

How Lukashenka's bagmen bypass sanctions

One of the novelties of this year's sanctions was the inclusion of some Belarusian IT companies in the list

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SYNESIS

Aliaksandr Shatrou (Alexander Shatrov), co-founder of Synesis, made a fuss earlier with his political comments. For example, after Freedom Day 2017, he criticized the protesters detained by the police. He later compared the protests to drug trafficking. Here is how Aliaksandr Shatrou put it:

“It’ll be strange if you start shouting that if drugs are legalized in America, then you don’t understand why you are treated like that here. That is, you understand the consequences, you go and do. If consequences suddenly come, don’t accept it. Here’s the same thing. People went to the demonstration. It wasn’t sanctioned. There’s a law that states what’s possible and what isn’t. What did they expect?”

In addition, the company banned using the Belarusian language in internal work chats. This is what the co-founder of Synesis Aliaksandr Shatrou said:

“He knows Russian, but uses Belarusian. I’m categorically against such moments. That is, it creates inconvenience to everyone who doesn’t know this language. «

The product for which the company came under restrictions is called Kipod, a cloud platform for monitoring public safety.

Результаты процедуры закупки № 2018-578135-Р

Открытый конкурс

Общая информация

Регистрационный номер приглашения	2018-578135
Краткое описание предмета закупки	Выбор технического оператора республиканской системы мониторинга общественной безопасности
Полное наименование заказчика, место нахождения организации, УНП	Департамент финансов и тыла Министерства внутренних дел Республики Беларусь Республика Беларусь, г. Минск, 220030, ул. Короля, 71 102300781

Результаты по лотам

[Раскрыть все лоты / Свернуть все лоты](#)

№ лота	Описание предмета закупки	Участники, с которыми заключен договор	Цена договора
1	Выбор технического оператора республиканской системы мониторинга общественной безопасности 1 компл.	Не состоялась	—
		Результат процедуры закупки	Не состоялась
		Страны нахождения участников, с которыми заключен договор	—
		Места нахождения участников, с которыми заключен договор	—
		УНП участников (или номера документов, удостоверяющих личность, для физических лиц), с которыми заключен договор	—
		Страны происхождения товара	—
		Дата договора (решения об отмене/признания несостоявшейся)	09.07.2018
		Объем (количество) поставки	—
		Иные участники и цены их предложений	—

События в хронологическом порядке

11.07.2018
09:35:22

Размещено сообщение о результате проведения закупки

Synesis became the technical operator for the Republican Public Safety Monitoring System in 2018.

How this happened is unknown. The open tender was cancelled due to the fact that only one candidate applied for it, the company 24x7 Panaptes, owned by Synesis. Further selection procedure was closed to the public.

	Сведения о собственнике имущества (учредителях, участниках)***	
	Физические лица****	
	Фамилия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое имеется) (страна гражданства)	Шатров Александр Евгеньевич (Республика Беларусь)
	Дата включения в ЕГР	19.09.2014
	Размер доли (в процентном соотношении или в виде дроби) и вклада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном фонде, вид валюты	100%, 635 (денежный), Белорусский рубль (BYN)

История участников			
	с 27.12.2007	по 23.04.2018	Мишин Денис Сергеевич (Российская Федерация)
	с 01.04.2008	по 23.04.2018	Птицын Николай Вадимович (Российская Федерация)
	с 24.06.2011	по 24.11.2011	Шатров Александр Евгеньевич (Республика Беларусь)
	с 24.11.2011	по 19.09.2014	Косаревский Максим Леонидович (Республика Беларусь)
	с 19.09.2014	по 23.04.2018	Шатров Пётр Евгеньевич (Российская Федерация)
	с 21.10.2016	по 30.12.2020	Олексина Инна Владимировна (Российская Федерация)
	с 09.11.2018	по 30.12.2020	Птицын Николай Вадимович (Российская Федерация)
	с 09.11.2018	по 30.12.2020	Шатров Пётр Евгеньевич (Российская Федерация)
	с 24.06.2011	по 19.09.2014	Компания "АМБАР СЕРВИСЕЗ ЛИМИТЕД" ООО, HE251510 (Республика Кипр)
	с 21.10.2016	по 30.12.2020	Общество с ограниченной ответственностью "ЭНЕРГО-ОИЛ-ИНВЕСТ", 192381964 (Республика Беларусь)

Then, the Council of Ministers ordered a number of facilities to connect to the Synesis system, and in addition - to pay Synesis a very high monthly rate of 100 rubles per camera.

Now Synesis is 100% owned by Aliaksandr Shatrou. But this happened quite recently, two weeks after the imposition of another round of EU sanctions against this company. Until then, company shares belonged to Energo-Oil-Invest and the wife of Energo-Oil's main beneficiary, Ina Aleksina (Inna Oleksina).

They joined Synesis in 2016, seven months before the decree on the Republican Monitoring System was adopted. That is, it may seem that the investment was specifically aimed at obtaining an order to create a national surveillance system. IT specialist Syarhei Laurynenka (Sergei Lavrinenko) believes that Synesis is an exception:

“The Belarusian IT sector differs in that it is mostly export-oriented. More than 95% of all services it produces go to countries outside Belarus. Belarusian projects in companies are a rarity. Therefore, indeed, companies that have large Belarusian customers, large Belarusian orders, rather, stand out from the crowd. But for those who work for the Belarusian market, this is, so to speak, a significant preference.»

Aliksandr Shatrou says that his company receives money not from the Interior Ministry, but from subscribers, and on this basis plans to appeal against the EU sanctions. And very few cameras have been connected yet. Probably, to make it easier for him to appeal the sanctions, Shatrou got rid of the partnership with Aliaksei Aleksin’s (Alexey Oleksin) structures on paper.

Aleksin became known to the general public thanks to Tabakerka (Snuffbox), the only private network of the capital’s kiosks.

Ten years ago, Minsk authorities banned kiosks in the city, citing, among other things, that they were unsightly. The company, which was subsequently given a monopoly on them, is called Energo-Oil. Now - Energo-Oil-Invest. This is the same company that owned Synesis before the sanctions were imposed. Anatol Shumchanka (Anatoly Shumchenko), chairman of the Perspectives NGO, which unites individual entrepreneurs, noted that the state behaves strangely:

“The state is behaving strangely, since in this case it should give everyone equal opportunities, but instead, based on the answers that kiosks are impractical for entrepreneurs, we conclude that for the state there are mere mortal entrepreneurs, and not simple entrepreneurs who have special preferences”.

In early 2021, Energo-Oil-Invest also underwent a sudden change of ownership. January 12 Aliaksei Aleksin.

	Фамилия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое имеется) (страна гражданства)	Олексин Дмитрий Алексеевич (Республика Беларусь)
	Дата включения в ЕГР	12.01.2021
	Размер доли (в процентном соотношении или в виде дроби) и вклада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном фонде, вид валюты	50%, 79868.54 (денежный и неденежный), Белорусский рубль (BYN)
2		
	Фамилия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое имеется) (страна гражданства)	Олексин Виталий Алексеевич (Республика Беларусь)
	Дата включения в ЕГР	12.01.2021

The state register of legal entities names Energo-Oil as the predecessor of Energo-Oil-Invest, formerly called Triple-Energo and part of Yuri Chizh’s holding. Aleksin took charge of Triple-Energo in 2001. Prior to that, he was the curator of petroleum products trade at Belvneshtorginvest, part of the Presidential Affairs Management (PAM).

Under Aleksin, Triple-Energo was one of the few private companies whom the authorities allowed to process cheap Russian oil at Belarusian refineries, and then export oil products made from it. At the beginning of the last decade, this company, according to media reports, also illegally re-exported Russian oil products, disguising them as solvents, thinners, and biodiesel. According to the daily, other companies that were part of Triple at the time did the same: Neonafta and Belneftegaz.



Aliaksandr Shatrou (Alexander Shatrov) / probusiness.io

After the collapse of Chizh's business empire, these companies also went to Aleksin.

Neonafta got into another scandal two years ago. The media claimed that the company re-exported Russian fuel oil to Ukraine, disguising it as Belarusian. However, at that time the Aleksins no longer formally owned the company.

Since 2016, half of Neonafta belongs to a certain Lidziya Ushakova (Lydia Ushakova). And the second half is divided between Aleh Piatrou (Oleg Petrov) and Oleg Gerasim (Aleh Herasim).

The former works as the director of the restaurant-hotel complex Friends, a branch of Aleksin's Energo-Oil. The latter Aleh (Oleg) works as the former's deputy in the same restaurant. That is, both Neonafta co-owners are active employees of Aleksin's restaurant at the same time. This is confirmed by naviny.by journalist Ales Yarashevich:

“After Aleksin began appearing on the EU sanctions list, he transferred some of his assets to these people, to his managers. Maybe that's how he wants to avoid EU sanctions.»

Another of Aleksin's companies, Belneftegaz, protects the Customs Union from smuggling. Exactly from what the media accused the company of at the beginning of the decade. Now Belneftegaz is the national operator of the transit traffic monitoring system under the BNGarant brand. Here is what naviny.by journalist Ales Yarashevich tells us about it:

“This system allows to monitor the movement of goods in real time. A seal is placed on trucks or cars, and through computer systems you can see where the cargo is, track whether the seal was broken, whether there were any deviations from the route. The operator of this system is Belneftegaz, controlled by the businessman Aliaksei Aleksin.

The transit traffic monitoring system was created on Lukashenko’s decree in February 2019. And it was developed by our old pals from Synesis, the very company that came under EU sanctions for the video surveillance system. The specific legal entity in this contract was the firm Synesis Stigma. Aliaksandr Shatrou, his brother Yauhen (Evgeni) and a partner from Russia own minority stakes there. And 75% belongs to Aleksin’s Belneftegaz.

1	Регистрационный номер	192003422
2	Состояние	Действующий
3	Регистрирующий орган (на дату формирования выписки)	Берестовицкий райисполком
Наименование юридического лица		
4	Полное наименование на русском языке	Общество с ограниченной ответственностью "ВЛАТЕ Логистик"
5	Сокращенное наименование на русском языке (при наличии)	Общество с ограниченной ответственностью "ВЛАТЕ Логистик"
6	Полное наименование на белорусском языке	Таварыства з абмежаванай адказнасцю "ВЛАТЭ Лагістык"
7	Сокращенное наименование на белорусском языке (при наличии)	ТАА "ВЛАТЭ Лагістык"
История наименования		
	с 16.04.2013	по 14.03.2014
	Иностранное частное логистическое унитарное предприятие "ВЛАТЕ Логистик"	
Сведения о государственной регистрации юридического лица		
8	Государственный орган (иная организация), осуществивший государственную регистрацию	Минский горисполком
9	Дата государственной регистрации и номер решения*	16.04.2013
10	Дата внесения в ЕГР последней записи по субъекту	29.12.2020

Aliaksei Aleksin is no longer among the owners of Belneftegaz. After the EU sanctions were imposed, he transferred his share to his sons, Dzmitry (Dmitry) and Vitaly. His wife Ina (Inna) became another shareholder.

Piatrou (Petrov) and Herasim (Gerasim) only recently became the owners of Vlate Logistics. Again, after the imposition of EU sanctions.

LUKASHENKO’S FAVOURITE BUSINESSMEN

Until then, the company belonged to Bremina Group, which Aleksin owns together with two other businessmen from Lukashenko’s entourage - Aliaksandr Zaitsau (Alexander Zaitsev) and Mikalai Varabei (Nikolai Vorobey). Here is what naviny.by journalist Ales Yarashevich told about them:

“Zaitsau and Varabei are two big Belarusian businessmen, quite influential. They are often called Lukashenko’s wallets. Aliaksandr Zaitsau has a diversified business, his interests are concentrated in the trade of Belarusian machinery in the Middle East. Also extracts minerals. For example, he has gold mining projects in Africa, in Ghana, in Sudan. Mikalai Varabei’s interests are mainly concentrated in the oil sector. He has long owned a large private oil trader Inter-Service. And Inter-service owns a number of assets in the oil sector: a bitumen plant that supplies bitumen to Ukraine. Mikalai Varabei has been included in the third EU sanctions package”.

Сведения о собственнике имущества (учредителях, участниках)***	
Физические лица****	
1	
собственное имя, отчество (если таковое страна гражданства)	Герасим Олег Ромуальдович (Респу
числения в ЕГР	29.12.2020
и (в процентном соотношении или в виде клада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном и валюты	1/6, 60000 (денежный), Белорусский
2	
собственное имя, отчество (если таковое страна гражданства)	Аркадьев Владимир Михайлович (Р
числения в ЕГР	29.12.2020
и (в процентном соотношении или в виде клада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном и валюты	1/6, 60000 (денежный), Белорусский

е, вид валюты	2
илия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое ется) (страна гражданства)	Аркадьев Владимир Михайлови
включения в ЕГР	29.12.2020
ер доли (в процентном соотношении или в виде и) и вклада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном е, вид валюты	1/6, 60000 (денежный), Белорусс
3	
илия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое ется) (страна гражданства)	Петров Олег Владимирович (Рес
включения в ЕГР	29.12.2020
ер доли (в процентном соотношении или в виде и) и вклада (с указанием вида вклада) в уставном е, вид валюты	1/6, 60000 (денежный), Белорусс
4	
илия, собственное имя, отчество (если таковое тца) (с...	К...

Bremina Group is the owner of three huge logistics centers on the Belarusian border, in close proximity to the customs checkpoints. They have the right to clear goods, and the company's head office is registered in the small village of Balbasava (Balbasovo). There is a free economic zone created by Lukashenko specifically for this company.

Bremina Group owns warehouses, and is engaged in goods transportation through other firms. Previously - through Transpetrolbaltik. Then - through Gas Venture.

The media have repeatedly accused both companies of smuggling. Legally, they were registered in Aleksin's building, but their office wasn't there. And the actual contacts on the Minsk City Executive Committee website were those of Bremina Group.

Volha Palavets (Olga Polovets) was the director of Gaz Venture and Transpetrolbaltika.

On her social media pages there is a photo report from a staff party where she is wearing a Triple-Energy T-shirt: the company that belonged to Aliaksei Aleksin.

Formally, Gaz Venture, headed by Palavets, belonged to two Cypriot offshore companies, which in turn were run by the Lithuanian company Luben.

Our investigation, together with the Lithuanian portal Siena, found that this Luben not only serviced Gas Venture, but also personal finances of its alleged beneficiaries, Aliaksei Aleksin and Aliaksandr Zaitsau.

Another of our investigations together with the Internet portal naviny.by showed that Gaz Venture became one of the selected companies to which the Belarusian authorities gave a benefit for the import of flowers, i.e. exemption from value added tax.

по 24.04.2014	Куделько Андрей Леонидович (Республика Беларусь) Акционерное общество "ВЛАТЕ Логистика" (ООО), ТВ СН-170.3.037. (Швейцарская Конфедерация)
по 11.12.2015	Частное производственно-торговое унитарное предприятие "Стисхо", 191774065 (Республика Беларусь)
по 29.12.2020	Общество с ограниченной ответственностью "Бремино групп", 691598938 (Республика Беларусь)
по 30.05.2017	Компания с ограниченной ответственностью "ДЕМИСТАТ КАМПАНИ ЛИМИТЕД" (Республика Кипр)
Сведения о ликвидации юридического лица	
е о ликвидации	
Юридической несостоятельности (банкротстве) юридического лица	

They export flowers from Belarus to Russia, underestimating the real cost 10 times and paying only 1/10 of the value added tax there. First of all, it allowed

Belarusian re-exporters to flood Russian market with cheap flowers. And second of all, the very same flowers, according to market participants, are often re-imported back to Belarus. Chairman of the National Association of Florists in Russia Alexei Antipov shared his opinion.

"There are as many as 200 companies in Belarus that are exempt from VAT by the president. They were created to help Belarusian companies. But they began to abuse. And, it looks like the customs duty is paid within 5%, and exempt from VAT.»

After a series of journalistic investigations that proved the connection of Gaz Venture with Bremina and personally with its owners, businessmen from Lukashenko's entourage, Bremina Group switched to using a new carrier, Vlate Logistics, which belonged directly to Bremina. But after the sanctions, six people became the formal owners of Vlate. Among them are employees of the Aleksin's restaurant Piatrou (Petrov) and Gerasim (Herasim).

Another of the six, Dzmitry Zamulevich (Dmitry Zamulevich), is former director of Interservice, the ultimate beneficiary of which is Mikalai Varabei. After the EU sanctions, Varabei appointed Alesya Berazhnaya (Alesya Berezhnaya) as the director of Interservice and issued her a stake in his parent company Krasny Bor, which also owns Interservice.



Volha Palavets (Olga Polovets)

AVOIDING SANCTIONS

Varabei, although he personally came under sanctions, guided his main asset away from the hit. By Lukashenko's special decrees, Aleksin's entities received a number of exclusive trade privileges, huge benefits for imports and logistics. Also, through an opaque procurement procedure, Aleksin became the ultimate beneficiary of the national tracking system. His assets include MTBank, two giant Veles Meat pig farms, and a brewery in Latvia.

And, of course, tobacco. Firstly, Aleksin built a new tobacco factory, specifically for which the Minsk authorities expanded the city limits.

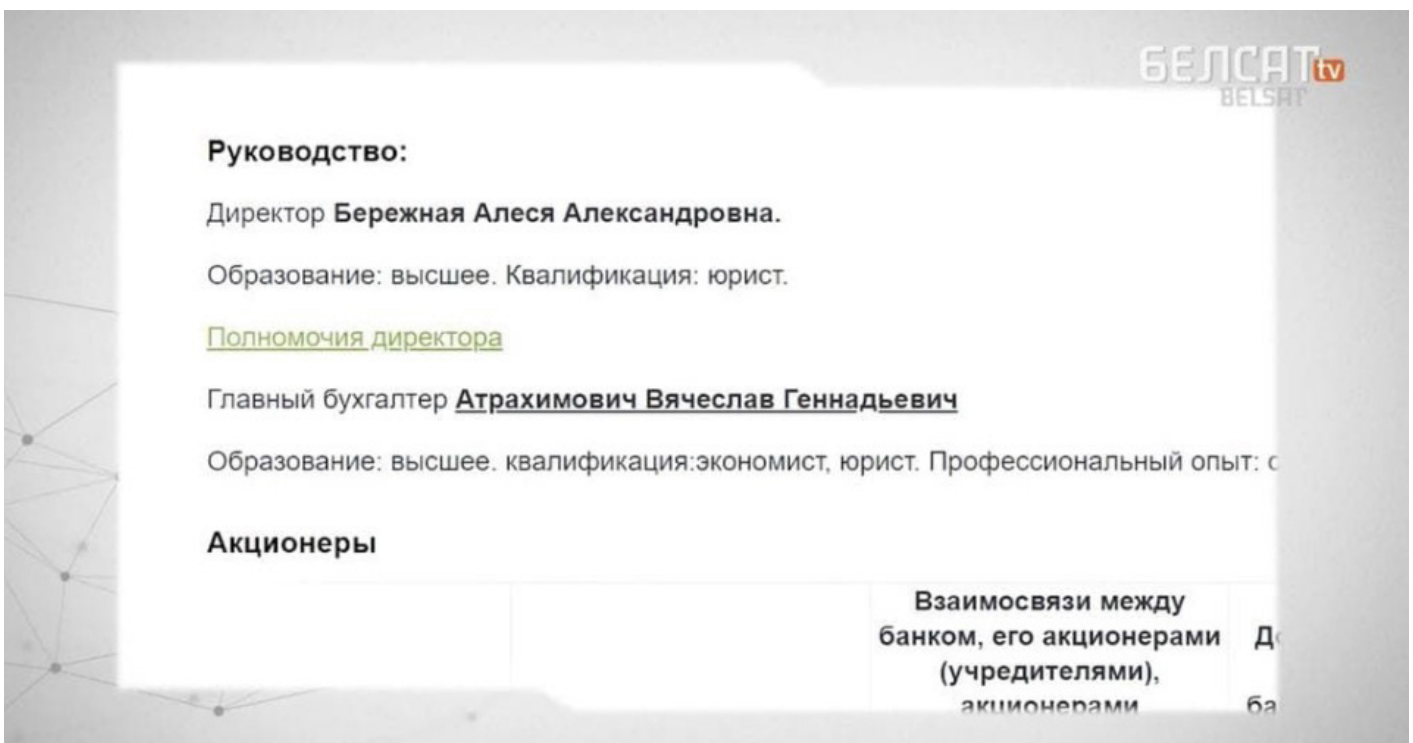
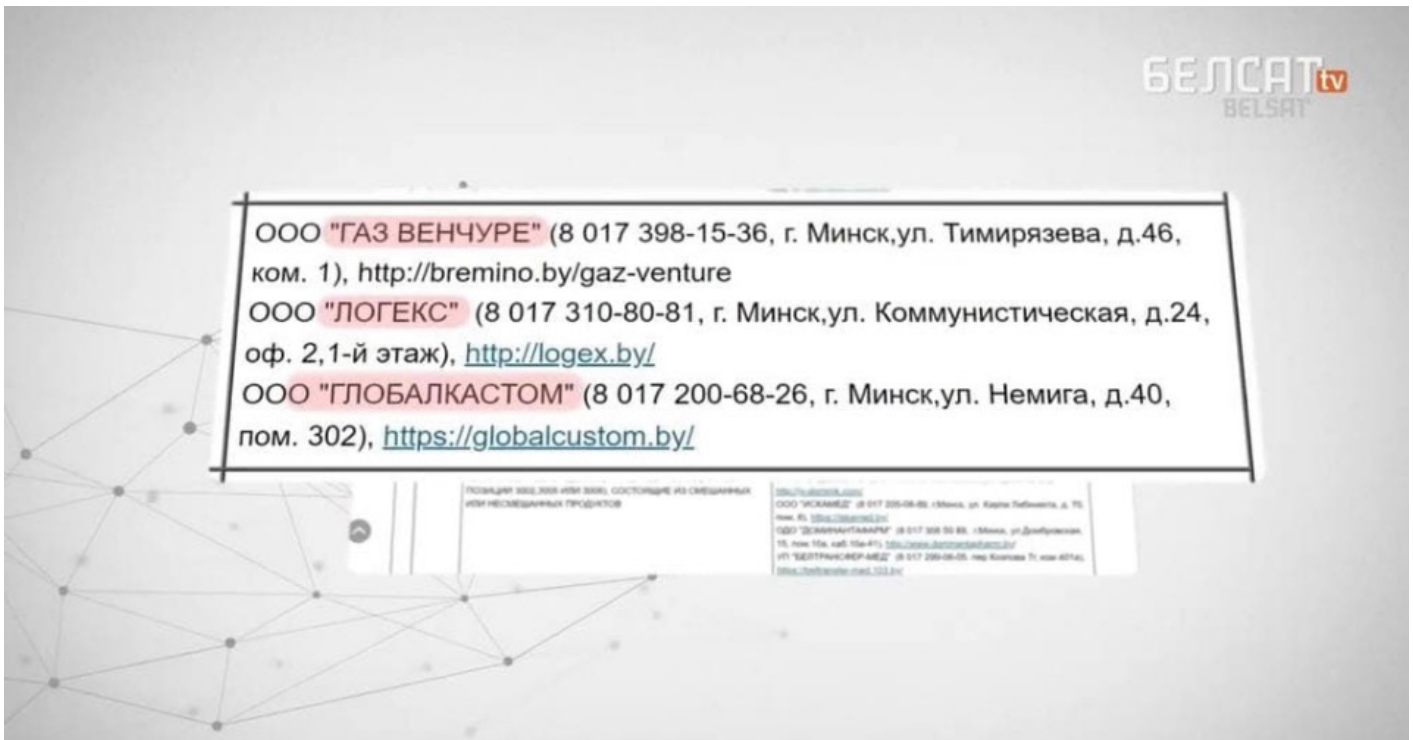
Secondly, Aleksin's companies were allowed to import cigarettes, although previously only government agencies could do so.

Finally, Energo-Oil, according to the information on their website, has become the exclusive Belarusian dealer of the state-owned Hrodna tobacco factory Neman, the largest cigarette manufacturer in Belarus.

And cigarettes made in this factory are leaders among smuggled tobacco in a number of EU countries and in Russia. Let us recall that Lukashenko appointed Aleksin's company as smuggling controller.

And the final touch. One of Aleksin's employees owns the company Moto Event. It is registered at the address where other Aleksin's companies are located.

This company organizes a biker festival HOG Rally, which was attended by Alexander and Viktor Lukashenko. The creation of this kraken of monopolies was made possible solely by the benefits and preferences given by the authorities.



One of the versions that circulated in the media is that, for example, Aleksin's MTBank was given the opportunity to complete the deal to buy out the Belarusian Idea Bank from the Polish company Getin Holdings. Aleksin, as our investigation showed, used this postponement to urgently move the major part of his business empire away from possible sanctions, re-registering his companies to his children, wife, and employees of his restaurant. His partner from Bremina Group Mikalai Varabei is doing the same.

УКАЗ ПРЕЗИДЕНТА РЕСПУБЛИКИ БЕЛАРУСЬ
7 августа 2019 г. № 298

Об импорте табачного сырья

В целях создания дополнительных условий для производства табачных изделий постановляю:

1. Предоставить ООО «Интер Табакко» право реализации исключительного права государства на осуществление импорта табачного сырья.

2. Настоящий Указ вступает в силу после его официального опубликования.

Президент Республики Беларусь

А. Лукашенко

2	Состояние	Действующий	
3	Регистрирующий орган (на дату формирования выписки)	Минский горисполком	
4	Полное наименование на русском языке	Общество с ограниченной ответственностью "Мото Ивент"	
5	Сокращенное наименование на русском языке (при наличии)	ООО "Мото Ивент"	
6	Полное наименование на белорусском языке	Таварыства з абмежаванай адказнасцю "Мота Івэнт"	
7	Сокращенное наименование на белорусском языке (при наличии)	ТАА "Мота Івэнт"	

	Сведения о правопреемнике(ах)**		
12	Местонахождение	Республика Беларусь, 220029, г. Минск, ул. Коммунистическая, д. 11, пом. 3 (кабинет 16)	
13	Контактные телефоны	8017 396 52 97, 8029 365 73 95	