

*Belarus
Remembers*
encyclopaedic
project presented



Salvador Dali's
exhibition enjoys
popularity at
National Art Museum



INTERNATIONAL

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of Supreme Court
ceremonially opened



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Contours of new international architecture

Belarusian parliamentary diplomacy must ensure balance across all vectors

By Alexey Fedosov

Speaking at the opening of the House of Representatives' spring session, Chairman Vladimir Andreichenko underlined that Belarus desires constructive settlement of international problems, viewing all potential partners as equal. He explained, "We view the provision of balanced contacts across all vectors of Belarusian foreign policy as the major task of parliamentary diplomacy."

Regarding western and eastern areas of collaboration, he believes that a new architecture of international relations is becoming apparent. "Of course, we're deeply interested in funding and reinforcing points where our major economic and humanitarian interests meet," Mr. Andreichenko emphasised.

The idea of an 'integration of integrations' relies on strengthening mutual trust and economic interaction, as promoted by Belarusian parliamentarians across all in-



Spring session of the House of Representatives begins its work

ter-parliamentary venues, and particularly within the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. In late April, Minsk will host a conference of the OSCE PA Silk Road Support Group, dealing with issues of enhancing investment, transit and tourist attractiveness for countries keen to implement the initiative. The forum will bring together representatives of twenty-three states. "Opinion sharing will be very useful in helping strengthen mutually beneficial co-operation," noted the Chairman of the House of Representatives, adding that parliamentarians aim to give foreign partners complete information on the potential of Belarus as a key link within the Silk Road Economic Belt.

Another Belarusian initiative within the OSCE PA is a

resolution being submitted for discussion this July in Luxembourg, at the Parliamentary Assembly's 28th Annual Session. The document is dedicated to strengthening co-operation in the sphere of technological forecasting.

Mr. Andreichenko asserts that Belarusian MPs have capacity to expand ties globally, using consultations with inter-parliamentary organisations and at the level of friendship groups, as well as with representatives of influential international structures, business circles and diplomatic missions accredited in Belarus.

He added that Belarus is satisfied with its dialogue with European partners. In particular, negotiations with representatives of German, Dutch and

Swedish parliaments have proven useful. Moreover, there have been regular meetings with MPs from the People's Republic of China, which are yielding fruit. A delegation recently visited Belarus.

Mr. Andreichenko has assessed the international programme of the Parliament's spring session as intense, stressing that the goal is to reinforce and promote national interests, with trade-economic issues as the main focus. Regarding WTO membership, Belarus foresees major benefits, but also risks. Deputies are currently studying all sides, conducting comprehensive analysis. Mr. Andreichenko comments that discussion will continue at a seminar being organised with the WTO Secretariat.

Treaty revision to be postponed

By Olga Korneeva

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Russia, Vladimir Semashko, believes previously voiced proposals to revise Union State Treaty should be postponed, speaking to *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* newspaper

"In my view, the current level of Union State integration does not contradict the vital interests of our two states," noted the diplomat. "It's possible that individual provisions of the treaty might have to be revised and updated in future. However, primarily, we must conscientiously fulfil the obligations stipulated by the current version of the treaty — foremost, its economic part — before considering public discussion or a referendum, as suggested. Otherwise, people will simply stop trusting us. We cannot erode and devalue all the gains because of unfair complaints or disagreements. We need to resolve such disagreements without jeopardising each other's interests, or the image of the Union State. Therefore, I believe that the revision of the Union State Treaty should be postponed."

At the same time, Vladimir Semashko deems it necessary to update the action plan to implement the provisions of the Union State Treaty. "We need to specify actions to be taken in order to achieve our desired goals, and in order to bring fresh impetus to Union State development," he underlined.

Twenty states become co-authors

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

UN adopts Belarus' resolution to establish International Delegate's Day, on April 25th

The resolution is designed to highlight the role of the delegates of UN member-states in fulfilling the main goals of the United Nations. It also acknowledges the role of UN founding nations, including Belarus. In the context of the centennial anniversary of the Belarusian diplomatic service, in 2019, the resolution welcomes national initiatives on the establishment and celebration of a diplomatic workers' or service day.

The resolution has been co-authored by more than twenty states. Presenting the resolution to the UN General Assembly, Belarus' Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Dapkiunas highlighted its human rights dimension, its relevance and its unifying nature. "Promotion and adoption of non-confrontational resolutions has become Belarus' hallmark. It's testimony to our country's commitment to a constructive approach to international relations," the Deputy Foreign Minister noted.



Roberto Antonione

By Oleg Bogomazov

The programme has included meetings between Roberto Antonione and the Council of the Republic and the House of Representatives of the National Assembly, as well as with chairmen of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the State Committee on Science and Technology.

Mr. Antonione also met the CEI Secretary General and Belarusian Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei. The latter noted that opinions are divided regarding the CEI, with some being pessimistic, but Belarus is in favour of strengthening the role of this organisation within the region. "We're ready to make more effort to enhance the image of your organisation,"

CEI not yet exhausted

Secretary General of Central European Initiative, Roberto Antonione, in Belarus on working visit

stressed the Foreign Minister, adding that the Central European Initiative contributes to the unification of Eastern and Western Europe, and a number of Belarusian proposals are reflected in relevant documents.

Mr. Antonione noted Belarus' chairmanship of the CEI in 2017 and its efforts to develop the organisation. In his opinion, it was one of the most successful initiatives in its history. He said, "It was a very positive experience, which allowed us to take significant steps, to see the future in positive colours." The Secretary General is convinced of the importance of European countries understanding modern life in Belarus.

After the meeting between Vladimir Makei and Roberto Antonione, the Ministry hosted a seminar to discuss proposals for co-financing with the Central European Initiative. Representatives of government bodies attended, alongside those from public associations and organisations of culture, education and health.

During the seminar, the General Secretary and the staff of the CEI spoke about financing instruments used by the organisation, the submission of applications, and their processing and decision-making. Roman Romanovsky, who heads the Pan-European Co-operation Department of the Foreign Ministry, noted that, during its membership of



Vladimir Makei

the CEI, Belarus has attracted more than 8 million Euros for research and development projects in the fields of economics, education, culture and information.



The Central European Initiative was established in 1989 and has eighteen member-countries. Belarus joined in June 1996. The Republic views the organisation as an effective tool for expanding and strengthening regional co-operation through the implementation of joint projects in topical areas of activity — including energy efficiency, sustainable development, ecology, science and technology.

Centre of justice is more than just a home for the servants of Themis



By Vasily Kharitonov

The building in Orlovskaya Street was begun in October 2016 and completed six months ahead of schedule. Blending organically into the urban environment, the façade, like that of the neighbouring Palace of Independence, is made of glass and natural stone, and national symbols are used as decoration. The state coat of arms and the flag crown the temple of justice. Whilst it is a traditional administrative building, it has its own unique features, with a symmetrical rectangular design and side glazed wings to the façade, symbolising the balance of Themis' scales.

In the area in front, visitors are greeted by a snow-white statue of the goddess of justice, symbolising impartiality. The lobby, at the centre, has similar motifs on the ceiling, supported by columns. The heart of the building is the Plenum Hall with 110 seats. Documents relating to judicial practice and statistics will be considered here. The Plenum provides the general courts with clarification on the application of legislation, especially topical in view of dynamically changing laws. The stained-glass is the major attraction of the hall — featuring a stylisation of Slutsk sashes on the ceiling. Its author is artist Vladimir Krivoblotsky, who has previously decorated the Central Hall of the Palace of Independence.

The ribbon was cut during the opening ceremony by the President of Belarus — Alexander Lukashenko, the Chairman of the Supreme Court — Valentin Sukalo and the Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee — Anatoly Sivak. Mr. Lukashenko learnt about the practicalities of the building, visiting some rooms and offices. He asked how the new building has improved conditions for the work of the judiciary. In turn, the Chairman of the Supreme Court informed the Head of State about innovations — including the use of technology. “I sincerely wish you every success. Judge fairly!” said the President.

Mr. Lukashenko also took part in a meeting on improving the system of the courts of general jurisdiction. The meeting was held in expanded format: it was attended by the heads of district and city courts, chairmen and their deputies of regional and general economic courts, heads of structural units of the Supreme Court, heads of several ministries and

departments and senior officials. In total over 360 people were in attendance.

On the new Supreme Court building

The President shared his impressions of the new building, noting that its opening is significant not only for the judicial system but also for the whole country. “It’s not just the building itself that is significant, although it has turned out to be modern and functional. It symbolises the authority of the judi-

ciary. The Palace of Justice should look like this,” Mr. Lukashenko said. “The creation of this centre suggests that we have put the sovereignty and independence of our state at its head. In this state, there should be not only well-functioning branches of Government but also the usual symbols of each power.”

The President stressed that judges need to feel free to make their judgements: not to be afraid of prosecutors, or depend on the opinion of investigators, nor to look to the local authorities. They must be guided only by the law. “My

On the role of the Supreme Court

In reforming the judicial system, the Supreme Court was given the power to provide organisational, personnel and logistical support to courts. It now manages all their processes. “I made this decision because the judicial system should be really independent,” Mr. Lukashenko said. He believes that the highest court is obliged to act strategically, to be proactive and ahead of the curve. “Analytical work should be a priority for the Supreme Court. It is necessary to make full use of the powerful intellectual potential that the court has,” he said.

About five years ago, the Supreme Court stated the need to develop a single Civil Code. However, the task has not yet been begun, the President said. “It is time to intensify efforts to complete the Code. We need it desperately.”

In his opinion, the present realities require us to accelerate work on the informatisation of the judicial system, and the use of IT technologies in judicial activity will allow us to reduce the cost of court proceedings. The Head of State instructed the Presidential Administration to join other structures in taking these issues under control so that their solution would not be delayed.

“These innovations significantly increase the openness and transparency of justice. The introduction of electronic legal proceedings is taken into account in the preparation of international ratings that determine the level of development and investment attractiveness of our state,” the President said.

He also believes that the Supreme Court should not shy away from the main direction of development of the state and society. Measures taken to stimulate entrepreneurial activity and the development of the digital economy require legal protection from the judiciary. “The task of the Supreme Court is to make sure that the domestic judicial system meets the best standards of justice and enjoys authority in the legal community, both domestically and abroad. This approach will greatly contribute to the development of innovative technologies, attract foreign investment and improve the competitiveness of the economy. The meeting should result in further improvements in the judicial system which will have a positive impact on the image of not only courts, but also the state as a whole,” the President concluded.

ACCENT

The President drew attention to the fact that the main consideration in the work of the courts should be fair treatment of people. Only then will they trust justice and know that they can always find protection of their rights and legitimate interests. At the same time, Mr. Lukashenko stressed that the courts should be independent from other structures and branches of Government in decision-making.

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The President added that he had rejected projects for the new building of the Supreme Court several times. “I wanted it to look like the Palace of Independence — in the same style, since it is a symbol of independence. Everything here is made by Belarusians from Belarusian materials — just like it is in the Palace of Independence,” he explained.

On social justice

Speaking of the justice system, the Head of State stressed that social justice is the major criterion which people are guided by when assessing the work of the courts. According to him, social justice is not only a guarantee of public confidence in courts and legislation but also the most important component of the ideology of the Belarusian state. “The demand for justice is enormous — not only in the Slavic states but throughout the world,” Mr. Lukashenko said. “People must be confident that they will

find their rights and legitimate interests protected in court. This means that they will be heard and that a well-reasoned decision will be taken regarding their situation. It is very important that people understand why the court makes such their decisions.”

On court staff and the fight against corruption

Proper training and professionalism of judicial personnel is an indispensable condition for the effectiveness of the judiciary, said the Head of State. Firstly, according to Mr. Lukashenko, it is necessary to fundamentally change the approach to candidates for judicial positions. “People with the highest moral qualities, a broad outlook, erudition and life experience should be appointed at court. This is an objective requirement of modern society,” the President said.

The Head of State also noted that most judges work honestly and conscientiously but the facts of corruption cast a shadow over all. “The irreconcilable fight against corruption is a matter of honour for the judicial system itself. The purity of judicial ranks is the basis of its authority. People who are prone to abuse and are dishonest should be identified and immediately dismissed, because it will get worse in the future,” stressed the President.

Partners learn from each other

Belarus hopes for new projects in co-operation with China



By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Meeting the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Shen Yueyue, the Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, noted that relations between our two states have always been built within a spirit of trust and mutually beneficially collaboration and partnership.

"We hope that good co-operative traditions will preserve and interaction will be filled with new ideas and projects," underlined the Chairman of the House of Representatives.

The Belarusian Parliament hopes that the visit by the Chinese delegation, headed by the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Con-

gress, will reinforce relations in all areas.

Shen Yueyue underlined that China attaches major importance to co-operation with Belarus. "We're ready to keep promoting the *Belt and Road* initiative for the benefit of our two peoples," she said. The head of the Chinese delegation emphasised the importance of inter-parliamentary co-operation and urged the continuing fulfilment of agreements reached by our heads of state. She also suggested strengthening the legal framework of bilateral co-operation and establishing a system to monitor the implementation of concluded agreements. According to Shen Yueyue, it's necessary to intensify contacts between Belarusian and Chinese MPs, since they can learn a lot from each other and exchange useful practices.

The parties noted that Belarus and China are closely following each other's domestic developments and are happy for each other's political and economic successes.

According to Belarusian statistical data, in 2018, trade turnover between China and Belarus exceeded \$3.5 billion. Our countries are successfully implementing the *Belt and Road* initiative, with Belarus as its key link, being host to the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park. The latter has been called a pearl of the Silk Road by the Chinese President, Xi Jinping.



Great Stone to become high-tech town

By Alexey Fedosov

Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park transforming into high-tech satellite town of Minsk, as notes Belarusian Prime Minister Sergei Rumas on meeting Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Shen Yueyue

Thanks to the joint work of specialists from Belarus and China, the Park has become a magnet for foreign investments, technologies and human resources. It already has forty-three resident companies, including those from the United States, the European Union, Israel, Canada and Russia. "We can describe this Park not merely as Belarusian-Chinese but international," Mr. Rumas asserts.

The Zhejiang Province, from which Shen Yueyue hails, is one of the most economically developed, and is home to the Alibaba Corpo-

ration headquarters. With the Great Stone Park transforming into a high-tech science satellite of Minsk, the Government is happy to establish a sub-park of Zhejiang Province at the Park, welcoming major high-tech companies from the province.

The Prime Minister also spoke about regional interaction, which should spearhead China-Belarus economic relations. "We're counting on your assistance, taking into account your managerial experience in the city of Hangzhou," Mr. Rumas added. He also suggested Hangzhou twin with a Belarusian city.

The meeting was held in the run-up to the 2nd *Belt and Road* Forum in Beijing, where the leaders of Belarus and China are expected to meet on the sidelines. With this in mind, the recent Minsk visit by the Deputy Chair of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress is viewed as preparation for coming top-level meetings.

Bilateral trade spirals upwards

Last year, Belarus and Poland achieved the highest trade turnover in eight years

include products of petrochemistry, metallurgy, wood-working and building materials. This is a base we can develop further. We need to set a goal of reaching \$3bn in mutual trade while maintaining a trade surplus," Vladimir Ulakhovich, the Chairman of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BelCCI), told journalists at the Belarusian-Polish business forum in Minsk.

Last year, Polish investments in the Belarusian economy amounted to \$445m. Most of the joint ventures operate in the food, construction and trade sectors. "We've developed good practices in joint ventures. Polish business is happy to work on the Belarusian market, since business conditions here are comfortable. The Polish economy is largely based on small and medium-sized business, as such enterprises are very mobile," added the BelCCI Chairman.

The Belarusian-Polish business forum has brought together more than 100 Belarusian companies from all over the country, as well as 13 Polish companies specialising in construction, biogas technologies, food production, tobacco goods, auto-



At Belarusian-Polish JC Bel-Plast International Ltd.

mobile parts, furniture, cast iron products, and equipment for the food processing industry. The two parties also discussed prospects for Belarusian-Polish trade-economic co-operation. The forum also featured a presentation about the business climate of the two countries, and B2B negotiations between representatives of the two states' business circles.

Mr. Ulakhovich called the current business forum a preparatory stage for the traditional economic forum — *Good Neighbourliness*. "The event will take place in June, simultaneously with the *Belagro* exhibition. Three areas will be on show: re-

gional collaboration, issues of logistics and the IT sphere. The Polish side is showing interest towards the Belarusian IT-sphere, as its dynamic development is apparent," he noted.

The President of the Polish Chamber of Commerce, Andrzej Arendarski, expressed the desire to invite Belarusian IT specialists to Warsaw to find out about conditions for co-operation with Polish partners. In general, trade-economic collaboration between the two states is actively developing in wood processing, metallurgy, power engineering, the food industry and the tourist sphere.

All advantages of digital industry

By Olga Korneeva

WITSA ready to open regional office in Belarus

World Information Technology and Services Alliance ready to open its regional office in Belarus — as discussed by First Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Turchin and Secretary General of WITSA James Henry Poisant.

Regarding co-operation between Belarus and the WITSA, Mr. Turchin notes, "I know about certain initiatives on your part. I think that the opening of a regional office of the organisation in Belarus will send a positive signal — including for the international community, which recognises our success in the IT-sphere."

James Henry Poisant has made proposals to improve the professional level of specialists, saying, "Education is changing rapidly, due to the development of information technologies."

The World Information Technology and Services Alliance is a leading consortium of ICT-industry associations, from over eighty countries. The Alliance was founded in 1978, as the World Computing Services Industry Association.

By Vladimir Velikhov

In 2018, the trade turnover between Belarus and Poland totalled \$2.55bn — a record-high for both states over the past eight years.

In addition, for the first time in the last eight years, Belarus posted a trade surplus with Poland worth \$138m. "We expanded the range of commodity items to 495 in total. Belarus' major exports to our neighbouring country

On factors which directly influence living standards



Volkovysk is a regional centre in the Grodno Region

Acute issues of regional socio-economic development — such as working with investors and urban beautification — tackled at President's session

By Vladimir Khromov

The participants of the meeting included the leadership of the Government, the National Assembly, the Presidential Administration, the State Secretariat of the Security Council and the Property Management Directorate and the State Control Committee, alongside leadership of the regions and of the city of Minsk, joined by aides to the Head of State from the regions.

Alexander Lukashenko noted that, in recent times, large-scale events have tackled priorities for various spheres of the economy, with issues of housing and utilities infrastructure, agriculture and construction discussed. These branches primarily determine the state of the Belarusian economy, through solving social issues. Moreover, three roadmaps have been agreed: for the agro-industrial complex; for construction and housing; and for the communal sector. These establish systems and instruments of implementation. In addition, outlines are in place to improve education in Belarus, and prospects for science.

"Clear stages have been determined to accelerate the development of the regions. We've agreed, within the coming two years, to ensure accelerated socio-economic development for eleven cities. The Government and governors are now tasked with implementing our plans and directives locally, to raise standards of living for citizens. The foundation of successful



Modern production of Bellakt in Volkovysk

state development is a strong economy, so we must focus on the regions, creating jobs with reasonable salaries," emphasised the Head of State.

Mr. Lukashenko has tasked governors with identifying obstacles to regional development.

Fulfilment of plans

The President stated that, last year, the vast majority of regions failed to attain targets for gross regional product, or productivity. Export growth and FDI targets were also problematic, and no region managed to reduce production or sale costs. "Major performance indicators were not met and some governors failed to meet targets this year," stated Mr. Lukashenko, underlining that production volumes are less important than final results, profit and cost-effectiveness.

Working with investors

The President noted a lack of systematic work with investors, and the need for an individual approach, without red tape or bureaucracy. He referenced work with Chinese investors, saying that agreements with Chinese provinces and cities have been signed at regional level.

Regarding investments, Mr. Lukashenko accentuated the importance of qualitative rather than quantitative indices. He is keen to see production of innovative goods and the latest technologies, alongside goods with market popularity.

"Investments shouldn't be for their own sake; they need to 'add value'. Many investors arrive asking for complete exemption from taxes or social obligations, and want to pay low salaries," noted the Belarusian leader. "It's high time that investors worked under standard

conditions. Privileges should be granted only to those whom we desperately need."

Agriculture

As in other spheres, Mr. Lukashenko wishes to see the use of the latest technologies in the agro-branch, as well as observation of regulations and norms. "There shouldn't be any failure this year, nor blaming of bad weather. We have enough power and money to sow in any weather. Farms should be provided with machinery, fuel, mineral fertilisers and seeds," the President said. He urged the Government to mobilise necessary funds.

Urban beautification

"This year, we'll beautify Belarus, planting flowers and greenery everywhere, to ensure that the country is beautiful," underlined the Head of State, giving instructions to plant trees and shrubs along motorways. "It's only practical. You wouldn't have to mow the roadsides so much. I will hold aides responsible for the regions and the city of Minsk," he warned. All towns are to be beautified, to attract people to move from larger settlements to smaller towns.

Quality jobs

The Head of State asserted that most of the jobs created in the country are highly-productive and low-paying, for people lacking qualifications. He wishes to see export-oriented and import-substituting goods being produced, with high added value, to help influence salaries for employees. Naturally, the right conditions and incentives are needed in the regions and towns to attract the necessary labour.

Salaries

Mr. Lukashenko wishes to see more salary growth, and timely payment of wages, with penalties for regional leadership where delays are evident. He said, "You're aware that the

The Head of State's goals are simple and understandable: those in power regionally must take responsibility, as should workers. We need to maintain production discipline and improve financial-economic figures at enterprises, to help raise salaries and our standard of living.

Initiative did not go unnoticed

By Alexey Fedosov

At a meeting in Minsk, parliamentarians of Belarus and the Netherlands discussed prospects of Helsinki-2, as well as the development of bilateral political dialogue



Raymond de Roon

The parliamentary delegation of the Netherlands paid its first visit to Belarus. During the meeting in the House of Representatives, the parties expressed their hopes for parliamentary dialogue to continue. The Dutch MPs showed interest in more frequent meetings with their Belarusian counterparts to learn more about the situation in the country.

At a meeting with the Chairman of the House of Representa-

tatives' Standing Commission on International Affairs, Valery Voronetsky, the head of the parliamentary delegation from the Netherlands, MP Raymond de Roon, suggested discussing the geopolitical situation. Mr. de Roon also touched upon Belarus' initiative to launch the Helsinki-2 process and its expectations. The guest asked his Belarusian counterpart when the process could be launched.

Mr. Voronetsky emphasised the complexity and inconsistency of the current geopolitical situation. The opposing sides from the West and East should understand that it's impossible to continue further in the same vein, that it is time to sit down at the negotiating table. "Then a Helsinki-like process can take place," he stressed.

Mr. Voronetsky noted that Belarus is trying to make its own contribution to strengthen stability and security in the region. Despite being on the border of the geopolitical confrontation, the country managed to maintain good pragmatic relations with all its neighbours. This is facilitated by Belarus' multi-vector foreign policy.

Holiday greetings

Chairman of the Supreme State Council of the Union State, President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, congratulates President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, on Day of Unity of Peoples of Belarus and Russia

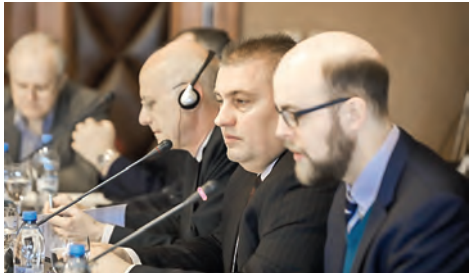


"The treaty on the creation of the Union State unites the closest partners and good neighbours within the post-Soviet space. This is the vital force and huge potential of Belarusian-Russian integration", reads the greeting.

The President of Belarus underlined that the international situation and the requirements of time set a strategic task before the two states: to further strengthen the Union

State, taking into account national priorities and principles of equality. "I'm deeply convinced that trust and mutual understanding will remain determining characteristics of the Union State while enabling us to bring bilateral relations to an entirely new level, meeting the interests of our nations," noted Alexander Lukashenko.

Pragmatic view of sovereign interests



By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Belarus views relations with European Union as those of neighbours who help each other, notes Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Kravchenko at seminar on *Reassessing Sovereignty in Today's World*, arranged by Minsk Dialogue expert initiative

According to the diplomat, Belarus expects relations with the EU to develop successfully, as our two sides are connected by common interests. Moreover, the EU is Belarus' second most important trade partner. Mr. Kravchenko sees relations between Belarus and the EU as those of neighbours who help

each other, avoiding problems, and facilitating regional security rather than only consuming it.

Speaking about Belarus' membership of the Eurasian Economic Union, Mr. Kravchenko noted that this Union is similar to the EU but without the political aspect. "I believe that the Eurasian Economic Union will grow in the interests of its members. Our discussions can become heated and vigorous but this shows that our countries are interested in the successful development of this organisation."

The diplomat underlined that developing relations with both sides is a sovereign right for Belarus. "Our sovereign interests will be most fully realised via EAEU membership while developing relations with the EU. This is aimed at implementing state sovereignty," he asserts. "The European Commission should start dialogue with the Eurasian Economic Commission. Technical contacts have already been launched but these are not enough."

When priorities coincide

Belarus and Serbia plan to develop sci-tech co-operation

By Olga Korneeva

The Chairman of the State Science and Technology Committee of Belarus, Alexander Shumilin, and Minister of Innovation and Technological Development of Serbia, Nenad Popovic, discussed the prospects of sci-tech and innovation collaboration between the two countries, including in the spheres of agriculture and food, biotechnologies, nanomaterials, laser and chemical technologies.

Belarusian national priority areas in sci-tech and innovation sectors largely coincide with Serbian ones. This primarily includes pow-



During meeting with Serbian delegation

er engineering, medicine and pharmacy, information and communication technologies, as well as bio- and nanotechnologies. "Therefore, we suggest intensifying bilateral interaction, including on joint scientific projects as part of the European Union's *Horizon 2020* programme," noted Mr. Shumilin. According to him, the potential for projects in the sci-tech area is still hugely untapped, and Belarus and Serbia need to develop and deepen interaction in technology.

The two parties also discussed the organisation of the meeting of the Belarusian-Serbian Commission on Sci-Tech Co-operation.

It should be mentioned that Belarus and Serbia have launched a tender for joint sci-tech projects for 2020-2021. Belarusian and Serbian scientists are currently implementing ten projects: five on physico-mathematical sciences, two for chemical science and geosciences and three exploring agrarian and biological sciences.

Big break packed to capacity

By Olga Pasiyak

"Which mineral water would you like: Minskaya or Bonaqua?" asks attentive waiter Alexander Krainik. Making my choice, he pours from my right, with his right hand and then wipes the bottle neck with a towel. Alexander, a 10th grade pupil at an ordinary Minsk school, has been attending the Minsk State Professional and Technical College of Mechanical Works and Materials Handling several times a week.

It might seem easy to wait on tables but there are many nuances to offering good service, as teacher Valentina Yanchevskaya knows. Over two thousand senior schools are sending students to this college alone, helping young people gain certification in practical professions, learning not just theory but hands-on skills.

Minsk has an educational centre in each city district, for 10th and 11th grade pupils to attend once a week for six hours. The choices are wide, allowing students to select what truly interests them, from cooking to manicure skills, record keeping to computing. Those in 9th grade can also take part, with an optional course.

College Director Andrey Gotto tells us, "During pre-professional training, 9th grade pupils study two hours a week, choosing a new speciality each term: four through the year. Female students tend to choose courses aimed at clothes design, retail and preschool teaching, while young men often show interest in carpentry and electrical installation, as well as metalwork."

Among those training as waiters, there are young people

Schoolchildren from Belarus to gain certification in barista skills, floristry and hairdressing, alongside general education certificates



Hairdressing is a popular profession

from various schools, but most are boys, leaning how to fold napkins beautifully and lay tables. There's even a technique for replacing the cloth without uncovering the table (to use, for instance, when a guest spills wine).

Waiters also need to know how to be unobtrusive. It might be that the dining couple are celebrating a romantic occasion, or that a young man wishes to make a marriage proposal. In this case, the waiter needs to serve cham-

pagne without getting in the way, and lighting and extinguishing candles without drawing attention to themselves. Tenth-grade pupils master their skills in a classroom which has a bar counter, while 11th grade pupils are permitted to gain experience at town cafes and restaurants, earning them third degree certification.

As to which skills are most difficult, teacher Tatiana Kochergina stresses the need for understanding of service culture. "You need to appreciate psychology,

which has inspired her interest. "I plan to study as an economist, but I wanted to try something else, just for myself," she explains.

"Usually, we discourage girls from such professions, as it's easier for strong male hands," notes Mr. Gotto. "However, Anya was confident in her desire to study and is one of the best in the class. When my wife and I studied together at the physics department, she was also quicker than I with the brazier."

Departmental Head Marina Bogacheva is keen to keep adding to their list of professions. For example, interior decorating has just been added, alongside specialised art lessons. One group of 10th grade pupils are drawing in black ink, creating a plate to show book ownership. It's delicate work, transposing an illustration for Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night Dream*. Teacher Victoria Gritsuk explains, "They might go on to work as decorators, or photographers, dressing shop windows. If they also master computer skills, the opportunities are even wider, to include furniture design, or the creation of business cards and pamphlets."

Everything comes with practice, as students soon learn. Visiting a real workshop, most gain new appreciation for what's required, and become excited about the future. Those learning culinary skills might go to school canteens or city cafes, while those learning about retail can spend time at trade centres. Keen florists are sent to the botanical gardens, while would-be health-care specialists can help out at the Scientific and Practical Centre of Surgery, Transplantology and Haematology.

Parliament outrage over justification of Polish war criminal

By Oleg Bogomazov

The National Assembly of Belarus was outraged to learn about justification of the Polish war criminal Romuald Rajs, nicknamed 'Bury', by Poland's Institute of National Remembrance. On the request of BELTA, the Chairman of the House of Representatives' Standing Commission on International Affairs, Valery Voronetsky, explained the position of the Belarusian Parliament

In January-February 1946, Romuald Rajs, together with members of his gang, committed the mass killing of civilians, including elderly people, women and children, mostly ethnic Belarusians of the Orthodox faith. The deputy noted that his crimes have been justified by saying that they were committed 'in circumstances of extreme necessity'. "Obviously, this repulsive step by the Polish Institute offends not only the memory of the victims, their descendants and all good people but also shows disregard for Christian European values. It undermines the spirit of mutual understanding, trust, good-neighbourly interaction and co-operation between our peoples and can have a long-term negative impact on the development of bilateral relations," Mr. Voronetsky believes.

The parliamentarian wondered whether the Polish Institute of National Remembrance understands that by taking such a decision they are opening Pandora's box. In other countries, not only in Poland, there may be those who will justify war crimes 'by extreme necessity'. "Does this correspond to the state interests of modern Poland or contribute to good-neighbourly relations between our countries and peoples? Obviously not," he added.

The Belarusian Parliament believes that the civil societies of the two countries should have their say. "We hope that their reaction to the justification of the war criminal involved in the genocide of Belarusians will make Poland reconsider their short-sighted decision. We hope that our colleagues, Polish MPs, and sensible citizens of Poland will give an appropriate assessment of the actions by the Polish Institute to glorify the war criminal and will voice their principled position on the issue," noted the MP.



Our memory and pain

Belarus Remembers encyclopaedic project presented in Minsk

By Konstantin Bakun

Belarus upholds its honoured memories of the Great Patriotic War. No other conflict has brought so much grief and misery; nor so many victims. Meanwhile, we continue to restore the tragic pages of our country's history.

Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House recently presented the *Belarus Remembers* encyclopaedic project. The Director of the State Great Patriotic War History Museum, Vladimir Voropaev, notes that such projects remain relevant, saying, "The Belarusian nation is sensitive to the history of this war. We are doing everything possible to get to the truth, so that no one who died remains 'unknown'."

The publishing house's Director, Vladimir Andrievich, explains that three volumes have been released so far: *Khatyn. The Tragedy of Belarusian Villages*; *Trostenets. The Tragedy of the Peoples of Europe*; and *Pain and Anger. Holocaust and Resistance in Novogrudok*. All are devoted to the terrible events of the Great Patriotic War. Meanwhile, work continues on publications devoted to the tragic events at such places as Masyukovsh-



Younger generation should understand horrors of war

DIRECT SPEECH

Peter DETTMAR, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Germany to Belarus:

I thank you for the opportunity to attend today's event. It is very important to preserve the memory of the terrible events that took place during WWII — so that this tragedy will never happen again!

china death camp, Minsk ghetto and Krasny Bereg.

The presentation was attended by representatives of the diplomatic corps, including the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of

Austria to Belarus, Aloisia Woergetter. She stressed that the publisher has done a great job. She said, "Co-operation to preserve the memory of this terrible tragedy should continue. Thank you very much for scrupulously working in this direction; you have achieved a great deal. For our part, we'll try to inform the people of Austria about the tragic events that took place on the territory of Belarus during WWII."

The official visit by the Austrian Chancellor, Sebastian Kurz, coincided with the book launch. He has helped open a new monument to the victims of Nazism at Trostenets Memorial, unveiling a monument entitled 'Array of Names', which is dedicated to over ten thousand Austrian citizens of the Jewish nation who died at Trostenets death camp.

Bilateral efforts won't be in vain

The Ambassador of Belarus to France, Belarus' Permanent Representative to UNESCO, Igor Fisenko, presents his credentials to the Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, with the official ceremony taking place recently in the organisation's headquarters in the French capital

By Vladimir Khromov

After the ceremony, Igor Fisenko and Audrey Azoulay discussed the state and prospects for co-operation between Belarus and this international organisation. The Ambassador noted that since Belarus joined

UNESCO in 1954, it has been actively involved in the organisation's activities and was elected to the UNESCO Executive Board five times. "Belarus has a wealth of experience in many areas of the organisation: education, science, culture and sport, and is ready to share its best practices with

all interested parties. For many centuries our country has been building interfaith and interethnic peace and is doing its best to promote order and accord not only in Belarus, but in the entire region," stressed Mr. Fisenko.

Audrey Azoulay expressed appreciation for Belarus' con-



Igor Fisenko and Audrey Azoulay

structive co-operation with UNESCO and for their great efforts to promote education, culture, science and sports. The Director-General underlined the importance of the efforts of the Belarusian state to maintain interethnic peace, preserve the memory of WWII victims and

promote UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

In conclusion, Igor Fisenko gave Audrey Azoulay the book *Belarusian Treasures of UNESCO*, published in 2018 under the auspices of the Belarusian Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei.



‘A wake up call’: new report focuses on climate changes

The alarming conclusion is that climate change is moving too fast

The increasing number of natural disasters and dangers linked to climate change, highlighted in a major UN report, represents ‘another strong wake up call’ to the world, which must be countered by finding sustainable solutions quickly, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said.

Speaking at the launch of the *State of the Global Climate* report by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), Mr. Guterres reiterated his call for action, underlining that the alarming conclusion that climate change is accel-

erating, ‘proves what we have been saying: climate change is moving faster than our efforts to address it’.

The State of the Global Climate in 2018 highlights evidence of record warming from 2015 to 2018, increasing sea-level rise and worrisome greenhouse gas concentration.

The data released in this report give cause for great concern. “The past four years were the warmest on record, with the global average surface temperature in 2018 approximately 1°C above the pre-industrial baseline,” Mr.

Guterres wrote in the report.

WMO noted the temperature rise last year came despite the agreement by the international community in December 2015 in Paris to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C.

“The time remaining to achieve commitments under the Paris Agreement is quickly running out,” said WMO Secretary-General, Petteri Taalas.

Mr. Guterres said the new data was ‘another necessary wake up call’ to push back global warming.

“This means ending subsidies for fossil fuels and high-emitting, unsustainable agriculture, and shifting towards renewable energy, electric vehicles and climate-smart practices,” the UN Chief said. “It means carbon pricing that reflects the true cost of emissions”, he continued. “It means accelerating the closure of coal plants, halting plans for new ones, and replacing those jobs with healthier alternatives, so the transformation is just, inclusive and profitable.”

Britain’s financial sector has gloomiest outlook since 2008 crisis

Optimism about the business outlook among Britain’s financial services firms has fallen at its fastest rate since the 2008 financial crisis amid concerns about Britain’s exit from the European Union

Business volumes among the 84 top financial firms polled have also fallen at their fastest rate since September 2012, the survey by the Confederation of British Industry and accounting firm PwC showed.

The mounting gloom from banks, insurers, fund managers and other financial firms comes as Prime Minister Theresa May battles to get her twice-rejected withdrawal agreement with the EU through a bitterly divided parliament.

The investment management industry saw the sharpest fall in growth, the CBI/PwC survey said, as investors hold on to their cash in turbulent markets, while insurance brokers were the lone bright spot.

“The alarm bells ringing at the state of optimism in the financial services sector have now reached a deafening level,” Rain Newton-Smith, CBI chief economist said.

Employment across financial services fell at the quickest pace in four years, the poll showed, driven mainly by job cuts in the banking sector as lenders slash branch networks and shift jobs overseas to trim costs.

Fearful of fake news blitz, US Census enlists help of tech giants



The US Census Bureau has asked tech giants Google, Facebook and Twitter to help it fend off ‘fake news’ campaigns it fears could disrupt the upcoming 2020 count, according to Census officials and multiple sources briefed on the matter

The push, the details of which have not been previously reported, follows warnings from data and cybersecurity experts dating back to 2016 that right-wing groups and foreign actors may borrow the ‘fake news’ playbook from the last presidential election to dissuade immigrants from participating in the decennial count, the officials and sources said.

The sources said evidence included increasing chatter on platforms like ‘4chan’ by domestic and foreign networks keen to undermine the survey. The Census, they said, is a powerful target because it shapes US election districts and the allocation of more than \$800bn a year in federal spending.

Ron Jarmin, the Deputy Director of the Census Bureau, confirmed the bureau was anticipating disinformation campaigns, and was enlisting the help of big tech companies to fend off the threat. “We expect that (the Census) will be a target for those sorts of efforts in 2020,” he said.

Census Bureau officials have held multiple meetings with tech companies since 2017 to discuss ways they could help, including as recently as last week, Mr. Jarmin said.

So far, the bureau has gotten initial commitments from Alphabet Inc’s Google, Twitter Inc and Facebook Inc to help quash disinformation campaigns online. But neither Census nor the companies have said how advanced any of the efforts are.



Initiative to ensure all new cars sold in EU will have speed limiters by 2022

New cars sold in the European Union will, by 2022, need to be fitted with technology to prevent drivers from exceeding speed limits, according to provisional regulation agreed by the EU

The new rule is part of a series of additional safety measures agreed by the European Parliament, EU Council and Commission. Advanced emergency braking, electronic data recorders, alcohol interlock installation systems and systems to warn drivers of drowsiness will also become mandatory.

The aim is to reduce the number of fatalities on Europe-

an roads which average about 25,000 per year, the EU Commission said in a statement. It estimates that 90 percent of accidents are due to human error and that the new features will help save over 25,000 lives and avoid 140,000 injuries by 2038.

Elzbieta Bienkowska, EU Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, said that ‘with the new advanced safety features that will become mandatory, we can have the same kind of impact as when the safety belts were first introduced’. She also highlighted that ‘many of the new features already exist, in particular in high-end vehicles’.

The provisional regulation has also been welcomed by road safety groups.

Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of the European Transport Safety Council, said that ‘there have only been a handful of moments in the last 50 years which could be described as big leaps forward for road safety in Europe. The mandatory introduction of the seat belt was one, and the EU minimum crash safety standards, agreed in 1998 was another’.

Britain’s road safety charity Brake described the measures as ‘lifesaving’.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Surrealist universe of original inventions



Salvador Dalí's exhibition enjoys popularity at National Art Museum, becoming a highlight of museum's jubilee year



By Venimanin Mikheev

'Melting clock plates' and illustrations for Boccaccio's *Decameron* are among 160 works on show at the National Art Museum by the famous surrealist. Bronze sculptures are on display alongside book illustrations, jewellery set with precious stones, ceramics and glass. The 'Triumphal Elephant' on the legs of an insect, erected in Zybetskaya Street and already much photographed for Minsk's Instagram accounts, is also part of the Salvador Dalí exhibition.

The National Art Museum has found a partner in the Dalí Universe, which holds a large private collection of the artist's works. The Belarusian museum has several times welcomed the company's representatives to measure its space, ready for an exhibition. Due to insurance, the event has cost several tens of millions of Euros.

The works on show have travelled from Switzerland, where Dalí Universe is headquartered. Italian art dealer and collector Benjamin Levy heads the organisation, having previously worked with Dalí. His collection is considered to be the richest of the private

collections of Dalí's bronze sculptures and has already toured over a hundred venues worldwide.

Co-operation between Dalí and Levy resulted in the serial production of sculptures. On the eve of the opening in Minsk, questions were asked about the authorship, since printed graphics inspired by the artist's drawings, or a sculpture cast from his idea, may not have seen the master's direct hand.

The Guardian wrote about the issue in 2011, discussing *The Trade of 'Almost Dalí'*. In fact, Dalí experimented with various artforms, including cinema (where attribution is difficult) and was not afraid to have those works thought of as 'almost Dalí'.

"The authorship of all these works belongs to Salvador Dalí," says exhibition cur-

ator Olga Kletschina. "Sculptures were made by casting, through the lost wax method. Dalí lacked a foundry, so he worked with Benjamin Levy, making the design and layout and approving the circulation; each bears a number (e.g. the fourth of six). The late 20th century saw a different attitude to art and methods of production, with artists often making one wax model, using it to cast twenty sculptures." The 'largest private collection of bronze sculptures of Salvador Dalí' exists as a permanent exhibition in Paris, and has liaised with hundreds of venues.

The exhibited prints used as book illustrations include those for La Fontaine's *Bestiary*, Guillaume Apollinaire's *Poetic Works* and Ovid's *Art of Love*. Meanwhile, Dalí didn't make inlaid jewellery

with precious stones himself, but he did create the designs and layout.

The Minsk show allows us to explore the breadth of Dalí's creativity, which extended even to utensils and medallions. Of course, we all know his 'melting clock' and the snail with an angel on its back, as well as Newton losing his face, which transform reality.

The exhibition in Minsk is unique in concept and was prepared specifically for the venue space. Ms. Kletschina explains, "If Dalí Universe receives a request for the organisation of an exhibition, it asks about the hall size and all necessary technical information, so it can select appropriate exhibits from its large collection. For example, in Erarta, only bronze was exhibited last year. In this way, each exhibition is unique."



The opening ceremony at the National Art Museum was attended by Benjamin Levy, with the celebration preceded by the official unveiling of the 3m tall 'Triumphal Elephant' in the city centre. It was Dalí's favourite symbol and is proving popular with everyone who sees it. Museum Director Vladimir Prokoptsov has half-jokingly said that Dalí's elephant suits Zybetskaya Street and is eager to stay there long-term. It would be possible for the right sum of money, of course. Meanwhile, 'Worship of Terpsichore' stands at the entrance to the museum.

Ms. Kletschina notes that Dalí was 'quite an erotic artist', so parents need to think carefully about bringing their children, but there's no doubt that many items within the exhibition would please children — such as the wonderful elephants and snails, and illustrations from La Fontaine's *Bestiary*. The exhibition will run until the end of June but timely visitation is recommended, since we all know time flies, just as Dalí reminded us with his famous 'melting clock'.

One hundred discoveries in postcards



Last year, the centenary of the end of one of the world's major conflicts of the twentieth century — WWI — was celebrated. Collections of the famous Belarusian historian and collector — Vladimir Likhodedov who is a winner of the 'For Spiritual Revival' Award — boast rich material on the topic.



By Lyudmila Rublevskaya

Postcards and photographs show the panorama of events through the eyes of witnesses from both sides of the front line. The unique album — *Belarus 1914-1918. War and Peace* released by the Zviazda Publishing House — could be entitled: *Objective Moments in History*.

The collection features Belarusian cities and villages

affected by the war, hospitals, refugees, peaceful moments in soldiers' lives. Some of the pictures terrify as we realise that these people — smiling, playing musical instruments, celebrating Christmas — will soon begin killing each other. In the village of Markovo, civilians are digging trenches... These are women in white scarves, aprons... What was their fate? Who did they lose in that war? Who died in the trenches they dug? And here's an unusual photo featuring the German fire brigade in Lida: brave warriors in gas masks, with a strange device for air supply. A separate section is devoted to an important historical event: the signing of the Brest Treaty.

"Today, unfortunately, we have to admit that there is not enough knowledge about the war in society," the author of the

preface, the Minister of Information of the Republic of Belarus — Alexander Karlyukevich — notes. However, Belarus was an arena of military action. There are over three hundred military cemeteries from that time in its territory. Two million Belarusians became refugees and many failed to return home. Some photos are published for the first time.

This album is a part of the global author's project — *In Search of the Lost* — which has been carried out by Vladimir Likhodedov over many years.

Readers will be able to make a journey through time and make many discoveries. After all, comparing familiar places with pictures made a century ago is always exciting — especially since photography is the most objective document.

On the calendar of countries' forthcoming cultural events

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Days of Egyptian Culture to take place in Belarus in 2019

An agreement has been reached at a meeting between the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Egypt, Sergey Rachkov, and Egypt's Minister of Culture Ines Abdel-Dayem.

The two parties discussed the prospects for bilateral co-op-



eration in the sphere of culture. They also mentioned the positive experience of mutual participation in cultural events held in Belarus and Egypt, including

the International *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* Festival of Arts and the Cairo International Film Festival. They also discussed the calendar for the forthcoming cultural events and the roles of representatives of the two countries.

Furthermore, they agreed on direct collaboration between the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus and the Cairo Opera House.

Exhibits as a cultural phenomenon



By Svetlana Savelieva

Collection of 17th-20th century icons and editions presented in the State Museum of History of Belarusian Literature

The artistic and literary exhibition — *When the Soul's Bells Ring* — is dedicated to the Easter celebrations.

The exhibition presents 36 icons and rare editions from the 17th-20th centuries from the State Museum of History of Belarusian Liter-

ature. In addition, a collection of artistic fabric and church vestments from the collections of the Museum of Ancient Belarusian Culture of the NAS is also on show and comprises 21 items of liturgical clothes. Many outfits are sewn from fabrics by famous European manufactures of Lyon, Venice, as well as German and Polish cities, while some are locally produced.



"The artistic fabrics of Belarus are an original phenomenon in world artistic culture," notes the museum.

Womanly traits

Experts outline portrait of a modern Belarusian lady



By Kristina Glushko

Experts outline portrait of a modern Belarusian lady

Marina Artemenko, the Deputy Head of the Department of Population, Gender and Family Policy of the Labour and Social Protection Ministry, shares some interesting statistics: women make up more than 53 percent of the population of our country. "There are 1,146 women per 1,000 men; in the 65+ age group, there are 2,061," she says.

As regards the typical 'portrait' of a modern Belarusian lady, she is 42, lives in a city, has higher education and works in the field of services, health or education. She actively uses the Internet (80 percent of women go online daily) and monitors her health

(one in four girls over 16 take part in sport). The average age for marriage is 26 years and the average age of birth of the first child is 26.7 years. Our women are successfully engaged in business, create jobs and lead organisations. Interestingly, the Belarusian labour market registers more educated women than men: one in three women has graduated from a university and one in four from a college.

Encouragingly, the proportion of women in the National Assembly is increasing, with 32.9 percent of the total number of deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic being female. Local councils of deputies also have a significant number of women, at 48.2 percent.

Being ahead of 60 thousand competitors

By Denis Petrovsky

It seems that the 25-year-old Belarusian director, Nikita Lavretsky, can take the laurels from the famous predictor, Paul the Octopus

The winner of the best feature film at the 22nd *Listapad* Minsk International Film Festival for *Belarusian Psychopath* didn't attend the Oscars ceremony, but guessed almost all this year's winners, apart from the minor categories of 'Best Short Film' and 'Best Sound Editing'. He received his prize from the Kinopisk website — 'beating' 60 thousand competitors in the 'Guess the Oscar Winners' contest.

Nikita is helped in his predictions by an original mascot: a miniature 'Oscar', apparently once touched by the famous American actor, Eric Roberts, during the shooting of a Belarusian film project. Nikita began guessing the winners of the American film award in his childhood; his first prediction was the victory of James Cameron's *Titanic*. "Why am I such a fool that I don't put money on the Oscars but play the Kinopisk game instead?" he wrote about his victory on Face-



Nikita Lavretsky

book. "This year, I was first out of 60,000 entrants."

Green Book's victory was also predicted by Nikita in March 2018, when he advised a friend not to bet on *Widows* but on Peter Farrelly's film. We'll now wait to see whether — after Darya Zhuk's *Crystal Swan* — some of Nikita's new works will aim for a real Oscar: in the only accessible and honourable category for post-Soviet filmmakers — 'Best Foreign Language Film'.

This year, Alfonso Cuarón won a statuette in this category for his nostalgic drama *Roma* — although many Belarusian film lovers supported Paweł Pawlikowski's *Cold War*, which opened the *Listapad-2018* Festival.

Photo exhibition to cover Games



Ticket to Games for American guests

By Svetlana Savelieva

Photo-presentation on 2nd European Games in Minsk launches at United Nations headquarters in New York, in run-up to International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

Georgy Katulin, the CEO of the Minsk European Games Organising Committee and Secretary General of the National Olympic Committee of Belarus, addressed the gathering. The presentation seeks

to introduce visitors to the upcoming 2nd European Games, as well as Belarus' tourism offerings and economic capacities. Mr. Katulin also emphasised the visa waiver for participants and fans attending the 2nd European Games.

The photo exhibition was organised by Belarus' permanent mission to the United Nations, with support from the Minsk European Games Organising Committee. Attending the opening ceremony was the Deputy Foreign Minister of Belarus, Andrei Dapkiunas,

joined by the UN Under-Secretary-General, Vladimir Voronkov, and representatives of the diplomatic corps in New York and the UN Secretariat. The US representatives received tickets to the 2nd European Games.

On meeting the UN Assistant Secretary-General, Robert Piper, Mr. Katulin discussed possible joint programmes to promote Sustainable Development Goals through sports and healthy lifestyle. The parties noted the unique nature of the 2nd European Games as a platform for promoting the SDGs, as well as the experience of co-operation with UN agencies in international sports organisation, implementing joint projects in the social sphere for later replication across other countries.



Preparations in full swing and diversity

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Belarusian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Petrishenko meets Chairman of EOC Co-ordination Commission, the President of the NOC of Greece, Spyros Capralos, to discuss preparations for 2nd European Games

Preparations for the Flame of Peace torch relay were on the agenda of the meeting, noting that the torch will be lit in Rome (at the EOC headquarters) on 3rd May, to

arrive in Belarus on 12th May, before touring countrywide. All agree that the relay raises the profile of the Games.

The work of the Minsk European Games Organising Committee came under discussion, as did interaction with the EOC.

The 2nd European Games will be held in Minsk from 21st-30th June 2019, with competitions across fifteen sports, hosted by twelve venues, including Dynamo Olympic Stadium, Minsk-Arena, Chizhovka-Arena, and Minsk's Palace of Sports. Over four thousand athletes from fifty countries will compete in 199 medal events.

Arrow flying to the target

By Tatiana Pastushenko

18-year-old archer Karina Kozlovskaya dreams of performing at the 2nd European Games in Minsk

Archery is probably one of the few sports where it's possible to perform well at any age. Experts say that life experience is advantageous in archery, as with the years comes a feeling for the shot, as well as the ability to control your emotions. 18-year-old Minsker, Karina Kozlovskaya, however, is ready to prove that it's possible to achieve success even at a young age and confirmed this when she was ranked eighth among the adult athletes at the recent European Indoor Archery Championship. The head coach of the national team, Yekaterina Timofeeva, says even now, the young girl is snapping at the heels of long-standing leaders of the squad and lays serious claim to the right to perform at the 2nd European Games in Minsk.

What do your friends say when they find out that you practise archery?

Usually they are surprised. Little is known about this sport in Belarus and for many people archery is associated with books, comics and fantasy but few have an idea that there's a whole sporting world out there...

You are currently studying at the Architectural and Construction College. It's not a typical choice for an athlete...

It was mainly my parents who encouraged me to enter this educational establishment. When I was a second-year student, I was about to take part in international competitions. Looking at my rivals, I saw that I could shoot accurately and perform at the same level as them. I realised that I'd made a mistake with my choice of specialism. This year, I graduate from college and I'm going to enter the



Karina Kozlovskaya at training session

Belarusian State University of Physical Culture.

What was the attitude of your parents to your serious approach to archery?

At first, they thought it was only a hobby. But later they saw I was capable and determined to achieve good results, so they supported me. My younger sister also plans to take up archery, although previously she was involved in artistic gymnastics.

Various good luck charms — toys, keyrings, etc. — can be seen on the quivers of many archers. Do you have something similar?

My quiver is completely covered with badges. Archery is a sporting discipline with rich history, and we have a tradition of exchanging badges, keychains, small magnets and other trifles during the competitions with athletes from other countries. In this way we get to know each other, communicate and make friends. To be honest, I haven't counted the number of badges in my collection, but I know for sure that several countries are lacking, for example, Switzerland. I think I will be able to fix this during the 2nd European Games in Minsk.

Do you seriously plan to fight for a place in the team?

Of course! I'd like to see what the European Games are and feel the atmosphere of these competitions, meet athletes from other countries and compete with them, to show my mettle!



Rivals already known

Draw for beach soccer tournament, being held as part of 2nd European Games, takes place in Minsk, with Belarus due to face Portugal, Switzerland and Romania in Group A, while Group B features Italy, Spain, Russia and Ukraine

By Alexander Pimenov

The beach soccer tournament of the 2nd European Games will be held at the Olimpiyskiy Stadium, with group stage games scheduled for 25th-27th June. On 28th June, the two best teams from each group will play semi-final games. Games for gold and bronze medals are scheduled for 29th June. The teams knocked out of the semi-final stage will then compete for 5th-8th places.

In 2015, Russia won the beach soccer tournament at the 1st European Games in Baku,

with silver going to Italy and Portugal claiming bronze.

Alexey Sychev, the Chairman of the Belarusian Beach Soccer Federation, believes that the Belarusian team is capable of winning a medal at the 2nd European Games. He notes that Belarusian beach soccer has recently made progress, with the Belarusian national team seeing success at the Euro Beach Soccer League for the last five years, ranking among the top eight teams in Europe. Last year, Belarus was placed fifth at the tournament and Minsk hosted one of the stages in August 2018 (which

OFFICIAL DRAW			
GROUP A		GROUP B	
A1	BELARUS	B1	ITALY
A2	PORTUGAL	B2	SPAIN
A3	SWITZERLAND	B3	RUSSIA
A4	ROMANIA	B4	UKRAINE

acted as a test for the new venue ahead of the 2nd European Games). Belarus won the stage, defeating all its rivals, including Italy, which later claimed the European title of the season. According to the vice-captain of the Belarusian team, Ivan Miranovich, he and his partners were much assisted by fans' support. Playing Italy, they were behind (1:4) but managed to turn the game around to win 6:5, thanks to Belarusian fans. At the forthcoming Games, the Belarusian beach soccer masters will be fighting for medals, relying on fans' cheering to urge them on.

ARENA

Photo of the week



Logoisk Sports Complex closes the season with a snowboarding event – trampolining into the swimming pool

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
 Until 25th April. *Reality*
 Until 28th April. *Territory of Portrait. Close View*
 Until 28th April. *Tkachev Brothers. Beginning of the Path*
 Until 12th May. *Paralised Flame*
 Until 21st June. *Two Worlds of Russian Icon Painting: 17th century monuments from Russian Icon Museum (Moscow)*
 Until 30th June. *Salvador Dali*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street
 Until 12th May. *1919: Belarusian Republic*
 Until 30th May. Exhibition of party dresses: *Invitation to the Ball*

BELARUSIAN LITERATURE HISTORY MUSEUM

13 Bogdanovich Street
 Until 30th April. *Travel to Land of Childhood: Yanka Mavr and Literature for Children*
 Until 31st May. *Vladimir Korotkevich: Awakened Memory*

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

11 Sovetskaya Street
 Until 2nd August. *Killed Strongmen of Belarusian Land*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
 Until 14th April. *Path to Constitution*
 Until 15th April. *AquaConcert*
 Until 30th April. *Small Homeland: Tale of Times*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

3 Nekrasov Street
 Until 12th May. *I'm Monet, I'm Shishkin, I'm Malevich*

MAXIM BOGDANOVICH LITERARY MUSEUM

7A Bogdanovich Street
 Until 24th April. *Witnesses of Time*

VILNIUS GALLERY

55 Kalinovsky Street
 Until 14th April. Photo exhibition of Mikhail Linnik: *Shapes of Homeland*
 Until 10th August. *Yakub Kolas and Vilno*

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square
 Until 14th April. *Native Land*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY

12 K.Marx Street
 Until 1st September. *Dangerous Beauty*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
 13.04. Nina Sharubina and Yelena Shvedova
 16, 17 and 18.04. The Bat

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
 11.04. Circle of Love
 12.04. OblomOFF
 13.04. Hot Mothers
 14.04. Pane Kokhanku
 16.04. Ideal Husband
 17.04. Singer
 18.04. Taming of the Shrew

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
 11.04. Even a Wise Man Stumbles
 12.04. Pygmalion
 13.04. Who Laughs Last
 14.04. Battlefield
 16 and 17.04. Mixed Feelings
 18.04. Night of Anton Chekhov's Miniatures

BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE

3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street
 11.04. Three Sisters
 12.04. Trouble of Tender Heart
 13.04. Star Time
 18.04. Inspector

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street
 11.04. Inspector
 12.04. Prudok Homeland / School of Taxpayers
 13 and 14.04. Kolyady Night
 14.04. Pinsk Gentry
 16.04. Seagull
 17.04. Pan Tadeush
 18.04. Local Cabaret / Elza's Land

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street
 12.04. If There Is No Tomorrow
 13.04. Love Is Lost! Return Who Finds!
 16.04. Medea's Syndrome
 17.04. Gender Tricks
 18.04. Suffering Because of Common Sense

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
 11.04. Hotel of Two Worlds
 12.04. Playing Happy Family
 13.04. About Fedot-Archer
 18.04. Tectonics of Feelings

MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
 11.04. Titanic
 12.04. Hello, I'm Charlie's Aunt!
 13.04. Cherry Orchid
 14.04. Secret Marriage
 16.04. Retro Style Wedding
 17.04. Once in Chicago
 18.04. Cleopatra