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"Whatever plans the Kremlin has, I am not interested in them. I will continue my work." **Alexei Navalny** wrote on his blog.

16.2Mln

rubles — the total damages Navalny was ordered to pay.

Dec. 2014

Navalny handed suspended sentence of 3.5 years on charges of embezzlement.



Navalny has been a constant thorn in the regime's side. He ran for Moscow mayor in 2013, in which he won almost 30 percent of the vote.

A Peculiar Thaw

By **Ola Cichowlas** o.cichowlas@imedia.ru | Twitter: @olacicho



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Cover photo by Valery Sharifulin / ITAR-TASS

The Kremlin's liberal overtures are probably not all they seem

The Russian opposition woke up to a surprise on the morning of Nov. 16. Moscow's Supreme Court unexpectedly scrapped opposition leader Alexei Navalny's criminal conviction, and sent his case for a retrial.

Convicting Navalny was the Kremlin's way of stopping him from taking part in any national elections. The Supreme court's decision has opened the — until now unthinkable — prospect of Vladimir Putin's main political foe running for president in 2018.

The news was, unsurprisingly, met with suspicion in opposition circles.

Kirov Trial

Back in 2013, Navalny was charged with stealing timber from a state-owned corporation in the provincial city of Kirov. The trial was largely condemned as politically motivated: it came just two months after the Moscow mayoral election, in which Navalny won 30 percent of the vote against a Kremlin loyalist.

As part of another case a year later, Navalny and his brother Oleg were convicted of embezzling 30 million rubles (\$460,000). Navalny was given a suspended sentence, but his brother was sent to three and a half years in prison. Human rights organizations again condemned the sentence as a Soviet-style tactic to silence dissent by holding relatives hostage.

This second conviction did not, however, legally stop Navalny from running for office. It was the earlier Kirov conviction that blocked him from registering as a candidate.



ALEXEI NAVALNY / FACEBOOK

A Supreme Court decision has sparked speculation that Navalny could compete in the 2018 presidential election.

Navalny for President?

While dramatic arrests would indicate a continuation of authoritarian rule, there have been some indications that the Kremlin might be considering loosening its grip on some aspects of political life. The appointment of a new head of domestic politics, Sergei Kiriyenko, with his reputation as a progressive Western-minded liberal, was considered to be a move in this direction.

Soon after the appointment, the word "thaw" entered Moscow political lexicon. The Supreme Court ruling on Navalny could conceivably be interpreted as part of the same trend.

But while Navalny's overturned sentence has sparked speculation that he can compete in the upcoming 2018 presidential contest, this is far from a done deal.

Even if the court ruling is not revisited, there are plenty of other barriers that could stop Navalny from running. Collecting the requisite number of signatures to register for an election remains an obvious obstacle, for example.

While these are signals that the Kremlin is open to more competition, it is clearly an "overstatement" to call it a thaw, says Kynev.

Russian political expert Stanislav Belkovsky says he did not expect the court decision, and that the development flew in the face of wider political developments. At the same time, the analyst did not exclude the possibility that the Kremlin may harbor radical aspirations to "adopt" Navalny as a partner in 2018.

"It would make sense for the regime, both at home and abroad," says Belkovsky.

Political analyst Yekaterina Schulmann also thinks the Kremlin may be starting to search for new, unexpected candidates for the 2018 presidential election.

The Kremlin's strategists will face a tough task, which may force them to opt for "untested" candidates, says Schulmann. "On one hand, they will have to keep the voters intrigued to ensure a high turnout but on the other, they don't want 20 unknown candidates on the ballot."

Whether he was aware of such plans or not, Navalny maintained public skepticism of the court's motivations. Whatever the Kremlin is planning for 2018, he wrote, he will "continue to fight these harmful thieves in positions of power." **TMT**

LONG-DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

The World After Trump: Friendly, But for How Long?

By **Mark Galeotti**
Senior researcher at the Institute of International Relations Prague



GALINA GUBCHENKO

No wonder many in the West think Putin is winning. The European Union is in crisis, with Britain's Brexit potentially being followed by other "exits." Elections have seen the rise of Moscow-friendly presidents: Bulgaria's Rumen Radev, Moldova's Igor Dodon, and Donald Trump in the U.S.

However much there are those who want to see Moscow's hand behind all this, it actually played a minimal role, if any, in most of these developments.

Moreover, while the new situation offers some new opportunities, it is harder to be sure Russia is in much of a shape to take advantage of them.

The hacked emails and other examples of Russian mischief in the American elections were intended to weaken an expected Clinton presidency, not elevate Trump. If anyone gave Trump the election, it was the FBI, not the FSB: its eleventh-hour statement about its investigations killed Hillary Clinton's momentum at a crucial moment.

Likewise, for all that Russia's propaganda stations and troll farms assiduously backed Brexit, hoping it would start unravelling the European Union, there is no evidence that Kremlin machinations played any part in the referendum's outcome.

In France, Marine Le Pen's Front Nationale notoriously received a €9 million (\$9.7 million) loan from a Russian bank. Czech president Miloš Zeman's campaign was in part bankrolled by the local head of Russian company Lukoil. But that does not necessarily mean their support has been bought or generated by Moscow.

The West is bleeding, but its wounds are self-inflicted. There is a generalized crisis of legitimacy, as complacent political elites fail to connect with communities feeling disenfranchised and discriminated against.

There is a toxic disconnect between a Brussels consensus of ever-closer political union and the aspirations of most EU member states and their populations. Governments across Europe are being held to account for promises broken, corruption unfettered and reforms stalled.

Of course, Moscow will gleefully encourage these internal tensions, and exploit them whenever it can. Russian propaganda, diplomacy and money will lever open whatever splits they find — but the West cut those rifts in the first place.

As a result, the West is divided, distracted and debilitated. Its capacity to resist Russian adventurism is suffering. If Trump begins to look lukewarm about sanctions, for example, the shaky European consensus on maintaining them will evaporate overnight.

How can Russia capitalize on this moment of weakness on the part of the West?

The truth is it won't be able to do much. What, after all, does it have to offer? It could be a little less obstructive in the Middle East, albeit by selling out one of its last allies.

It could let Washington revisit its deal with Iran, but at the cost of one of its major arms customers. It could be a little less confrontational and subversive in Europe, but it's unclear how far Trump would care about that. It could share more intelli-

gence about the Islamic State, but with ten terrorists being detained in Moscow and St Petersburg, this ought to be a greater priority.

The West remains fundamentally stronger in every sense but one. It has social, economic, military, political, and soft power advantage; but Russia has will, a powerful central government without meaningful checks and balances, that can focus resources on its priorities and ignore the limitations and conventions of democratic societies.

In the short term, that looks like power and would-be strongmen from Turkey's Recep Erdogan to Trump are drawn to Putin's example. But it is a kind of power that depends on the temporary weaknesses of others, and is bought at terrible cost. Military adventures and domestic quietude are draining Russia's national reserves, and at the expense of any meaningful economic reform.

Even ostensible friends, from Le Pen to Trump, put their own and their countries' interests first. If they let sanctions slide or turn a blind eye to bloodshed in Syria, it is because they see some advantage to themselves.

This is the best the Kremlin can hope for: a new generation of Western leaders who don't care enough about what it does at home, or in "faraway countries" and to "people of whom we know nothing." But the moment Putin appears to be challenging their direct interests, he may find that authoritarian populists are rather more formidable enemies than multilateralist liberals. **TMT**

La dolce vita in the heart of Russia

The best Italian clinics have opened in Moscow



companies now consider the Russian market one of their priorities. Among these, for example, is GVM Care & Research, one of the largest Italian companies. Advanced technologies, medical innovations and highly qualified doctors are already available in an Italian clinic in central Moscow. In addition, the government considers attracting foreigners to Russia for medical tourism is a priority, and GVM Care & Research meets this requirement fully — their diagnostic center is one of the few, if not the only one, in the country where foreigners can receive support in English and Italian.

From nursing home to international corporation

The global medical tourism industry is estimated by experts at \$439 billion, and by 2025 this figure could rise to \$3 trillion. These data come from a joint study by Visa and Oxford Economics called the Global 2016 Medical Tourism Index (MTI). Italy, according to the study, is among the top ten most attractive countries for medical tourism. Italy is also in the top ten in the Bloomberg ranking of medical care. The World Health Organization, which makes the most comprehensive global estimates of the health system, ranks Italy

second on the entire planet. That is why the country that has long been a Mecca for health pilgrimage from all over the world.

In this context, it is remarkable that, for decades, Italian medicine has developed mainly within the country, and only recently has it been actively promoted on foreign markets. GVM began its ascent in 1973, with the opening of a nursing home in the province of Ravenna, in Cotignola. Today the holding company has a leading place in the country in the fields of health, thermal therapy and medical and scientific research. GVM Care & Research is a network of 23 hospitals and five clinics in Italy and seven clinical centers in France, Poland and Albania. In total, the company has more than 30 GVM Care & Research medical institutions and private medical institutions, with 5000 employees, among whom are 2000 physicians serving patients from all over the world.

The healing sun of Italy

Why is Italy so attractive for foreign tourists? This question has three answers. The first is advanced technology. GVM Care & Research invests most of its revenue each year in innovation. Therefore, for example, the Institute of Clinical Cardiology in Rome is famous throughout the world for its

technology and procedures in interventional cardiology, hemodynamics, electrophysiology, cardiothoracic and vascular surgery. The distinction here is that the institution guarantees the so-called cardiac cycle, providing full and comprehensive care.

The second reason for the attractiveness of Italian clinics is their highly qualified specialists. For example, Maria Cecilia Hospital is proud of its arrhythmology and electrophysiology center. It is also one of the leading centers in the world for treatment of diabetic foot and for thoracic surgery and neurosurgery, for which they prefer to use noninvasive techniques such as the gamma knife (for stereotactic radiosurgery of brain pathologies).

The third, and perhaps most attractive, reason is called wellness tourism. This is integral restoration — both physical and mental. Anywhere in Italy, you can enjoy the sun and spas, take a break from the stress of work, urban living and cold weather, rid yourself of bad habits and recover your fitness. Along with Austria, Germany and Spain, Italy is considered a leader in wellness tourism. Mud baths, balneotherapy, inhalation, gynecological treatments with thermal water and mud, hydrotherapy — you can enjoy all of this, particularly at the Terme di Castrocaro wellness clinic. Its main objective is the elimination of

risk factors in order to improve the quality and length of life.

From Italy with love

Russia, unfortunately, cannot boast of a high position in rankings. According to Bloomberg, it is the penultimate, 54th place for the quality of medical services (Brazil is last). The MTI index places it 34th out of 41. WHO calculations put Russia in 130th place, even behind most of the former Soviet republics. And the economic crisis and optimization of medical services do not foster optimism.

However, it is the crisis that stimulated and attracted foreign investment in the medical field. One of the new priorities for investment for GVM Care & Research is the Russian market. Medical and health treatment abroad is beyond the means of many people, but a little bit of Italy, a taste of la dolce vita, can be enjoyed right in the center of Moscow. GVM has opened a clinic on Smolensky Pereulok. Advanced technology, highly qualified doctors in a number of fields (gynecology, urology, nephrology, neurology, cardiology, ophthalmology) and MRI diagnostics are all provided at budget prices. The Italians see the GVM diagnostic center in Moscow as their calling card and they intend to expand its network to Russian regions.



The GVM Care & Research Center in Moscow:

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Sat. 9:00-21:30,
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4 Looking Forward



Nov. 11 — the Bear Slayer's Day, which commemorates Latvian independence.

The Moscow Times
No. 5781

10%

of Estonia's population sent to Soviet labor camps.

102 km

the length of the Suwalki Gap connecting Lithuania to Poland.



"Estonia is pulling and pushing the rest of Europe into the 21st century based on its example and its efforts." **Toomas Hendrik Ilves**, Estonian head of state

Weekly Forecast*

Freezing of pension savings



Alexander Lorenz
Chairman of the advisory council,
AO NPF SAFMAR

"Russia will now opt to prolong the "freezing" of 2nd pillar contributions.

This means that we will have another moratorium on pension savings being transferred to non-state pension funds — and this time for three straight years. Unfortunately, in Russia, this has already happened for several years in a row. On the other hand it should be considered that pension assets are long-term funding invested in the local economy. This important resource is even more critical in light of the recent lack of foreign direct investment into Russia. Russian pension funds have now already matured to a point where they can be considered institutional investors. Over the last years they have considerably increased their investments into stocks and bonds of local Russian corporates and have participated in the financing of local infrastructure projects. The Russian government is planning to bring the economy back on a path of solid growth. For this to be achieved, it would be imperative to foster long-term savings in general and non-state pension funds in particular.



Pavel Mitrofanov
Managing director for corporate ratings,
the RAEX (Expert RA) agency

"It is not acknowledged, but the latest freeze of pension is a **severe blow** to infrastructure projects in the regions.

The priorities of their budgets are social spending, while roads, the modernization of utilities and medical care, for all their importance, are sidelined and underfunded. Therefore, most of the successful projects in recent years were possible only due to concessions in which private investors have become NPFs. They bought bonds issued by the concession holders to cover long-term financing. Concession papers are of interest to funds: they have high reliability, and the yield covers inflation, saving clients' money. But without the inflow of new funds in NPF system, their ability to finance public-private partnership projects will be exhausted in the near future."



Sergey Belyakov
Head of the Association of NPFs

"Constant freezes of pension savings and frequent changes to the rules on the pension market create **uncertainty** for most people.

They begin to have less trust in the government's policy toward the pension system. They are disappointed. Reform follows reform and, on top of everything else, the government takes funds away from pension savings. The amount of the frozen funds is more than 1 trillion rubles. Plus almost 1.5 trillion rubles that were taken from savings accounts in the moratorium of the previous three years from 2014 to 2016. We should make increasing pensions a priority, not saving federal budget money meant for social spending."



A Holey Alliance

By **Bradley Jardine** b.jardine@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Evgeny Tonkonogy**

Trump's vague stance on NATO has the Balts worried

As the world attempts to stabilize itself following the political earthquake of Donald Trump's election, Europe's eastern frontier is bracing itself for a shaky future.

On Nov. 9, NATO members Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia extended cautious congratulations to the new President-elect. But his unexpected victory was not the result they had hoped for.

Throughout the campaign, the Republican candidate made hostile comments over Baltic security ambitions. He pledged to make the border states pay for their own defense, espoused a more Moscow-friendly foreign policy and indicated he would be scarcely interested in conflicts taking place thousands of kilometers from American shores.

Window to the East

Since regaining independence a quarter of a century ago, the three Baltic states have firmly entrenched themselves within Western security frameworks. They joined both NATO and the EU in 2004, and have been prominent advocates of both structures since.

But this year has brought the sledgehammer blows of the Britain's Brexit vote — withdrawing Britain from the EU — and the election of the NATO-skeptic Mr. Trump.

"The two pillars of our security are weakened," admitted Sandra Kalniete, a Latvian MEP, writing on her Facebook page.

Trump's allies have offered the Baltics scarce comfort over their foreign policy ambitions. One potential Trump secretary of state, Newt Gingrich, recently dismissed the idea of Estonian statehood, arguing that it was practically Russian territory anyway and not worth defending. "I'm not sure I would risk a nuclear war over some place which is in the suburbs of St. Petersburg," he told CBS.

Neighboring Lithuania has also long regarded America as a key pillar to its modern sense of statehood.

If you walk past Vilnius' city hall, you will see an inscription of a 2002 speech by George W. Bush: "anyone who would choose Lithuania as an enemy has also made an enemy of the United States of America." This bold statement was made even prior to Lithuania and the other Baltic states' 2004 incorporation into NATO.

Trump has made the region's security establishment nervous. In July, the head of the Latvian parliament's foreign relations committee, Ojars Eriks Kalnins, branded Trump's statements "very dangerous" and claimed they undermined decades of cooperation with several U.S. administrations.

Immediately southwest of Lithuania is the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, a strategic region that hosts Russian ships and, more recently, nuclear-capable Iskander missiles.

Kaliningrad is sometimes referred to in Western defense circles as Russia's "natural aircraft carrier." It is also an advantageous military staging area. Given Russia's close relationship with neighboring Belarus, forces stationed in Kaliningrad could theoretically close the so-called Suwalki Gap between Poland

and Lithuania in short order. This would cut the Baltics adrift from the rest of Europe.

The second scenario feared by analysts is that of a "hybrid-war" similar to those used in eastern Ukraine and Crimea. Latvia is seen as perhaps the most vulnerable in this regard due to its large ethnic Russian minority — more than a quarter of the population.

Russian TV channels have long been active in the republic, supporting local initiatives like a failed 2012 referendum to make Russian the country's second official language.

Many Russian speakers living in Latvia also argue that they have been denied full democratic participation. A decision to deny Russian speakers automatic citizenship rights in the 1990s left around 300,000 — mostly elderly — people with "non-citizen" status.

A Beacon of Hope

The mood in the Baltics is different to the one in 2014 when Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean peninsula. That was a time of great fear and trepidation. This time around, NATO has been careful to provide firm reassurances. Last week, the organization's secretary-general Jens Stoltenberg issued a direct warning to the president-elect in the form of an op-ed in Britain's Observer newspaper, writing that "going it alone is not an option, either for Europe or for the U.S."

The alliance has pledged to increase its air policing operations and to add 4,000 ground troops, the equivalent of a four international battalions, to the Baltic states and Poland.

"We have implemented the biggest reinforcement of our collective defense since the Cold War. We do not seek to provoke a conflict [with Russia], but to prevent one," Stoltenberg's article read.

Politicians have also urged people not to panic about the Trump presidency. Latvia's Prime Minister Maris Kucinskis told Latvian Independent Television that he expected "stable" commitment to the region.

"We respect the choice of the American people and our policy is not going to change because of that." In addition, Latvia's National Security Committee Head Solvita Aboltina stressed that "Latvia will do its best to build a pragmatic, constructive relationship with the new U.S. administration."

Linas Linkevicius, Lithuania's foreign minister, said he draws comfort from the U.S. Republican party's traditional backing of NATO and its previously solid defense of the Baltics and the rest of Eastern Europe.

There have been a few hints, too, that Trump's criticism of the role of NATO may be tempered once in office. Speaking after a meeting with the President-elect, President Barack Obama said Mr. Trump had assured him there would be "enormous continuity" between the two presidencies, and that the U.S. would remain a "pillar of strength" and "a beacon of hope" to peoples around the globe. **TMT**

Localization in Russia – new opportunities



Vladimir Tchikine
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Associate Director, Head of Commercial Practice / Projects, Goltsblat BLP

It is no a secret at all, crisis and sanctions made a certain impact on the Russian economy, however, that does not necessarily mean an adverse impact. The Russian government learned lessons from the sanctions and the crisis and is now trying to step away from a resource-addicted economy. It is a nice try, as long as it brings certain profits for Russia and companies working here. Import substitution, which is obviously becoming a state strategy, is part of that stepping away, and localization seems to be a logical continuation of that strategy.

One of the steps in this relation is the Special Investment Contract (the "SIC"), which was introduced to support potential investors in transferring business into Russia, creating new facilities and receiving the status of Russian domestic manufacturer. And, of course, the government introduced incentives like preferred access public procurement, tax preferences and overall support and assistance.

The status of Russian domestic manufacturer gives its holder the right to sell domestically produced goods to the government, and may facilitate the sales of such goods to the biggest state-controlled companies of Russia. In addition, an investor that has concluded a SIC can get tax exemptions. There are two ways a foreign investor can get the status. The investor can

conclude an SIC with the Russian Industry and Trade Ministry (the "MIT") or, having fulfilled the established localization criteria without a SIC, obtain confirmation of status from the MIT.

In simple words, the state of Russia gives the investors the right to participate in government procurement in return for investments. This right does not run afoul of Russian WTO commitments because Russia has negotiated observer status in the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement, therefore Russia may establish trade-related measures that otherwise would be inconsistent with the provisions of Article III or Article XI of GATT 1994 for the purpose of government procurement.

The qualifying localization criteria are set in Government Decree 719 of July 17, 2015 (Decree 719). Any manufacturer meeting the criteria may become a domestic manufacturer, however this status needs to be confirmed by the MIT either through a SIC or through special confirmation. There are important differences between an SIC and special confirmation. An SIC makes it possible to attain localization gradually and, in addition to the right to sell to the government, gives the investor the right to tax exemptions with a grandfathering clause, but an SIC requires that the investor make an investment of at least 700 million roubles, the investor can receive the

status of exclusive supplier of the government by investing at least 3 billion roubles. As opposed to that, special confirmation can be granted in case the maximum localization per Decree 719 has been achieved and does not give the right to any tax exemption. However, there is no investment obligation.

Furthermore, the failure of the investor to fulfil the localization schedule and/or to make the required investments may lead to an early termination of an SIC that will imply that the investor is liable to pay the tax arrears resulting from tax exemptions and special tax treatment granted to it and a late-payment penalty.

The special tax treatment is set forth in relation to local taxes (or the local part of the federal taxes). In particular, in certain regions of Russia, the local part of the income tax is set to zero. Also, other taxes are significantly reduced, and such preferences are deemed to be in force for several years.

This seems to be a great support from the federal and local government. Of course, such tax preferences are subject to certain requirements to be met, but nevertheless, the parties (the investor and the government) may to a certain extent agree on a few provisions in the contract that may relate to the taxation.

By itself, the decision to localize in Russia is, in fact, a decision to conduct large-scale investments. Such decisions, especially in a situation where the price of commodities is falling and rouble is getting weaker, can be made without expert opinion or a detailed analysis of the investment options. And anyway, localization requires the transfer of technologies into Russia and development of Russian-based technology.

Of course, nothing prevents private companies, or even state-owned companies, from investing in the development of new technologies and improving or transferring existing ones. In 2014, the MIT and the Energy Ministry considered that, for example, an effective mechanism for technological development of the chemical complex would be the localization of foreign enterprises and joint ventures with foreign companies for the purpose of technology transfer. However, the MIT started thinking some time ago about 'reverse engineering' — the Ministry plans to establish a Reverse Engineering Center headed by the Development of Industry Fund. Apparently, it will be used for developing domestic analogs of imported equipment.

Reverse engineering itself, and its industrial use, may cause a lot of legal disputes and problems for the end users of such equipment. For example, if equipment created through reverse engineering violated the rights and interests of the relevant technologies' owners, the latter would be entitled to apply to the court for protection of their rights, including demanding that use of the equipment stop.

However, it doesn't seem to be a problem at all in projects where technologies are transferred by investors to their own facilities and localized enterprises.

In light of all that, and given that legislation with regard to the SIC is very new and requires a kind of adaptation period, we believe that the government would do better to closely follow up the processes, starting from requirements (which in certain cases may be differentiated), precontract negotiations, contract execution and the performance of the same.

GOLTSBLAT BLP

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* **Goltsblat BLP** is the Russian practice of **Berwin Leighton Paisner (BLP)**, an award-winning international law firm headquartered in London and with offices operating in major commercial and financial centres throughout the world — Moscow, Abu Dhabi, Beijing, Berlin, Brussels, Dubai, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Paris and Singapore, Tel Aviv and Yangon. The firm has a team of 100 Russian, English and US law qualified lawyers based in Moscow and over 800 lawyers in the other international offices. **Goltsblat BLP** currently has over 1300 clients among the major international investors operating in Russia, including 37 Fortune 500 companies.

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РЕКЛАМА

6 Looking Forward

The Moscow Times
No. 5781

"LinkedIn strongly supports freedom of expression and fundamentally disagrees with government censorship." LinkedIn CEO **Jeff Weiner** on expanding to China



5Mln
number of registered LinkedIn users in Russia.

400Mln
number of registered LinkedIn users around the world.

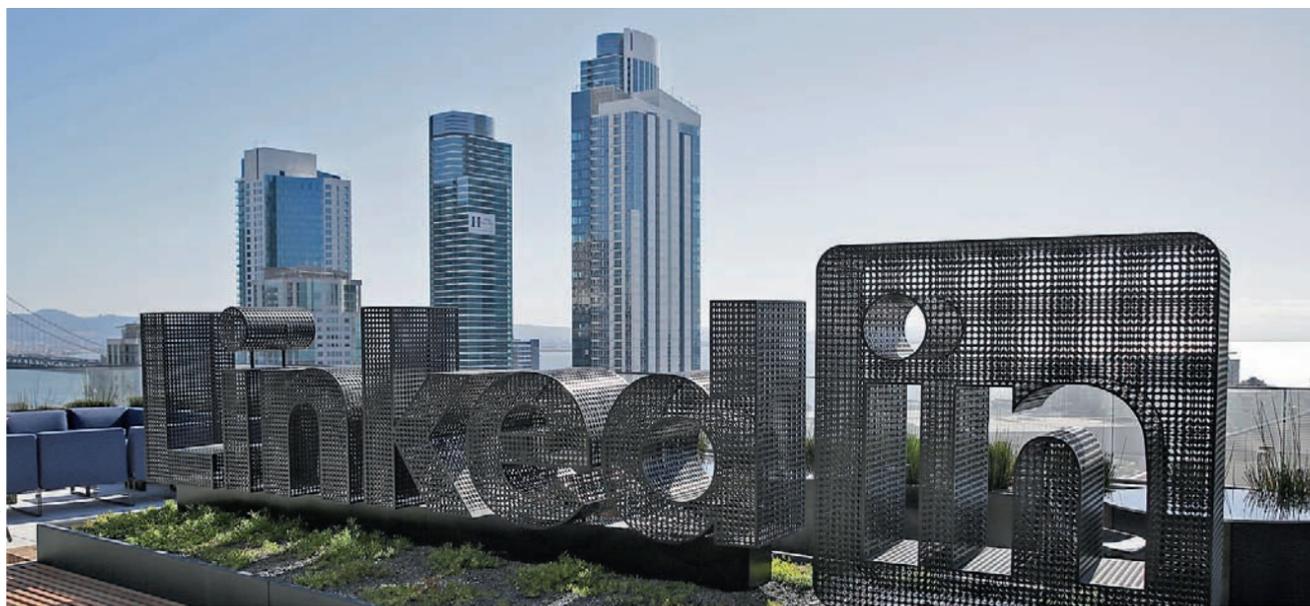


"[LinkedIn] have a bad track record: Every year there's a major scandal about the safety of user data."
Vadim Ampelonsky, Roskomnadzor

LinkedOut

By **Natalia Suvorova** newsreporter@imedia.ru

Russia is poised to ban the world's largest job searching engine. The business world is not impressed



ERIC RISBERG / AP

LinkedIn may not be the most popular social network in Russia, but its problems with Russian authorities may be a sign of a broader clampdown to come.

After the ban is implemented, Russian users are likely to opt for local job search websites but here they will find that their options are limited. There is currently no Russian alternative to LinkedIn. Perhaps the nearest analog, MoiKrug, a professional network bought by Russian giant Yandex in 2007, has been gradually losing audiences and finally narrowed its scope down to a job search network exclusively for the IT sphere. In 2015, Yandex sold it to Tematicheskies Media.

Another competitor, Professional.ru, features more user-generated content and acts as a social network with job listings. The company claims to have over 6 million registered users, but only about 30 percent of them are regular visitors that open the website once a month.

Maria Lemeshkina, executive director of the platform, said she expected LinkedIn's problems to have a positive effect on the company's market share. "We anticipate a new influx of users to our website."

Regardless of the reasons for the LinkedIn ban, it seems unlikely to be Roskomnadzor's last move. The concern now is that the regulator will turn its sights to more popular foreign networking sites and internet services. **TMT**

On Nov. 10, Moscow's Tagansky Court upheld an earlier decision by Russian state regulator Roskomnadzor to block the American tech giant from the Russian market. The ban, which is expected to come in force in the coming days, is the first application of a controversial 2014 law that obliges tech companies to store personal data on servers within the Russia.

Roskomnadzor's move on LinkedIn took industry insiders by surprise. Many had considered the 2014 law unenforceable, and LinkedIn is hardly alone in processing user data away from Russian shores.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Olga Golodets has insisted the LinkedIn ban is no big deal, claiming the disappearance of LinkedIn from the Russian Internet would not impact on the country's labor market.

But Russian businesses and job seekers think otherwise.

Yevgeniya Dvorskaya, the founder of JungleJobs, a Russian search engine that connects recruiters with companies, said she was worried about the consequences of the potential ban for her business. Her company has over 500 professional recruiters on its platform, and using LinkedIn is essential in their work. "This will be a real blow to the industry," she told The Moscow Times.

What makes LinkedIn so valuable for recruiters around the world is its easy to use resume database and social network function. Unlike conventional job search sites, it has extensive search settings. Most of its functions do not require paid subscription.

For Dvorskaya, the most important advantage of the site is that users do not openly declare they are looking for a job but, at the same time, they are open to new career opportunities. "Compared to

regular job sites, it's a much more subtle way of communication," said Dvorskaya.

The ban on LinkedIn will hurt Russian job seekers as much as recruiters, says Anna Imas, former general director at Job.ru, one of Russia's largest job search engines.

"We have been building many of our business relations via LinkedIn, and it will be sad if it gets blocked eventually," he said.

ALLEN & OVERY

Allen & Overy strengthens its Moscow Corporate practice with the arrival of Belinda Mancktelow as Counsel



Belinda Mancktelow

In November 2016 Belinda Mancktelow joined Allen & Overy's Moscow Corporate team as an English law Counsel from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP, where she had worked since 2015. Prior to that Belinda worked for Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom LLP in London from 2006 to 2012 and in Moscow from 2012 to 2015. Belinda is an English-qualified M&A and private equity lawyer with a blue-chip London background, excellent negotiation and transaction structuring skills and extensive experience of leading deals in Russia and the emerging markets. She has an in-depth understanding of the interests and needs of both Western and Russian/CIS financial and trade clients across a range of industries including mining, oil & gas, financial services and telecoms.

Belinda's arrival will strengthen Allen & Overy's Moscow top-tier Corporate practice, which has established capability advising leading Russian and multinational companies on complex domestic and cross-border transactions across key business sectors.

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Out & About



November 17 – 23, 2016

7

Weekly round-up of all that's new, delicious and fun in Moscow.



KRASNODAR BISTRO / FACEBOOK



The owner of Krasnodar Bistro has decided that it's about time for hearty Cossack cuisine to make its mark on Moscow's gastronomic scene.

Krasnodar Bistro

By **Andrei Muchnik** artsreporter@imedia.ru

A tribute to Russia's south

Krasnodar Bistro is the latest addition to the growing empire of butcher-turned-restaurateur Tahir Kholikberdiyev, the brains and brawn behind meat-lover's paradise Yuzhane and Rebro Adama, a stall at the trendy Danilovsky Market.

The meat comes from Tahir's full cycle meat farm in the Krasnodar region, where cows are grown, butchered and then served at a restaurant called Skotina (Cattle). Krasnodar region is also known as Kuban, the home of Kuban Cossacks. With this opening, Kholikberdiyev has decided that it's about time for the hearty

Cossack cuisine to make its mark on Moscow's gastronomic scene.

Krasnodar Bistro has opened on upmarket Bolshaya Dmitrovka, next to other gourmet hot spots like Teknikum and Moloko.

The menu is full of southern specialties, some of them with a twist. Start with surprising tomato salad that includes popcorn, cheese and corn oil (390 rubles).

Then move on to the Kuban fish pie (490 rubles) which looks something like a hybrid of a French quiche and a lamb kebab. It's served with plum candy that melts in your mouth and

feijoa-pineapple guava paste (690 rubles).

The biggest surprise on the menu is nutria, also known as river rat or coypu. Although nutria originated in South America, it has spread all over the world and today it is mostly bred for its fur.

In Russia's South, nutria meat, which shares a taste similar to that of rabbit, has been popular for a long time.

Kholikberdiyev made the bold decision to introduce it to Moscow's foodies, or at least those who aren't afraid of the word "rat". At Krasnodar Bistro you can try nutria in a burger

(550 rubles), fried dumplings (390 rubles), hot dogs (350 rubles) or even in "golubtsi"—stuffed cabbage and vine leaves (550 rubles).

Cossack food goes down a treat with the "Cossack" craft beer from Ant Brewery in Krasnodar (280 rubles). If you are feeling adventurous, try the traditional Russian bread wine or "polugar." Opt for the polugar served with garlic and pepper (620 rubles) and or rye (740 rubles).

+7 (495) 692 6295

facebook.com/pg/krasnodarbistro
9 Ulitsa Bolshaya Dmitrovka
Metro Okhotny Ryad, Teatralnaya

NEWS & OPENINGS



NOMI / FACEBOOK

Nomi

Japanese with a twist

Nomi is an izakaya, the Japanese version of a gastropub. The eatery is named for its main specialty—okonomiyaki—a Japanese savory pancake filled with pork or squid (400 rubles). There are several types of Japanese kebab, from scallop (350 rubles) to chicken hearts (150 rubles). Chase it with a sake tasting set (300 rubles) and imagine yourself in Tokyo.

+7 (968) 322 0848

facebook.com/nomimoscow
9 Kalashny Pereulok
Metro Arbatskaya, Pushkinskaya



HELL'S PIZZA / FACEBOOK

Hell's Pizza

A slice of New York City

This new pizza joint in Kitai-Gorod has taken slice pizza to a whole new level, with creative new toppings, barista-style coffee, and delicious craft beer. If you like your pizza spicy go for the "Motorhead"—black dough, pepperoni and chili pepper. For the true New York pizza experience dig into an "on the go"—deconstructed meatballs and lashings of cheese.

+7 (916) 774 2068

facebook.com/hellspizzaa
8 Maroseyka Ulitsa
Metro Kitai-Gorod



UNTITLED BAR / FACEBOOK

Untitled Bar

Creatives' paradise

This hipster bar's exposed brick interior and minimalist modern furniture give it a decidedly Brooklyn vibe. The menu is simple, but healthy and delicious. The business lunch will give you the most bang for your buck—soup, salad, two dishes and coffee or tea for only 300 rubles and if you go in the evening you might catch an art lecture or talk as you sip on cocktails.

+7 (967) 118 1409

facebook.com/untitledhub
15 Ulitsa Petrovka, Bldg.1
Metro Chekhovskaya, Pushkinskaya



BEAR BURGERS / FACEBOOK

Bear Burgers

100 percent meaty goodness

"Not another burger joint!" we hear you cry. Bear burgers started out as a small grill serving customers on the summer veranda at Beer Brothers Bar. They went down a treat and this autumn sees Bear Burgers open its own spot in the northeast of the city. Try the "Sweet Red"—a beef burger with cheddar, smoked bacon, rucola cheese and red cowberry sauce (350 rubles).

+7 (985) 264 6417

facebook.com/BearBurgers/
12 Preobrazhenskaya Ploshchad
Metro Preobrazhenskaya Ploshchad

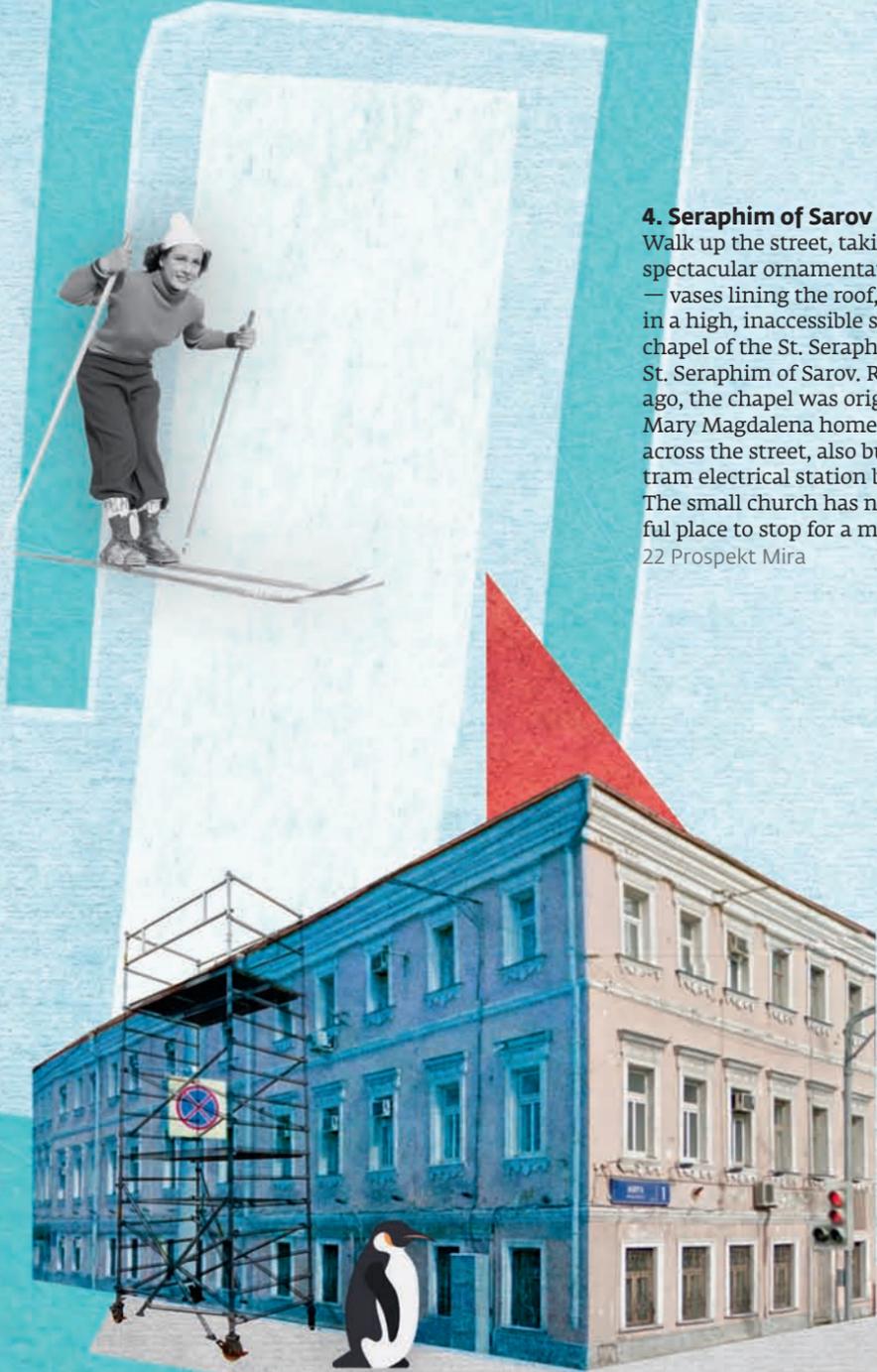
Take it and go!

Four pages packed with the best places in Moscow to eat, drink, walk, shop, listen, watch, dance and sightsee. A new walking route and listings every week! **Take it, use it, save it!**

Where Prospekt Mira Begins Pre-Revolutionary Treasures On a Soviet Avenue

By **Michele A. Berdy** m.berdy@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Oleg Borodin**

Discover beautiful architecture, explore the Silver Age and visit a tropical forest — all in a few blocks of Prospekt Mira



4. Seraphim of Sarov Chapel

Walk up the street, taking in the classical houses with their spectacular ornamentation: wreaths, lions and my favorite — vases lining the roof, just in case you need to grow flowers in a high, inaccessible spot. Soon you'll come upon the lovely chapel of the St. Seraphim Diveyevo Convent, built in honor of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Returned to the church just a few years ago, the chapel was originally built in 1912. It matches the St. Mary Magdalena home for children with vision impairment across the street, also built in 1912, and the charming little tram electrical station building at No. 17, built the same year. The small church has new frescos but old icons, and is a peaceful place to stop for a moment of quiet contemplation.

22 Prospekt Mira



Prospekt Mira

2. Romanov Tavern

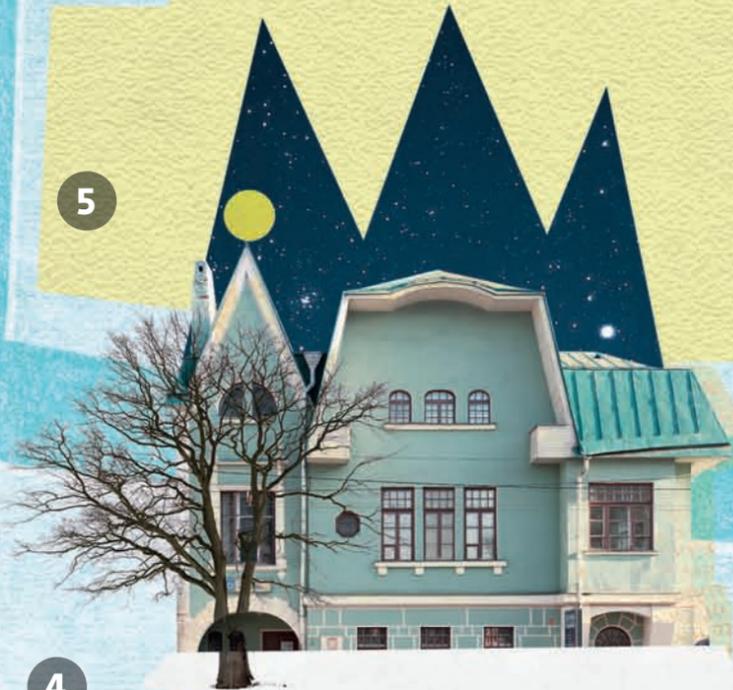
Walk to the corner of Prospekt Mira, noting the small turret on the corner with a bas relief of happy workers frozen in their celebration of 1954. After the Sukharev Tower was torn down in 1934, the city planners redesigned the street and put up turrets on the buildings at the corners of Prospekt Mira. They were originally decorated with the date 1939, the year of the economic achievement exhibition at the end of the avenue, but later changed to it to 1954, when the exhibition opened again after the war. The street was named Prospekt Mira (Peace Avenue) in 1957 in honor of the wildly popular Soviet youth festival. But despite all this new construction, this part of the street has retained its pre-Revolutionary ambience. On the far side of the street is the old Romanov Tavern building, which for a couple of centuries provided good simple fare to the locals and visitors to the famous flea market held here. Its Soviet turret was dismantled. Next to it is a charming apartment house from 1885, and then at No. 5 is a pretty pink bit of froth that was the home of the Perlov family, famous for their tea imports.

1 Prospekt Mira

2

Sadovaya Koltso

5



6

6. Apothecary Garden

Backtrack on Prospekt Mira to the small mall on the left. Go inside to the second floor to get a ticket to the Apothecary Garden, and make your way carefully down the ice and snow-covered metal stairs (really, safety inspectors?) to enter the garden. Founded in 1706 by order of Peter the Great, this land on the outskirts of the city was used to grow medicinal herbs and later became a botanical garden of Moscow State University. There is some pleasure in walking along the clean, snow-covered paths in near-silence, but of course the garden is more interesting in the warm months of the year. But that's not why you're here. You're here to go into the lush, humid, sweet-smelling greenhouse filled with orchids and palm trees, vines, and trees. Cheaper than a trip to Bali, weekly infusions of the greenhouse may help you make it to the other end of winter with your sanity intact. After this little bit of tropical heaven, head back to the mall and have a bite to eat in one of the dozen or so cafes. And then, when you feel up to it, head back to the metro and home.

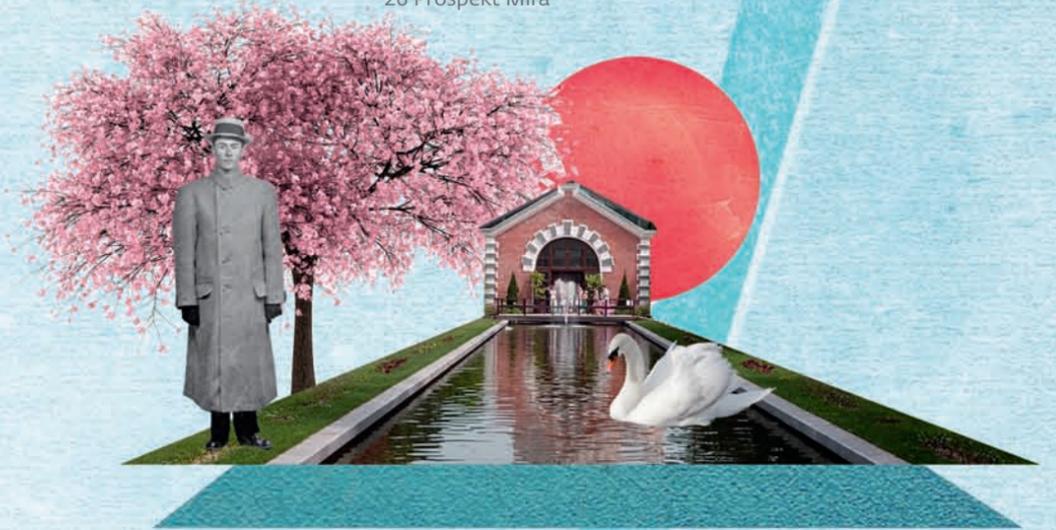
26 Prospekt Mira

4

5. Museum of the Silver Age

Walk up until you see a cozy little style moderne house on the right, just past the small mall. From 1910 to 1924, the poet, writer, critic, translator Valery Bryusov lived in the downstairs apartment of this apartment house. After he died, his wife continued to live in the apartment until 1965. After the building was repaired and reconstructed, it became the Museum of the Silver Age — that extraordinary flowering of the arts at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Today you can see something very rare: a writer's study that is almost exactly the way it was when the writer lived there, down to the books on the shelves and furniture (spectacular style moderne to match the house). Upstairs are four more rooms with displays of theater posters, first editions, portraits, photographs and other literary ephemera. Most is in Russian, but you can understand a lot by just gazing at the book designs. The museum also holds lectures, theatrical events, and other activities.

30 Prospekt Mira



3. Gatehouse

The start of Prospekt Mira is known more for its traffic jams than its architecture, but if you walk up the street — either on a quiet Sunday morning or in a mask to block the car exhaust fumes — you'll see some treasures. On the right side of the street, look at No. 4. It was an addition to a house owned by the wife of a wealthy merchant. As you can see, this lovely bit of style moderne architecture, built in 1909 by Semyon Kulagin, was really once a gatehouse.

4 Prospekt Mira

1. Sheremetyev Hospital

This walk begins outside the Sukharevskaya metro station on the north side of the Ring Road. Here, in the late 1790s, under the shadow of the landmark Sukharev Tower, Count Nikolai Sheremetyev decided to build a hospital for the indigent. He commissioned the work from the architect Yelizvoi Nazarov, a protégé of the famous architect of classicism Vasily Bazhenov, to make something that looks more like a country manor house than an almshouse. The rounded walls seem to embrace the round Trinity Church in the center. It opened in 1810 and served the poor until after the Revolution. Now it is part of the Sklifosovsky Hospital and Institute, the city's premier emergency care hospital, which has dozens of facilities behind the house. Unfortunately, one of the buildings seems to crouch over the elegant old hospital, with the name of the institute divided by the cupola. Just keep your eyes down on the building.

3 Bolshaya Sukharevskaya Ploshchad



3

Bolshaya Sukharevskaya Ploshchad

1



**Tom Hiscock**, General Electric

I enjoy **Kitaisky Lyotchik** on Lubyansky Proyezd. Whether you're sipping tea or enjoying the dynamic beer-fuelled main stage, it's a great place to wallow in some live music and escape the atmosphere of "face control."



VOZDUH-STUDIO

Exercise Classes With an Edge

Hats off to you if you're still hitting the icy pavements for your morning run, but most of us are aiming to stay indoors as much as physically possible this winter. Good news then that Moscow is bursting with exercise classes where you can stay in shape, try something new and avoid braving the elements. Here are our top picks.



RAISKY

Hip Hop Dance

Shake it Out

Tired of yoga mats and zen and feel like you just need to dance away your frustrations to upbeat music? Raisky dance studio offers hip hop classes from English speaking teachers where you get your heart pumping and enjoy a party atmosphere as you strengthen your arms, legs, thighs and core muscles. Besides hip hop you can also try your feet at jazz funk, contemporary, dance hall, booty dance, and more. Move over Beyonce.

+8(495) 505-16-46

raisky.com

6/1 Pyatnitskaya Ulitsa, Bldg. 8
Metro Novokuznetskaya



TOPSTRETCHING / FACEBOOK

Aerial Yoga

Defy gravity

If you're tired of traditional yoga classes but still want to work on your balance and flexibility, why not try aerial yoga? As the name suggests, it's a way of improving your range of motion while hanging in a cozy ribbon hammock. Don't be intimidated, these classes are suitable for beginners because they help stretch stiff muscles through relaxation techniques without over-extending. Top Stretching has four locations in the city and multiple classes per day so there are no excuses not to give it a go, wherever you are and whatever your level.

topstretching.ru

Various locations



SLIFE

Pole Dancing

Strength and agility

Anyone who has ever tried pole dancing will agree it's a serious full-body workout. But it's also a great opportunity to let down your hair and twirl away the stress of a week at work. And don't worry, you don't need to have abs of steel to get the most of a class at Slife because the instructors are accustomed to complete newbies. In addition to pole dancing classes, you can also try your hand at striplastika dance classes — recommended for those who are not keen on heights — and break dance. First timers can try any class for a special price of between 200 and 350 rubles.

+7(495) 648-8048

slife.net

12 Leningradsky Prospekt
Metro Belorusskaya



WANGLINSCHOOL

Tai Chi

Find your inner balance

Tai chi is well known for its calming effect and health benefits. Like yoga, tai chi relieves stress and anxiety while toning the body through graceful stretches. Steady flowing movements glide your body from

pose to pose, allowing you to keep your own pace while letting your mind wander. Based on coordination rather than muscular tension, tai chi has shown to be a particularly good form of activity for the elderly. You can try tai chi at Slife studio or, if you want to get serious, you can try the Moscow Wanglin school of tai chi located near Komsomolskaya metro station. Note that it's necessary to sign up for a class in advance and that instructors only speak Russian.

+7(495) 225 7674

wanglinschool.org

14/1 Novoryanzanskaya Ulitsa
Metro Komsomolskaya



VOZDUH-STUDIO

Body Ballet

Tone and stretch

Body ballet focuses on the benefits of classical training such as posture, alignment, and flexibility, but combined with a grueling workout. Body ballet is often recommended for those looking to strengthen muscles and shed a few pounds through a combination of aerobic activity and traditional ballet practice. Body ballet hasn't properly taken off in Western countries yet, so you'll be ahead of the curve if you try it here in Moscow. Several fitness centers offer body ballet classes, including Vozdukh studio, which offers a trial class for just 300 rubles.

+7 (499) 704 3221

vozduh-studio.ru

11 3rd Samotechny Pereulok, Bldg.1
Metro Dostoyevskaya



The Moscow Times
CONFERENCES

DECEMBER 13
MARRIOTT ROYAL AURORA

TOP 10 LEGAL DISPUTES: PAST AND PRESENT PRACTICES OF CIVIL DISPUTES

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"This is, of course, a difficult event. It's beyond my comprehension."
Prime Minister **Dmitry Medvedev**

2013

Ulyukayev appointed economy minister.



Ulyukayev is the first serving minister to be arrested since Stalin's secret police chief Lavrenty Beria was detained in 1953. High-level officials were arrested in 1991 and 1993 in a time of huge political turmoil.

>59Mln rubles

Ulyukayev's income declaration last year.



The Loyalty of Fear

By **Eva Hartog** and **Mikhail Fishman** newsreporter@imedia.ru | Illustration by **Sofia Miroedova**

Unexpected arrest of economic minister sends a sharp message to Russia's elite

It was an awkward, dramatic national moment for Russia: a bonafide minister of the federal government standing in court as the defendant, facing corruption charges and pleading to be released on bail.

In court, Economic Development Minister Alexei Ulyukayev described himself as the "victim of a provocation." Though he's not imminently prison bound, Ulyukayev is now at the center of an unprecedented shift in Russia's anti-corruption campaign, which has been in full swing for the past two years. If convicted, Ulyukayev faces up to 15 years in prison.

Political elites in Moscow can scarcely remember anything as shocking as the arrest of a serving federal minister. Virtually no one saw this coming.

What The Hell Is Going On?

Ulyukayev was detained in the middle of the night, before dawn on Nov.15, after spending several hours at the office of Rosneft, Russia's state-controlled oil behemoth.

According to a humiliating report published in the pro-Kremlin Life tabloid, Ulyukayev initially thought the federal investigators who arrested him were performing some elaborate hoax. "What the hell is going on here?" he asked repeatedly, as they carted him away. The minister's team was already on a plane en route to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in Peru. Ulyukayev was booked on a flight leaving the next day, set to accompany President Vladimir Putin to the summit.

Ulyukayev is charged with extorting a \$2-million bribe from Rosneft, in exchange for a "positive assessment" on its bid to purchase half of the recently nationalized oil company Bashneft.

Even before the charges against Ulyukayev, the sale of the Russian government's 50-percent stake in Bashneft to Rosneft represented an important test of the state's commitment to privatization. The government only recently reacquired its shares in Bashneft, after its chief shareholder was arrested on vague money-laundering charges that were later dropped. The sale of the Kremlin's stake in Bashneft spiraled into a tug-of-war between the federal government and Rosneft, which is led by Igor Sechin, an influential and long-time ally of Putin.

Along with other prominent government officials, such as deputy prime ministers Igor Shuvalov and Arkady Dvorkovich, and Finance Minister Anton Siluanov, at first Ulyukayev openly opposed Rosneft's bid, arguing that selling Bashneft to another state-controlled company negated the whole purpose of privatization. (Two insiders tell The Moscow Times, however, that Ulyukayev's opposition to the sale

was always weaker than the objections of his colleagues.)

And then came the dramatic flip: in October, government ministers suddenly dropped their objections to the sale, giving the deal a green light. Even Putin expressed his surprise at the abruptness of it all, before consenting to the deal, as well, and announcing that the Bashneft shares had been sold at market price, with Rosneft paying \$5 billion for half of Bashneft.

Absolute Shock

Investigators say Ulyukayev was caught red-handed after a months-long sting operation in which the Federal Security Service wiretapped his phone. According to investigative reporters at the Novaya Gazeta newspaper, however, Ulyukayev never touched the money himself, which was merely discovered inside a bank safe. If true, it might explain why there's no footage of Ulyukayev handling a suitcase of cash — images that are usually broadcast widely as a form of negative publicity in cases like this.

Police say they're not releasing visual evidence in Ulyukayev's case, in the interests of the investigation, but claim traces of the illicit money were detected on the defendant's hands when he was detained.

From the outset, investigators have emphasized repeatedly that the legality of Rosneft's acquisition of Bashneft's shares is not in question. In other words, Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin doesn't need to worry about police battering down his door. Indeed, it was Rosneft employees who first appealed to law enforcement, investigators said in a special statement, and that is how Ulyukayev came under scrutiny.

Investigators say Ulyukayev used threats to extort the bribe from Rosneft — an accusation that elicits nervous laughter from Moscow elites.

"For people like us, who have known Alexei Ulyukayev for more than 30 years, this has all come as an absolute shock," wrote Anatoly Chubais, the head of Rosnano, a state-controlled technology firm, in a post on Facebook. "They are saying Ulyukayev was threatening Rosneft and extorting a bribe. Have I suddenly stopped understanding something about this world?"

The consensus among experts and insiders is that Ulyukayev posed little threat to Igor Sechin, whose influence and position in Putin's informal hierarchy is far higher. "Ulyukayev threatening Rosneft on an issue that Putin decides? It's crazy," agrees political analyst Gleb Pavlovsky.

Others have highlighted irregularities in the version of events presented by federal investigators. "Taking the bribe one month after the deal just doesn't make any sense," a source close to the

government told The Moscow Times. The size of the bribe, moreover — \$2 million to approve a deal worth \$5 billion — also seems suspiciously modest. And Ulyukayev is hardly cash-strapped: according to recent assets declarations, he's one of Russia's wealthiest state officials, with 16 hectares (40 acres) of land to his name, as well as three homes and three apartments.

Putin's Message

The shocking arrest would have been unthinkable without approval from the very top of the Russian government. Indeed, shortly after police took Ulyukayev into custody, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that Putin had been aware of the case "from the start of the investigative operations."

Ulyukayev's immediate manager, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, on the other hand, only learned about the case the day before the arrest, according to one insider source, who described the extortion case as an enormous blow to Medvedev's government, which was "already highly demoralized" and is now in danger of becoming "totally demoralized."

Appearing in the State Duma, hours after the arrest, Medvedev couldn't conceal his deep shock. "This is a very hard development for the government — it's beyond comprehension," he said, adding, "I discussed it with the president yesterday, and he thinks the same."

Political journalist Konstantin Gaaze doubts Medvedev's claims about solidarity with the president, given that Putin was apparently one of the officials who orchestrated the entire case against Ulyukayev.

"President Putin takes responsibility — that's the main message here," Pavlovsky argues. "This was the president's special op, and the federal police were nothing more than a helping hand."

The Kremlin's fight against corruption is notoriously selective, and prosecutions invariably signal conflicts behind closed doors, between different powerful officials and business interests. Nevertheless, Ulyukayev's arrest has no precedent, and it's left Russia's elites stunned and scratching their heads.

Whatever the motivation, Putin's message to the elite with Ulyukayev's arrest is perfectly clear, says Pavlovsky: "The condition of your work and status is that, at any moment, a criminal case can be opened against you. It's the loyalty of fear: 'As long as you're afraid of me, I trust you.'"

Within 24 hours of Ulyukayev's detainment, Putin fired him from his position as economic development minister. Under house arrest, Ulyukayev now awaits his trial and its potentially grave consequences. **TMT**



"Russia doesn't understand the danger. It warrants unpopular, but effective solutions." **Vadim Pokrovsky**, Federal Center for Fighting AIDS

The Moscow Times
No. 5781

854,187

Russians registered as living with HIV.

1.2-1.4Mln

estimated number of Russians with HIV, both diagnosed and undiagnosed.



According to Russia's Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova, the HIV epidemic is also spreading among well-to-do heterosexual couples.



DMITRY MARKOV

Russia's medical infrastructure is worn-out, underfunded, and hardly capable of dealing with a massive public health crisis.

Wishing Away a Problem

By **Daria Litvinova** d.litvinova@imedia.ru | Twitter: @dashalitvinov

Epidemiologists have developed the means to stop HIV in its tracks, but Russia is barely listening. Meanwhile, the number of new cases threatens to spiral out of control.

The tired, gray-haired epidemiologist in charge of inpatients at the Moscow Center for Fighting and Prevention of AIDS, says that Russia's HIV epidemic is exaggerated. "Journalists have very loud mouths," he mutters under his breath, before signing the papers to authorize a HIV test.

And yet here, inside the unfriendly, shabby corridors of the three-story building in eastern Moscow, there is standing room only. The benches and chairs are all fully occupied. Men, women, expectant mothers, pensioners, married couples spend hours in lines — arguing about whose turn comes next, who goes in after who.

As of Sept. 30, there were 854,187 Russians registered as liv-

ing with HIV. The number has been growing steadily since late 1990s, and has been increasing while the number of new cases has been falling in developed countries. In 2015, 95,475 new HIV cases were registered. During the first nine months of 2016, another 75,962 HIV diagnoses were handed out. UNAIDS has reported that Russia has the largest HIV epidemic in the European Region, and one of the fastest growing HIV epidemics in the world.

"The HIV epidemic in Russia is not an abstract, theoretical threat. As noted at the highest levels of the Russian government, HIV in Russia has reached a critical level, and the epidemic is getting worse by the day," Vinay Saldanha, UNAIDS regional director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, told The Moscow Times.

Indeed, for the first time in decades, Russian officials seem to be alarmed. Just last week, Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova described the situation as "critical." And two weeks earlier, Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev signed off on a new government strategy designed to get the epidemic under control by 2020.

The Medvedev strategy is, however, conspicuously vague. For the most part, it describes the importance of preventing the spread of the infection and treating those already infected. How exactly the government intended to do this with policy changes and action is less clear.

The world already knows quite a bit about HIV, and there are few excuses for not dealing with it. "Other than being able to completely cure someone — and scientists are already getting close to cure someone with HIV — we certainly know how to stop it," says Saldanha.

Russia's 'Patient Zero'

Russian authorities started monitoring HIV in 1985. For more than a decade, the situation was under control. But in 1997-1998, HIV numbers increased dramatically, as the virus spread to intravenous drug users.

Drug users were Russia's collective "patient zero," says Vadim Pokrovsky, head of the Moscow-based Federal Center

for Fighting AIDS, and Russia's most eminent HIV specialist. "In the 1990s, the ruble became a convertible currency, which meant that huge amounts of money could be earned selling drugs," he says. Hungry for cash, drug dealers increased the circle of addiction among young Russians. At some point, HIV started spreading among them.

Today, more than 50 percent of new cases are from drug use. "This is where it starts," says Pokrovsky. "Drug users have sexual contacts and infect other people, who, in turn, infect their partners."

The epidemic might have been nipped in the bud, had Russian authorities implemented timely drug substitution programs. This treatment is generally considered one of the cornerstones of HIV prevention. Not only does it prevent people from getting the virus via dirty needles in the first place, but it also helps infected drug users stick to HIV treatment regimens.

"It is difficult to make sure drug users take the medicine," says Pokrovsky. "But if you have substitution programs, you can offer HIV medicine together with the substance that substitutes drugs."

Implementation of the substitution therapy was under discussion in the 1990s, but it never achieved widespread support. Reactionaries within government staged a rearguard action against the programs, and some HIV specialists argued against it.

And the number of HIV patients continued to grow.

The One Percent

In December 2015, the number of cumulative registered cases of HIV in Russia reached over 1 million (this includes more than 200,000 who have already died from the virus.) Together with undiagnosed cases, the prevalence of HIV in the Russian population is today estimated at 1.2-1.4 million, according to Pokrovsky.

"One percent of the entire Russian population, age 15-49, is diagnosed with HIV," says Saldanha. "This is very alarming."

Even as Russia passed the 1 million milestone, it showed little fight in trying to turn the tide. The funds available for



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“Almost all the 850,000 diagnosed with HIV have at least one sexual partner, that’s another 850,000 at acute risk.” **Vinay Saldanha**, UNAIDS

25%

of HIV fund should be spent on prevention measures.



The epidemic is getting worse this year, the Federal Center for Fighting AIDS found. More people get sick and more people die.

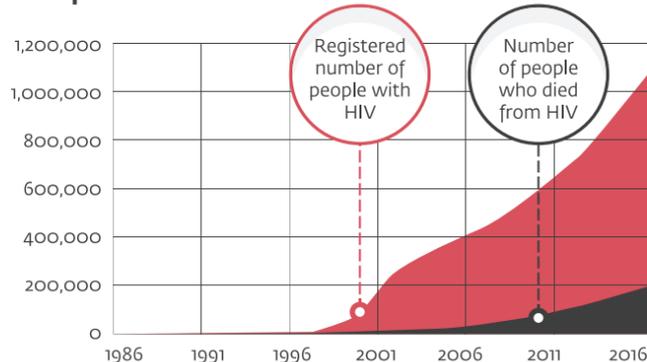
261,557

people are on treatment, which is 30.6% of Russians registered as living with HIV.

Drug Costs in BRICS Countries (per patient per year)



HIV Epidemic in Russia



Source: Federal Center for Fighting AIDS, UNAIDS

dealing with HIV are currently only sufficient to cover treatment for 261,557 patients, less than one third of those officially diagnosed. The country’s HIV infrastructure is worn out and outdated. Little more than 100 AIDS centers operate across the country. They provide treatment and medical care to HIV patients, but resources are stretched and there is no spare capacity.

Treatment itself is of low quality and often irregular, says Andrei Skvortsov, a coordinator at the “Patients In Control” project, which monitors medication supplies all over the country. In the past six years, the project has received dozens of complaints about medication shortages in different Russian regions. Skvortsov expects the shortages will only continue, given the fact that the budget for HIV treatment remains flat, while drug prices are on the up.

“The worst thing is that health officials are now opting to buy cheaper drugs, and some of them have awful side effects,” Skvortsov says. “Their logic is: ‘you’re going to take whatever we give you.’”

What is more, the treatment is also only usually guaranteed at an advanced stage of the disease, when the patient’s immune status reaches 350 CD4 cells or less (compared to 700-1100 CD4 cells of a healthy immune system). “The latest Russian clinical guidelines still state that anyone with HIV should be treated, but in most regions, clinicians initiate treatment only at 350 [CD4 cells] or under,” says Saldanha. “By contrast, most countries in Europe, Asia and Africa are quickly moving to implement WHO’s latest recommendations for ‘test and treat,’ which is essential to ensure that people with HIV stay healthy and do not transmit HIV to others.”

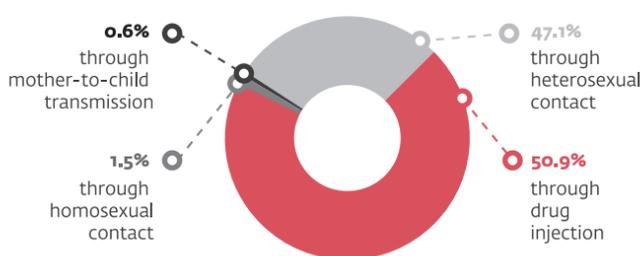
WHO’s new HIV treatment guidelines recommend that everyone with an HIV diagnosis is offered access to immediate HIV treatment, regardless of CD4 count. By immediately tackling infectiousness, it has contributed significantly to containing the disease in more advanced countries.

90-90-90

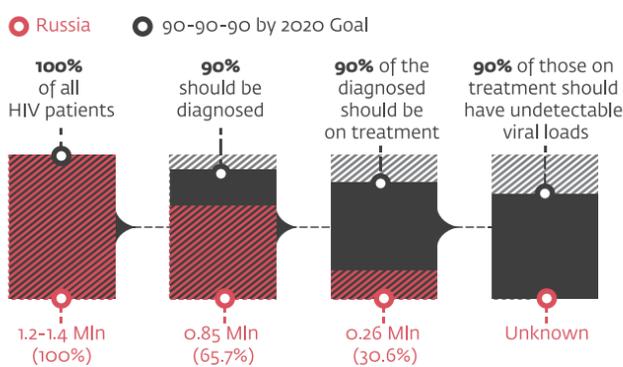
Another key yardstick is what is known as the 90-90-90 target. This states that by 2020 a country should look to diagnose 90 percent of all people estimated to be living with HIV, put 90 percent of those diagnosed on treatment, and reduce viral loads to undetectable levels in 90 percent of all those being treated. With undetectable loads, the virus is essentially suppressed — neither harmful to the carrier’s health nor effectively transmittable to others.

Once you reach the 90-90-90 goal, several positive things happen. The rate of AIDS morbidity and mortality drop, and with the additional impact of treatment as prevention, the epidemic becomes manageable. “Suddenly no one with HIV gets sick, hundreds of thousands of people no longer occupy hospital beds and a huge burden is taken off the shoulders of the medical system,” says Saldanha. If the 90-90-90 milestone is reached, 73 percent of all people infected with HIV have un-

Routes of Transmission in Russia in 2016



90-90-90 by 2020 Goal



detectable viral loads, and two-thirds of the epidemic can be brought under control.

In June, all UN member states — including Russia — committed to a “90-90-90” target by 2020.

Russia has a long way to go to reach this goal in terms of sheer numbers. The Russian government has yet to come up with effective HIV prevention policies.

“HIV treatment is essential, both for saving lives and having an impact on HIV prevention, but no country has ever successfully treated their way out of an HIV epidemic,” Saldanha says.

It is not clear how the authorities plan to prevent the virus from spreading among injecting drug users. The new Medvedev strategy offers few clues to that effect, says Pokrovsky. “Until we solve the problem with drug users, we can’t solve the others,” he says.

Sabotage

With drug substitution therapy deemed illegal, there is only so much that can be done to prevent transmission among Russian drug users. One of the only remaining effective means of alleviating the problem is via needle exchange, or “harm reduction” programs.

But even here, Russian officials have been engaged in active sabotage. According to Anya Sarang, president of the Andrei Rylkov Foundation, an NGO that works with drug users and HIV patients, it has become increasingly difficult to operate harm reduction programs since a decision by the Health Ministry in 2009 to announce it was against harm reduction programs. “This has resulted in a huge reduction in the number of such programs being delivered in Russia,” Sarang told The Moscow Times.

Even in 2009, there were only 75 harm reduction programs, covering no more than 135,000 of the estimated 2.5 million drug users in Russia. Today, that number is even less — 16 programs for 13,000 drug users. “At this scale, projects can only help individuals, but do nothing to stop the epidemic,” says Sarang.

This year the pressure was ratcheted up further, as five HIV-related NGOs, including the Andrei Rylkov Foundation, were added to the list of “foreign agents” register. This controversial legislation makes organizations subject to additional bureaucracy, excessive inspection regimes and harassment. “Many NGOs in smaller cities and regions are not ready to stand up to the scrutiny, and simply shut their doors,” says Sarang.

Russian government officials claim that needle exchange and sex education programs promote drug use and unsafe sex practices. Experts are adamant that the claims have no evidential basis. “Take Germany, where sex education is mandatory — there is no HIV epidemic there,” says Pokrovsky. “They also have drug substitution therapy and educate sex workers on safe sex. Obviously, these methods are effective.”

“It is essential to implement evidence-based prevention programs for key populations that represent the majority of new HIV infections,” agrees Saldanha. **TMT**

THE WORD’S WORTH

My Dear, I Don’t Give a Damn

Наплевать! I don’t give a damn

By **Michele A. Berdy**
Moscow-based translator and interpreter, author of “The Russian Word’s Worth” (Glas), a collection of her columns.



Russians are pretty good spitters. They aren’t world-class spitters, like in some countries where spectacular hawking sounds are part of the background noise and closed shoes with thick soles are a fashion necessity. Russia isn’t like that. But you do more spitting, literally and figuratively, in Russian than in English.

Let’s get through the tricky bit right away. The verb pair is плевать/плюнуть, and conjugation is — let’s be honest here — a nightmare. This isn’t the usual consonant cluster problem, but the vowel variation difficulty. If you have trouble with it, try singing a song along the lines of я плюю, она плюёт, мы все плюём (I spit, she spits, we all spit). Or think of it as *ономатороеия*.

The perfective плюнуть is easier to deal with — я плюну и он плюнет (I’ll spit and he’ll spit). Dog owners will find this easy, since one of the top three commands we teach our critters is the imperative плюнь! (Spit it out!)

But the interesting thing about spitting is its figurative usage, which has too many meanings — indifference and contempt, or a mix of the two. A lot of the time the verb stands alone, either plain or its related form *наплевать*. Say someone tells you that your neighbors are gossiping about you. Your response: *Наплевать!* (I could care less.) Or: *Мне не до того и вообще — наплевать* (I don’t have time to deal with it and besides, so what?) Or you might be told to pay no attention to something, which is when indifference and contempt mix together into backturning disdain: *Неприятности с женой, да? Наплюй.* (Trouble with the wife? Piss on that.)

For some reason, spitting from a high place implies greater indifference, and the higher the spitting platform, the greater the disregard. *На все их работу и расходы ему наплевать с высокой колокольни* (He didn’t give a squat for all their work and expenses, literally: he spat from a high bell tower.)

But spitting in someone’s face, soul or eyes is a grave insult. Here I beg you down on my knees, please, to never translate this as “I spit on you,” and most especially never ever say it aloud with a Boris and Natasha accent. In English we generally don’t spit, we insult, trample, stomp, or run roughshod. *Чтобы выборы не состоялись, достаточно так наплевать в душу избирателям ложью, что в день выборов они останутся дома* (To keep the elections from being valid, all you have to do is insult the voters with lies so that they stay home on election day.) *Они в душу наплевали* (They trampled on our feelings.)

Плевок is the noun, and means the thing you spit out — and sidestep on the street — as well as whatever you don’t care about. *Это дело плевать не стоит* (That deal isn’t worth the paper it’s written on.) And the vivid *плёвое дело* (spitting matter) means something simple: *Маме готовить ужин для шести — плёвое дело*. (Making dinner for six was easy as pie for my mother.) That is: *Плюнул, сделал* (easy-peasy, literally: spit and it’s done.)

But it can also indicate a lack of conscience: *Ему врать — плёвое дело*. (Lying for him is like rolling off a log.) *Ему наплевать на приличия* (He doesn’t give a damn about decency.) And what does this make you? Spitting mad. **TMT**

14 Foreigner Affairs



"Yekaterinburg in the 1990s would be the perfect setting for a modern-day 'Romeo and Juliet.'" **Andrew Dickson**, Shakespeare scholar.

The Moscow Times
No. 5781

14
the length of the traveling art residency in days.

9,258 km
the length of the Trans-Siberian railway



The **British Council Russia** is an organization which aims to build cultural and educational opportunities between Britain and Russia.

TransLit: A Train East

By **Ruth Moore** artsreporter@imedia.ru | Twitter: @ruth_ski

A project to celebrate the U.K.-Russia Year of Language and Literature sees a group of creatives take to the Trans-Siberian railway

A journey on the Trans-Siberian railway, with its boundless views of forest, land and sky, is as good a space as any to find creative inspiration. And it's just that which a group of Russian and British writers, musicians and poets were after when they set off on a two-week journey to the depths of Siberia at the end of October.

"TransLit," a project organized by the British Council in Russia, celebrates the 2016 U.K.-Russia Year of Language and Literature and coincides with the centenary of the longest railway line in the world, which stretches from Moscow to Vladivostok, a distance of some 9,258 kilometers.

The motley crew who took on the journey included both Russians and Brits: among them Shakespeare scholar and writer Andrew Dickson, award-winning novelists Alisa Ganieva and Joe Dunthorne, literary critic Konstantin Milchin and Gruff Rhys, frontman of iconic Welsh psychedelic rock group Super Furry Animals.

"It sounded like such a crazy idea. And when you get asked to do crazy things you should always say yes," said Andrew Dickson in an interview with The Moscow Times. Having recently published a book about global interpretations of Shakespeare, Dickson was keen to see the influence of the bard and his legacy in Russia.

"Russian interpretations of Shakespeare are so important. Kozinstev's films — 'Hamlet' and 'King Lear' — show such a deep engagement with Shakespeare. And it runs all the way through Russian literature," said Dickson. "From Chekhov and 19th-century adaptations of the plays to the fad for 'Hamletism' and Tolstoy's vexed relationship with Shakespeare. Then in the communist period it's interesting how Shakespeare was used as a way of escapism — alluding to political realities that you couldn't talk about directly."

The group stopped at four cities — Kazan, Yekaterinburg,



MAX ADVEEV

The railway, with its constantly changing landscape, echoed the diversity of the group.

Novosibirsk and Krasnoyarsk — spending time experiencing local culture and holding 'creative evenings' in each city, where they told stories through poetry, song and discussion.

"The thing that I've most been heartened by on this journey is first of all how many young people engage with culture here. Every event we've done has been packed with young people asking disconcertingly knowledgeable questions," said Dickson. "The public here are incredibly well-informed. A chemist from Krasnoyarsk came up to me and asked me about the theory that Hamlet's name is based on the biblical character of Ham."

The journey was as much about providing a space for dialogue between artists and writers of different backgrounds as it was about traveling physical distances. In a confined space without 3G or WiFi, discussion was the natural way to pass the time. And it yielded some interesting conversations.

"I love the spaces between languages where happy accidents can happen," said Gruff Rhys, frontman of Super Furry Animals. "I write in Welsh and in English, and on this trip I was interested in how when phrases are translated from one language to another they can sound completely absurd — like the Russian salad, 'herring under a fur coat,' which paints a very surreal image when translated."

The trip rounded off last week at Dewar's Powerhouse, where the group presented some of their creative responses. These included a multimedia work with song, poetry, video and sounds from the railway curated by Francesca Panetta, virtual reality editor at the Guardian, songs from Gruff Rhys and travelogues.

Alisa Ganieva, the Dagestani author of "Salaam, Dalgat!" and "The Mountain and the Well," was equally inspired by the polyphony of voices and influences the trip through Russia yielded.

"The further east in Russia you go, the greater the change in your sense of time, the world, yourself. For me it was so interesting how many ideologies coexist in one country. I saw this not in the whole, but in the details."

The railway, with its constantly changing landscape and scenery, echoed the diversity of the group. For Ganieva and others on the trip, the journey was proof that whatever the political situation between countries and nations, cultural communication can cross many apparent barriers.

"The arts are always about going beyond borders. Stepping out of your comfort zone and outside your norms. And intercultural communication such as a two week trip with a small group of foreigners is a rich stimulus and incentive for stepping out of your own reality," said Ganieva. **TMT**

Find our more about the project at literature.britishcouncil.org/project/translit-a-travelling-art-residency

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Notice is hereby given that **Gamma Capital Holdings Corp.** is being dissolved and the dissolution commenced on the **10th November 2016**. Who has any claims against the company must lodge their claims with the liquidator within 1 month hereof. GRAND PLUS LTD. of 1755 Coney Drive, 4th Floor, Belize City, Belize has been appointed as a liquidator of the company. Dated 11th November 2016

GRAND PLUS LTD Liquidator

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Vampires, All Singing, All Dancing

By **Ruth Moore** artsreporter@imedia.ru | Twitter: @ruth_skii

Vampires can be seductive, witty and, as it transpires, outrageously camp. Or at least they can in "Dance of the Vampires," the latest production to hit the stage at Moscow's MDM Theater. The flamboyant musical is set to run through January in the capital after a hit three-year run in St. Petersburg that ended in 2014.

Based on a 1967 film by Roman Polansky, who also directed the original German-language production of the musical, the supernatural romp has been performed in 12 countries and 11 languages, and set the pulses of 7.5 million people racing. The only place it flopped was on Broadway in a modified version. There, investors lost \$12 million. The Russian show, which sees the script and score translated and nods to the native "vurdalaki" folk legends, has been directed by "Golden Mask" winner Cornelius Baltus.

The curtain is drawn on Professor Abronius (Sergei Sorokin) and his young, wide-eyed assistant Alfred (Alexander Kazmin), who are lost in mountainside fog on a quest to prove that vampires really do exist. After a hypothermic mishap they end up in a Jewish shtetl where the superstitious villagers are midway through a rousing garlic-inspired chorus number. Alfred falls in love with the innkeeper's daughter Sarah (Yelena Gazeva), and while she initially reciprocates, there's soon trouble in

paradise. During a long session soaking in the tub — you'll discover Sarah spends an inordinate amount of her stage time in the bath — she is seduced by the mysterious, immortal Count Von Krolock (Ivan Ozhogin). You guessed it, he's a vampire. She soon flees to the Count's castle, setting into action a chain of events that lead to a midnight gothic extravaganza of the undead. It's raunchy and outlandish, but Russian theater-goers seem to be lapping it up. "Moscow audiences have been intrigued by 'Dance of the Vampires.' The mixture of comedy and the strong visuals on the show pull you into a world of its own — I have so far only heard it has a greater impact on people than the 'Phantom of the Opera,'" said Cornelius Baltus, the musical's director, in an interview with The Moscow Times.

Even if your Russian isn't too hot you'll recognize the recurring melody of a Russified "Total Eclipse of the Heart," which comes in early and returns intermittently throughout the production. This is complemented by a number of toe-tapping songs from the central protagonists and chorus and a mournful ballad by Krolock in the second act, where we discover being a blood-lusting vampire isn't all fun and games.

The grandiose gothic design of the set is highly impressive — transitioning from country inn to

graveyard, bedchamber and dazzling ballroom with slick efficiency. And the cast do an admirable job of running around it, with slapstick gags, gravity-defying dance numbers and even scenes where packs of vampires leave the stage and prowl the audience.

You'll find yourself suffering something akin to sensory overload — particularly in a dream sequence where a topless he-vampire in tight black trousers leads a blood-lusting chorus in what can only be described as some kind of vampire rave — but you can't argue you're not getting your money's worth of lycra.

There's also a daring scene where Herbert (Kirill Gordeyev), a magnificent vampire clad in lilac velvet, takes a fancy to Alfred and begins a seduction campaign. A man in the audience was seen holding his head in his hands as Herbert playfully mounted Alfred, but the rest of the audience was enthralled. "I think the hidden sensuality and comedy aspect are two ingredients for the success of the show," said Baltus. While there are certainly some who will sniff at this unapologetic extravaganza of the undead, "Dance of the Vampires" could just be the healthy dose of escapism we need right now. **TMT**

"Dance of the Vampires" is showing at Moscow's MDM Theater through Jan. 8. 28 Komsomolskiy Prospekt. Metro Frunzenskaya. vampirov-bal.ru

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