net sellers of foreign currency, partially bought by the National Bank and sent to replenish reserves."



Gold and currency reserves of the country exceed \$5.2 billion

Last year, Belarus' gold reserves increased by \$751.4 million — or 18 percent. Earlier this year, gold reserves stood at \$4.9 billion. The National Bank has set a goal to increase this sum by at least \$500 million by late 2017. According to Mr. Iosub, this is quite feasible. "As long as the population remains a net seller of currency and we can, at least partially, refinance our external debt, our gold and currency reserves will continue growing. The task is quite feasible if planned

credit is forthcoming. We also plan to receive another tranche from the Eurasian Fund of Stabilisation and Development and talks with Russia are underway. The tranche may be around \$700m-1bn."

By 2020, the National Bank plans to increase gold reserves to \$8-8.5 billion. As Mr. Iosub states, foreign currency reserve growth is a very important indicator, guaranteeing stability on the foreign currency market and indicating that there is no reason for concern.



Valery Malashko
is pleased with
the project

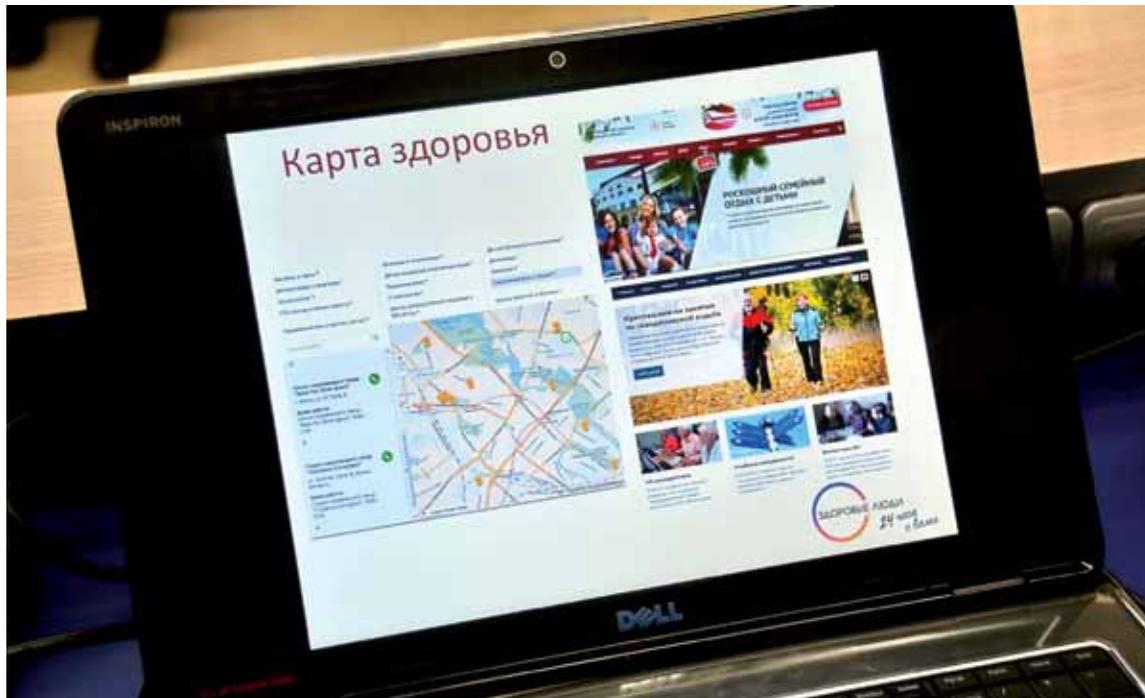
Questions answered on a major issue: health

Health Ministry has launched 'Healthy People', a national Internet portal to promote and inform a healthy lifestyle for all

By Lyudmila Gabasova

Developers claim the project is unique in scale across the CIS, and is the first of its kind to focus not only on medicine or medical tourism, but upon the entire population, aged 18-60+, with many and varying needs. Deputy Prime Minister Vasily Zharko initiated the project, which has been realised by a team of highly skilled professionals. Visit www.24health.by to see answers to all health-related questions.

Health Minister Valery Malashko acknowledges that medicine has progressed significantly, particularly in recent times: Belarusian medical professionals now offer heart-lung transplant operations, and mother-to-fetus HIV infection can now be prevented. The birth rate has risen and mortality figures have dropped. However, despite these advances, the problem of non-communicable disease has become acute. "These are responsible for 86 percent of deaths, while the existing methods of promoting a healthy lifestyle fail to reach the obligatory target. According to recent studies, over half of the population are overweight, while 30 percent of Belarusians are



'Health card' among portal's diverse highlights

smokers, 13 percent demonstrate insufficient physical activity and 8.5 percent never go in for sports," he explains. "Frankly, these are the common risk factors. However, in our modern times, we shouldn't wait until the patient comes to the doctor or the doctor to the patient: new approaches and innovations — primarily in the information sphere — are

needed. Therefore, we have changed the strategic policy, given that over 5 million Belarusians aged 15-74 regularly surf the Internet. Truly, there are many medical sites — including those of our neighbours — but these fail to provide such a synthesis of knowledge as our 'Healthy People' portal."

Olga Svetlitskaya, project man-

ager and a Doctor of Medical Sciences, agrees that our life has changed drastically. Innovations, aimed to make our world more convenient, are eventually leading to the situation where people move less, are isolated, often feel lonely and experience fear and stress (lacking traditional, community support mechanisms). Many occupations are disappearing, being

replaced by new professions, which require different skills. On the other hand, women aged 40 and over can now give birth, and nobody identifies with the idea of retiring at the age of 55-60.

"Our Internet portal is a social project," Olga stresses. "Food, physical exercise and regular daily routines are no longer believed to be solely responsible for happiness. Happiness is rooted in people's satisfaction with their lives. If a single link is dropped from the chain, then the need to consult a doctor arises. That's why we aim to cover all the most important questions: from how to raise children to how to lead an active life."

The 'Healthy People' portal has seven sections and many possibilities: social networks, emergency first aid videos, stocking the home medicine cabinet, and a 'health card', with useful addresses. All articles are unique, with no rewriting used. Users can leave a request for a certain topic and it will be addressed. A special mobile application will be launched this summer. The site has a Belarusian language version and, developers hope to eventually launch a version in English.

Vital to know how to deal with tick bites

Over a hundred people in Belarus suffer from tick-borne encephalitis every year and over a thousand Belarusians are infected with Lyme borreliosis. How is it possible to avoid this danger?

A. Matusevich, from Grodno

Ticks become active in April, through until October, but most are registered in the first half of summer. Mites can't jump. Rather, they wait for their 'victims', with legs spread apart on a blade of grass or a low shrub, no higher than one metre. Mites are attracted to the smell of animals and humans. As you brush past, they catch hold of you, then crawl upwards, even to the head or shoulders — creating the false impression that they've fallen from above. Ticks love dry, sunny and warm weather, tending to hide on cold days, when there are frosts or rain.

Those bitten by a tick won't necessarily become sick but should immediately seek diagnosis and take a course of preventive treatment.

After being bitten by a tick, the insect must be removed. This operation can be conducted at a doctor's surgery or at a medical trauma point. If you remove it independently, endeavour not to

crush the tick, as its pathogens can enter through small cracks on your hands. Most importantly, don't detach the mouth parts from the body, as these can cause inflammation and festering when left in the skin.

There are several ways to remove a tick — differing only in the tools used for removal. It's best to use tweezers or a curved surgical clip; any tweezers will work. Grasp the tick as close to the proboscis as possible, then pull gently, while rotating. It usually takes 1-3 turns to completely remove the tick, with proboscis intact. If we try to pull the tick, it may break. Special hooks for this operation are sold widely: an instrument resembling a curved two-pronged fork. The mite is inserted between the prongs and is lifted out. After removal, wash your hands and disinfect the wound.

If the mite head (a black dot) is torn off during removal, wipe the wound with cotton or a band-



No joking with ticks

age moistened with alcohol. Then, remove the head with a sterile needle (heated in a flame) in the same way as an ordinary splinter. After removing the tick, treat the site with tincture of iodine or alcohol, or any other available antiseptic. There's usually no need to bandage the wound, which can be treated at intervals with a little iodine (not too much or it can 'burn' the skin). If everything goes well, the wound heals within a week.

The removed mite can be destroyed but it's better to leave it

for laboratory testing, to detect tick-borne infections. Within two days, the insect should be taken to a laboratory for research on Lyme disease infection, encephalitis and probable other diseases. The tick should be placed in a small glass jar, with a piece of wadding or tissue slightly moistened with water. Be sure to close the jar with a tight lid and store in the refrigerator (the tick will survive for several days) if immediate delivery to the laboratory isn't possible. To ensure microscopic

diagnosis of the mite, it must be taken alive.

If you're bitten by a tick, allow an infectious diseases physician to monitor you for a month; if necessary, the doctor can prescribe preventive measures or treatment. If the site becomes inflamed, or if you have a high temperature, headache, dizziness, vomiting or muscle pains, consult a doctor for infectious diseases. Redness may be a symptom of borreliosis or an allergic reaction. Slight redness around the wound during the first days after the tick bite is usually a reaction and has no lasting ill effect. If dirt enters the wound, redness can be a consequence of a purulent infection.

In most cases, symptoms emerge in the second week after the bite. However, they may appear earlier or later (up to 21 days for tick-borne encephalitis and up to a month for Lyme disease).

The best way to prevent tick-borne infection is to use repellents, and vaccination and to deter mites from living in your garden.

By Tatiana Zhukova,
doctor of the highest category,
Candidate of Medical Sciences

Expanded expectations

This year's Independence Day parade will take place on a special scale, with more people parading on foot and the mechanised column enlarged significantly. Some of the most recent models and latest developments from our military-industrial complex will be on show, as the highlight of the parade.

By Anton Kostyukevich

The larger the expected audience, the greater the responsibility of parade participants, who must polish their skills, paying attention to the smallest details. The many-tonne combat vehicles are especially impressive, with Lipki aerodrome now hosting regular training for the mechanised column. This year, the column has almost doubled in size, to comprise twenty-seven (instead of the previous fourteen) sections. The length of all vehicles, end to end, would stretch beyond 2.5km. Truly, an amazing show is expected.

Even now, in the midst of training, columns of heavy equipment — including T-72B tanks and long-length 'Smerch' volley-fire rocket systems — can move along in a perfectly synchronised line. Each vehicle must keep to an average speed of 18-20km/h, to avoid breaking the rhythm of the column. Making a full circuit of the airfield, all vehicles occupy their place, with drivers



ALEXANDER KUSHNER

Modern samples of military machinery at the rehearsal of the parade for Independence Day

keeping vehicles at the right speed, reacting to any signal from the top section.

The Deputy Commander of the North-Western Operational Command, Colonel Vladimir Kulazhin, is responsible for preparing the mechanised column for the parade. He's convinced that there's enough time to 'rehearse', saying, "There

will be about 220 pieces of equipment, of various arms and services of the Armed Forces, taking part. Only the best and most disciplined military men have been chosen; during training, they'll be improving their knowledge of technical parts and driving skills. The most important elements of marching are being rehearsed:

keeping a regular distance and speed."

He continues, "Soldiers have great responsibility in fulfilling this honourable duty of participating in the parade of the Minsk garrison. About 30 percent of the military machinery and weapons taking part have been modernised or produced at domestic en-

terprises: 'Polonez' missile systems of multiple rocket launchers, BelGrad, the 'Tsitrus' radio relay station, the 'Cayman' and 'Volat' V1 armoured patrol vehicles, and machinery from Minsk Wheeled Tractor Plant."

The column will be led by a legendary T-34, with the 'Chervony' (red) inscription on its tower. Mean-

MT REFERENCE:

In line with the state programme on armaments until 2016-2020, the army is gradually being rearmed with modern military equipment. Existing machinery is being modernised, while another batch of modernised military vehicles — T-72B3 tanks — will be presented to military units at the 174th training ground in the Brest Region.

while, the audience's attention is likely to be attracted by new developments in Belarusian military production making their debut in the parade. 'Cayman' armoured vehicles are sure to cause a stir. Corporal Roman Korotkin, a driver and mechanic with the 120th separate mechanised brigade, has been on duty since last November and confirms the vehicles' excellent handling. "They're just like ordinary cars," he asserts. "It's easy to drive them. I'm happy to participate in the parade on a 'Cayman'. My parents are delighted and will probably come to watch."

Lipki aerodrome is hosting intense training three times a week, with two dress rehearsals planned: on June 24th and 28th.

Welcome to the travel banking tourist platform

Comprehensive banking offers support to tourists both in the country and abroad when travelling. For this purpose, BPS-Sberbank has developed the country's first travel card — ComPass, offering free trips and the opportunity to join the Sky Club, covering hundreds of air companies all over the world.

By Alexey Fedosov

The new platform opens up the sphere of travel banking in Belarus. Owners of these special cards can receive discounts on air tickets, accumulate free trips, apply for concierge services and have free access to the business lounges of European airports. Moreover, the tourist card allows money from purchases to be returned and

enables the member to buy a Schengen visa amongst others, with a discount.

According to BPS-Sberbank's press service, there are more than 1 million active tourists in Belarus. This is the target group of the developers of the travel banking technology. It's assumed that it will now be easier and cheaper to travel, primarily in Europe. The platform will also encourage

domestic tourism, with national tourist sites connected to the programme. The card will become a tourist ticket, enabling some documents to be left behind and avoiding formalities and restrictions.

The country's first Sky Club will enable the holder to book flights with hundreds of international air companies at a discount. When paying with the card, bonuses will be added at the rate of 1

point for every Euro, which can then be used to pay for air tickets, hotel rooms and transfers. Bonus money can be controlled from a personal online account.

Belarusian tourists can also freely use concierge services. Specialists will be able to organise a personal tour, book theatre tickets, reserve a table in a restaurant or find an invitation to a society event. Users can also

use discounts and bonuses in large cities, such as those now offered in Minsk by more than 3,000 organisations: from restaurant chains to taxi services and tourist agencies.

The card includes a whole package of automobile assistance: its owners will be given fuel (if necessary), will be able to call out a tow truck or have their car repaired in any place in

Belarus. Members can also receive assistance abroad in other European states. Twenty-four-hour technical support is available for drivers.

Owners of the card will receive insurance for 30,000 Euros, covering trips for up to 20 days. Packages are also envisaged with higher insurance sum and longer visits. Moreover, one insurance policy can be used for all family members.





Death toll climbs above 60 in Portugal forest fire

A raging wildfire has ripped through central Portugal, killing 61 people and injuring dozens more in what officials there describe as the ‘greatest wildfire tragedy of recent years’

At least 54 people were injured in the blaze, including eight firefighters and a child. The government has declared three days of mourning.

The head of Portugal’s judiciary police told reporters the fire was started by natural causes.

“We have been able to determine that the origin of the fire was caused by dry thunderstorms,” José Maria Almeida Rodrigues said.

Some victims were burned to death in their cars as they tried to flee, officials said. The blaze spread

Saturday to the Pedrógão Grande community, forcing residents to flee the area to escape towering flames. Pedrógão Grande is about 120 miles north of Lisbon.

“Many cars could not get out and people burned to death inside

their cars,” said Interior Ministry official Jorge Gomes.

The municipality’s Mayor, Valdemar Alves, said there were areas ‘completely surrounded’ by the blaze and not enough firefighters to battle the flames.



Van attack outside London mosque

A van ploughed into worshippers leaving a mosque in north London, killing at least one person and injuring several in what Britain’s largest Muslim organisation said was an act of Islamophobia

The vehicle hit people as they were leaving the Finsbury Park Mosque, one of the biggest in the country, the Muslim Council of Britain said. The attack comes during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, when people attend prayers at night.

British Prime Minister Theresa May said police had confirmed it was being treated as a potential ter-

rorist attack.

“All my thoughts are with the victims, their families and the emergency services on the scene,” she said.

Police said one man was pronounced dead at the scene and that the van driver, 48, had been detained by members of the public before being arrested. The driver would undergo a mental health assessment in due course, police said. The London Ambulance Service said it had taken 8 people to hospital, while 2 were treated at the scene. The leader of the opposition Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, said he was ‘totally shocked’.

EU agency targeted in weedkiller row

The debate over the safety of the world’s most popular weed-killer rages on, and it’s becoming a thorn in the side of the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA)

Members of the European Parliament have raised questions about EFSA’s finding that glyphosate, the main ingredient in Monsanto’s Roundup, is unlikely to cause cancer. The EU marketing authorisation of the herbicide is set to expire at the end of the year, and a decision over whether to extend it is pending.

During the plenary session in Brussels lawmakers left and right complained that some of the studies used by the agency to make up its mind were commissioned by the chemical industry — the companies selling the herbicides in the first place.

An NGO is also calling for great-



er corporate transparency issued new research claiming that nearly half — 46 percent — of EFSA’s experts had financial conflicts of interest with the agribusiness and food industries. EFSA called the figures misleading and said it had been diligent in its review of glyphosate. EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Andriukaitis, facing MEPs’ questions, defended the agency’s position.

Roaming fees to disappear

Mobile phone roaming fees disappear

The move is part of the EU’s drive to create a single digital market across the continent. It should mean an end to those huge holiday phone bills. Those who travel regularly — or even commute to another EU country — should end up spending less on calls, texts and surfing. Critics say these people are in the minority. The legislation has been ten years in the making, following initial opposition from cell phone operators.

Tech firms could face fines in crackdown on online ‘extremism’

The UK and France, working hand in hand against terrorism, are launching a joint campaign to fight online radicalisation

British Prime Minister Theresa May and French President Emmanuel Macron want to get tech giants such as Facebook and Google to do more to remove extremist material from the Internet. “We’re launching a joint UK-French campaign to ensure that the Internet cannot be used as a safe space for terrorists and criminals, and that it cannot be used to host the radicalising material that leads to so much harm,” May noted in Paris, speaking alongside Macron.

EU and China turn on Trump over climate change withdrawal

There has been a meeting of minds between China and European leaders following their Brussels summit

There are still disagreements over WTO rules but positions narrowed on steel overcapacity and what to do about North Korea’s missile tests. “China’s position is consistent. We are firmly committed to the denuclearisation of the peninsula and opposed to nuclear tests and missile launches by North Korea,” Li Ke-qiang told a joint news conference.

Sentiments shared by the European Council President Donald Tusk, “Today we are stepping up our co-operation on climate change with China, which means that today China and Europe have demonstrated solidarity with future generation and responsibility for the all planet. We are convinced that the decision by the US to leave the Paris agreement is a big mistake,” Tusk added. Both sides are expected to renew their commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

‘Armenian silhouette’ presented in Belarusian museum

Exhibition of People’s Artist of Armenia — Pharaon Mirzoyan — enjoys success in Minsk, featuring around sixty paintings and drawings

By Veniamin Mikheev

Pharaon Mirzoyan’s artistry is now known far beyond Armenia: he is an active participant of international open-air workshops of pictorial painting and an author of several personal exhibitions organised both domestically and abroad. He is an established master with his own philosophical outlook on life; in his artistry, Pharaon attempts to say something important in today’s brief life. Pharaon’s is talent multiplied by daily work, cantering on the age-old question of who I am and what is my purpose in this life.

While reviewing and analysing Mr. Mirzoyan’s artistry over past decades, we can trace his evolution. Having absorbed the traditions of his mentors, Pharaon is now among other Armenian artists who define the modern annals of Armenian fine arts. Importantly, the artist’s work is not only a local phenomenon of the national art school; it organically coexists in the context of the European art space. Meanwhile, his homeland, one of the most beautiful corners of Armenia — Syunik, remains his main source of inspiration even now.

Pharaon’s range is extensive: he works with landscapes, still-lives and plot compositions. Sometimes it seems that the author is accelerating his pace, afraid to lag behind the times and has something unspoken in his work. At the same time, his works are painted lightly, with emotions harmoniously laid down on the canvas or paper. Even graphic pencil sketches feature the confident hand of the master, not to mention his gorgeous pastel compositions which are likely to become the basis for future picturesque masterpieces.

The artist has blurred the boundaries of genres, becoming a universal and free painter who’s removed his inner barriers.

On becoming familiar with the exhibition at the National Art Museum of Belarus, anyone would think that, because of the long road of his creative research, Pharaon has formed his individual artistic signature. His palette is impulsive in still life and landscapes. He fills canvases with vibrant colours which convey the impression of Armenian epic mountain scenery.



Short interview with Pharaon Mirzoyan

What’s your life motto and how does it apply to your environment?

Decide whether there are conditions for implementation of your ideas. If not, create them on your own within your activity and involve like-minded persons in the process. Only in this way, I believe, will the fruit of your joint activity be born.

You have painted many pictures — they almost have no boundaries between genres but a strong Armenian theme is present. Is this essential for you?

The Armenian theme is a fundamental principle of my paintings: both material and spiritual. It does not matter for me whether I paint my pictures at the studio or in the open air. I perceive myself in my native land: Armenia. Every day gives me new paints and new plots — these may be sunrise or green sprouting on a cracked land. Any detail is viewed as a separate holistic life. The world is already created by God and I simply need to show it — through my personal experience and feelings. However, I sometimes like to work beyond small canvases — creating a monumental work. This is how my Armenia and Artsakh large pictures were born. 90 years have passed since Martiros Saryan painted his Armenia triptych and no large canvas has appeared during this time. I felt an irrepressible need to draw a large panel on this topic — relying on my most important state: the personal feeling of the country.

What kind of review do you hope to receive from the Belarusian audience?

The Minsk exhibition is a momentous event for me. I want to know how it will be accepted by my contemporaries from fraternal Belarus and what response it will create in their souls. Each painting is a form of perception of the Universe as a whole and the small world of an artist’s own identity. I’d like Belarusians to understand and accept my work.

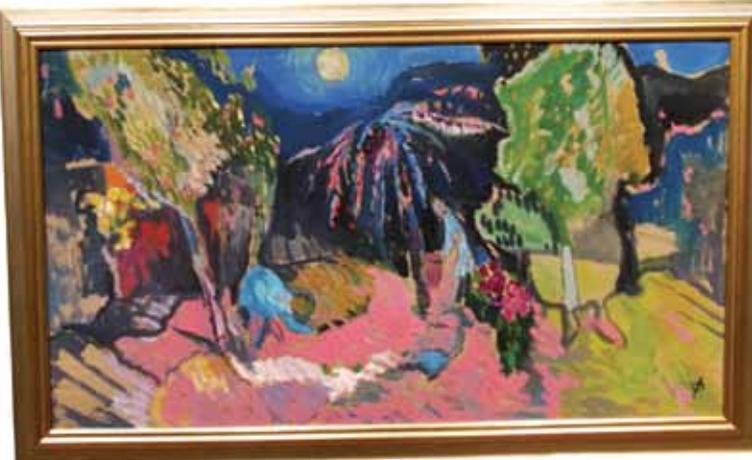


This magnificent artist, portrait painter and composer — who harmoniously combines images with the surrounding world and nature, enchants with the shimmering magic of his palette. Pharaon’s works are filled with the magic of understatement.

A special place in Pharaon’s work is occupied by the image of a woman, a portrait of his wife. In the past, the influence of old masters was evident in his works; he was attracted by details. At present, he paints quickly, with a single breath. That is why the portraits of his close-up people are truly sparkling. It seems they reflect the author’s emotions and artistic inspiration. In fact, the woman begins to occupy a



Exhibition opening ceremony



leading position in Pharaon’s artistry over time — symbolising the harmony of the surrounding world. The evolution of style and the change of approaches are also clearly seen in the genre of still-life — which is also important for Pharaon Mirzoyan. The exquisite forms make his still-life extremely attractive.

According to a Candidate of Art,

an Honoured Figure of Arts and the General Director of the National Art Museum — Vladimir Prokoptsov, Pharaon’s personal exhibition in Belarus is a window on the Cosmos for the Belarusian audience: artists, art critics, art dealers and ordinary visitors. He believes the master’s bright star attracts everyone with the light of his talent and mystery.

Sweet return of Alexandra

Belarusian cinema may lack awards, which makes recognition of *Vera's Sweet Farewell* all the sweeter. It's been awarded in the 'Romantic Films' nomination of the Houston Festival. It may not be an Oscar or a Golden Palm but it's still a breakthrough. Director Alexandra Butor, who was viewed as the major hope of Belarusian cinema three years ago, tells us more.



Alexandra Butor

By Natalia Stepuro

While shooting the film, you had festivals in mind. However, you failed to gain a global tour. What's the current feeling? Regret at this fact or joy that your film has been awarded by someone, even two years after being released?

I'm delighted that my film has been watched by Americans, and am surprised that they loved it. Of course, there's some regret that Belarusfilm 'missed out' on the festival side. At that time, there was new studio leadership, which resulted in the film being lost. Nobody cared about it. Only after the marketing department was revamped was it taken from the shelf and sent to festivals. I remember the premiere, when everyone advised me to screen it at festivals. However, it's not my property and I have no rights over its promotion. If I'd been entrusted with its promotion, it would have toured far more.

What have you been doing over the past two years?

After shooting two films, I became tired and decided to have a change. I opened my own film school. Only now do I realise that I'm ready to return, making new films. Rather than directing, I'd love to produce. Over the past two years, working with children, I've realised that I want to try a new sphere, to maintain my interest. I'm now preparing my first producer project and I hope it'll be screened before the public in autumn.

You were going to shoot *Common Soldiers* — based on Alexey Dudarev's play of the same title...

From the very beginning, I was aware that this topic would be hard to promote. Our people are fed up with the war. I addressed Germany but the topic was also neglected there. Moreover, I want to shoot this film with a proper budget. I'm still looking at options. At present, we're translating it into English; the new title will be 'The Hero'. Mr. Dudarev isn't against this; in fact, he told us that our script followed his play and had every right to use an original title. We tried out various names and changed the events, but Mr. Dudarev's characters remained.

Might you pass the project to another director?

I won't give 'The Hero' to some-

one else, as I want to shoot this film myself, independently. As regards films with small budgets, I have a dream. To be more correct, I have a goal: I want my cinema school to annually launch a small feature film. I'll produce it, while my students will shoot it.

You see, if I start shooting something, this new work must be stronger than what I've already produced. I think this will be the case with 'The Hero'.

was poorly written. I can hardly understand this.

Do you follow trends in Belarusian cinema?

I try to visit all independent shows, as I'm interested in seeing how guys are creating an alternative to Belarusfilm. So far, the only one who's surprised me is Mitya Semenov-Aleynikov. He was one of the brightest students at the Acting Department at our Academy of Arts; he later graduated from the All-Russian

We must learn and study others' experience.

American Lubezki won an Oscar using natural lighting and without special devices. Meanwhile, we bring a truckload of equipment but make poor films. We're trying to invent our own technology. Meanwhile, everything has already been invented — and not by us; we simply need to ask how everything works.

Do you know why 'Vera's Sweet Farewell' conquered American



A Shot from the film *Vera's Sweet Farewell*

Was the opening of your cinema school a necessary step, as you'd failed to find another job?

No. I'd long had that dream: I began thinking of it while making short videos. I'm freedom-loving and independent; I want to decide myself what to film and how. I've worked under all sorts of chiefs, and it wasn't always a good experience. It's difficult to deal with people who are poorly versed in my profession.

I understand that you have some kind of grudge against Belarusfilm. However, if you received a call, asking you to return, what would you do?

I won't receive a proposal from them regarding my 'Hero'; we've discussed this already. However, I would return, even working on someone else's script. It's silly to refuse serious cinema. Moreover, I have an advantage: I'm writing myself and, accordingly, can polish any script. One of my acquaintances refused a proposal to shoot because the script

State Institute of Cinematography and directed 'One Blood'.

Why haven't you worked on these films?

I've not yet found something to shoot. I'm simply testing the guys studying at my school. Honestly, I don't like all the festivals' red tape. Why has Mitya's film toured half the world? He addressed a special agency which has promoted his interests. I believe that directors should create rather than manage.

What do you think of Belarusian cinema?

There are no good scriptwriters. There's much talk at the diverse film parties I attend, saying that we lack advertising and good promotion. However, this is wrong. It's primarily necessary to write a script, then to professionally shoot it; afterwards, the film will enjoy great demand — even without advertising. We have a problem: we're developing domestically, paying no attention to what's happening in world cinematography.

hearts? The film lacks any special creativity or technical approach. We simply shot a human story, which is interesting to everyone. Our film began experiencing problems early on, at the cheapest stage: of script-writing. In short, it's not a matter of money.

What's the way forward for our cinema?

These are simple and inexpensive stories: melodramas and romantic comedies. Adventure, science fiction and space-related films are not for us, since they're expensive. Look at what South Korea is doing to catch audiences' attention. They produce simple melodramas which are popular all over the world and which aren't expensive. Belarusfilm is introducing a new policy: instead of a million Dollar film, it's shooting five at \$200,000 each. We'll see what will happen as a result. Expensive films might use popular actors and great graphics while cheap ones need a 'trick' in their script.

Vitebsk: bringing Marc Chagall's art to life

By Kira Ushchenchik

This summer, Vitebsk will celebrate the phenomenal creative legacy of artist and one-time resident, Marc Chagall. Over the course of twenty-five years, the Marc Chagall Museum has amassed an extensive collection of the artist's work, which includes more than three hundred original graphical pieces, etchings, aquatints and lithographs. The exhibition is one of the largest collections within the post-Soviet space.

"From a chronological point of view, the collection covers the whole period of Marc Chagall's graphical activity: from 1922 to 1985. The museum's whole collection has been formed thanks to donations by the painter's heirs and passionate admirers of his creativity," states Irina Voronova, Director of the Marc Chagall Museum.

It will be the first time in the museum's history that all ninety-six illustrations made by Chagall for Gogol's *Dead Souls* will be exhibited together; these were donated by Chagall's granddaughters, Meret and Bella Meyer. A complete cycle of etchings is a considerable rarity for museum and private collections. Another special feature of the exhibit will be a portrait of Chagall, created in 1922 by German painter-engraver Hermann Struck.

The exhibition should attract thousands of tourists to Vitebsk.

Cultural ties overcome distances

By Olga Korneeva

Days of Belarusian Culture in Vietnam open with bright performance by Belarusian masters in Hanoi

Taking part in the concert were the State Dance Company of Belarus, Youth Variety Theatre soloist Victoria Aleshko, and Honoured Artist of Belarus Anatoly Taras. The Vietnamese Exhibition Centre of Culture and Arts hosted an exhibition entitled *Rays of Inspiration*, by painter Vasily Yasyuk, and another, called *Belarus and Belarusians*, organised by the National History Museum.

During the opening ceremony, Belarus' Deputy Culture Minister, Vasily Chernik, noted that the advancement of Belarusian-Vietnamese co-operation has grown over recent years. Despite geographical distances, the countries regularly find new paths of mutually beneficial collaboration. Belarus-Vietnam cultural ties grow stronger every year, with good traditions being filled with new content, in the form of genuine cultural projects.



Belarusian javelin thrower Tatiana Kholodovich ranked first at international tournament of Challenge series in Finnish Turku

Tatiana Kholodovich surely in good shape

By Alexey Grishin

The 2016 European champion is in good form and in Finland she won with a result of 65.03m. Kelsey Lee Roberts of Australia was

ranked second (64.06m) followed by Sunette Viljoen of the SAR (with 61.54m).

Previously Tatiana Kholodovich won the Challenge tournament in the Dutch Hengelo. The

highest achievement of the Belarusian athlete this season is her victory at the IAAF Diamond League in American Eugene where she finished with the world third best result of the season — 66.30m.

Gomel looks better in gold

By Sergey Frolov

It's rare for a championship title to be determined during the last seconds, in five matches. However, our Belarusian women's handball team snatched victory in just this situation.

Minskers from BNTU-BelAZ team appeared on the court wearing T-shirts with golden letters, while their Gomel rivals attacked hard, almost 'smashing' their opponent. With blocks and mistakes at every turn, it seemed impossible to decide who had the advantage. Keeping their nerve, Tomas Chater's Gomel squad gained supremacy.

The Gomel team came to Minsk ready to grasp victory and had begun to bring this plan into action by halftime, being seven balls ahead. This went some way to undermining the morale of their opponents, and they extended their lead to ten goals ahead by the middle of the second half. At that point, the Minsk squad appeared to give up, and coach Konstantin Sharovarov, who'd been raging on the sidelines, finally gave in too. After the match, the Olympic champion stated wearily, "I've nothing to say: this time, our rivals were luckier."



Participants of Games will live in Student Village

'Bright you' at the European Games

By Alexey Bogomazov

Outline of European Games, hosted by Minsk in 2019, becoming clearer

The European Olympic Committee's Commission recently visited Minsk, to follow how preparations are going, and to see the sports nominations included in the list highlighted for the Games. Finally, major organisational issues have been solved. The EOC's seminar in Skopje has approved the terms for competitions and has determined the 'registration' of each sporting nomination. The opening ceremony of the European Games in Minsk will take place at Dinamo Stadium on June 21st, 2019, finishing on June 30th. Meanwhile, the European Olympic Committee will pay for travel by athletes and official figures, while the Organis-

ing Committee, chaired by Belarus' Prime Minister, will cover expenditure for the athletes' and delegations' accommodation during the Games.

Sporting venues are also important. Track-and-field events are to take place at the updated Dinamo Stadium (where reconstruction should be completed this year). Meanwhile, the city's primary indoor venue, Minsk-Arena, will host gymnastic events: artistic gymnastics, free calisthenics, acrobatics and trampolining. Nearby buildings will host badminton while cycling events will take place through Minsk streets.

Those who were initially sceptical regarding the level of competition at the forthcoming Games will be interested to learn that the EOC has approved 11 of 16 sporting nominations for the final programme of the 2020 Olympiad.

Fans helped make a favourable impression

By Petr Ovcharenko

The European 10,000m Cup held in Minsk has impressed the President of the European Athletics Associations, Svein Arne Hansen, as he explained to the BELTA correspondent

This is the best 10,000m tournament I have ever seen. I know that Belarus is capable of hosting international competitions, but I was more impressed with the attitude of people. There were a lot of fans in the stadium. It makes me really happy," he noted.

The President of the European Athletics Associations stressed that



During the competitions

with the commissioning of the Dinamo Stadium, Belarus' chances of hosting big athletics competitions will considerably increase. "I just

need now to see the reconstructed Dinamo Stadium and then I will be able to say which tournament can be held in Minsk," he stated.

Capital team — more successful

By Alexander Nesterov

Minsk hockey players ranked third at Champions Cup, in Trophy Division, held in Munich

Two Belarusian women's teams recently performed in the tournament in Germany: Grodno's Ritm and Minsk HC (ranked second in groups A and B respectively, after the preliminary round).

The match for third place was one of the most interesting, with the Grodno and Minsk teams knowing

each other well from the Belarusian Championship. During the previous meeting, Ritm was losing until the last minutes 3:4; however, in the 57th minute, captain Olga Shitar equalised the score (4:4) with an exact kick after a penalty corner.

Nevertheless, two minutes before the final whistle, Yevgenia Filippovich scored the decisive goal for the Minsk team. Grodno's Ritm had the advantage in the Belarusian Championship over the Minsk squad, having defeated it twice (7:3

and 4:2). Meanwhile, Münchner Sportclub won the Champions Cup in the Trophy Division, defeating Spanish Campo de Madrid, 1:0. In the top division of the Champions Cup, victory was celebrated by the Dutch Hertogenbosch, which was stronger than Hamburg — 2:1.

According to the Belarusian Field Hockey Federation, Belarusian women's teams are eligible for the elite division of the Champions Cup, due to their successful performance in the European arena.



Svein Arne Hansen

Show of the week



Two dozen teams demonstrate their mastery of fireworks at the *Sviata Sontsa-2017* (Holy Day of the Sun) folk festival, held in the Dudutki museum complex

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 25th May. *Breath of Eternity* Until 25th June. Exhibition dedicated to 70th anniversary of artist-restorer A. Shpunt
Until 3rd July. *Great Rembrandt*
Until 9th July. Exhibition of Vladimir Krukovsky's social poster

NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street
Until 24th June. *Skaryna — Enlightener-Humanist* Until 24th June. *Symbols of Soviet Epoch* Until 25th June. *Rabbinical Dynasty of Medalie*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 30th June. Exhibition of wax figures: *Miraculous Travel* Until 10th August (Labyrinth Gallery). *Francysk Skaryna. Extensive Man* Until 20th August. Exhibition of children's graphics: *Her Majesty Letter*

MUSEUM OF NATURE AND ECOLOGY

117 Kazinets Street
Until 11th September. *Miraculous World of Butterflies*

YAKUB KOLAS SQUARE

Until 9th September. *The Artist and the City: Golden Collection of Belarusian Pictorial Art*

GALLERIA MINSK

9 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 31st July. White Pole Museum of Ice-Cream

YAKUB KOLAS STATE LITERARY MUSEUM

5 Akademicheskaya Street
Until 26th June. *Polish Writers from 1920s-1930s* Until 30th September. *In Waves of Endless Movement: Along Kolas' Automobile Paths*

ZAIR AZGUR'S MUSEUM-WORKSHOP

8 Zair Azgur Street
Until 30th June. Galina Gorova's sculpture: *Thoughts and Forms*

VANKOVICH'S HOUSE

33a Internatsionalnaya Street
Until 20th July. Exhibition of Sergey Drozdov's author doll: *Male Sight*

BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS

32 Nezavisimosti Avenue
23-25.06. Fantastic Stories

MUSEUM OF THEATRICAL AND MUSICAL CULTURE HISTORY

5 Muzykalny Lane
Until 1st September. *Made in USSR*

LOSHITSA ESTATE

8/2 Chizhevsky Lane
Until 27th August. *Wonderful Animals*

THEATRES

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
22.06. Grandfather 23.06. Granitsy.net
26.06. Love of People 27.06. Feint-Kruaze 28.06. Belarus. Didactics
29.06. Portrait

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
22.06. Merry Poppins 23.06. A Glass of Water 25.06. Yunona and Avos 27.06. bridegrooms 28.06. Ball in Savoy
29.06. Jane Eyre

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
23.06. Forgetting Herostratos! 24 and 25.06. The Battlefield 26.06. The Same Place Next Year 27.06. Pygmalion
28 and 29.06. Wolves and Sheep

CONCERTS

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
29.06. Concert by Oksana Volkova and Yuri Gorodetsky

CENTRAL BOTANICAL GARDEN OF BELARUS' NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Kalinin Square
24 and 25.06. Eco-Market Pasternak

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
22.06. Eugene Onegin
28 and 29.06. Orr and Ora

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street
22.06. The Black Lady of Nesvich 23.06. Pinsk Gentry 27 and 28.06. Jeweller's Jubilee

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
22.06. Inn Keeper

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
22 and 28.06. Zhmurik 22.06. Tectonics of Feelings 27 and 29.06. Half-Wit

MAZ PALACE OF CULTURE

117A Partizansky Avenue
22.06. Allur Show

SVOBODY SQUARE

24.06. Jazz Evening

DUKORSKY MAENTAK

Dukora village, 15 Shkolnaya Street
24 and 25.06. 9th International Festival: Kupalle Circle