

Exhibition in the Museum of Modern Statehood marks 25th anniversary since the adoption of the Constitution of Belarus



Fewer than 100 days are left before the start of the 2nd European Games

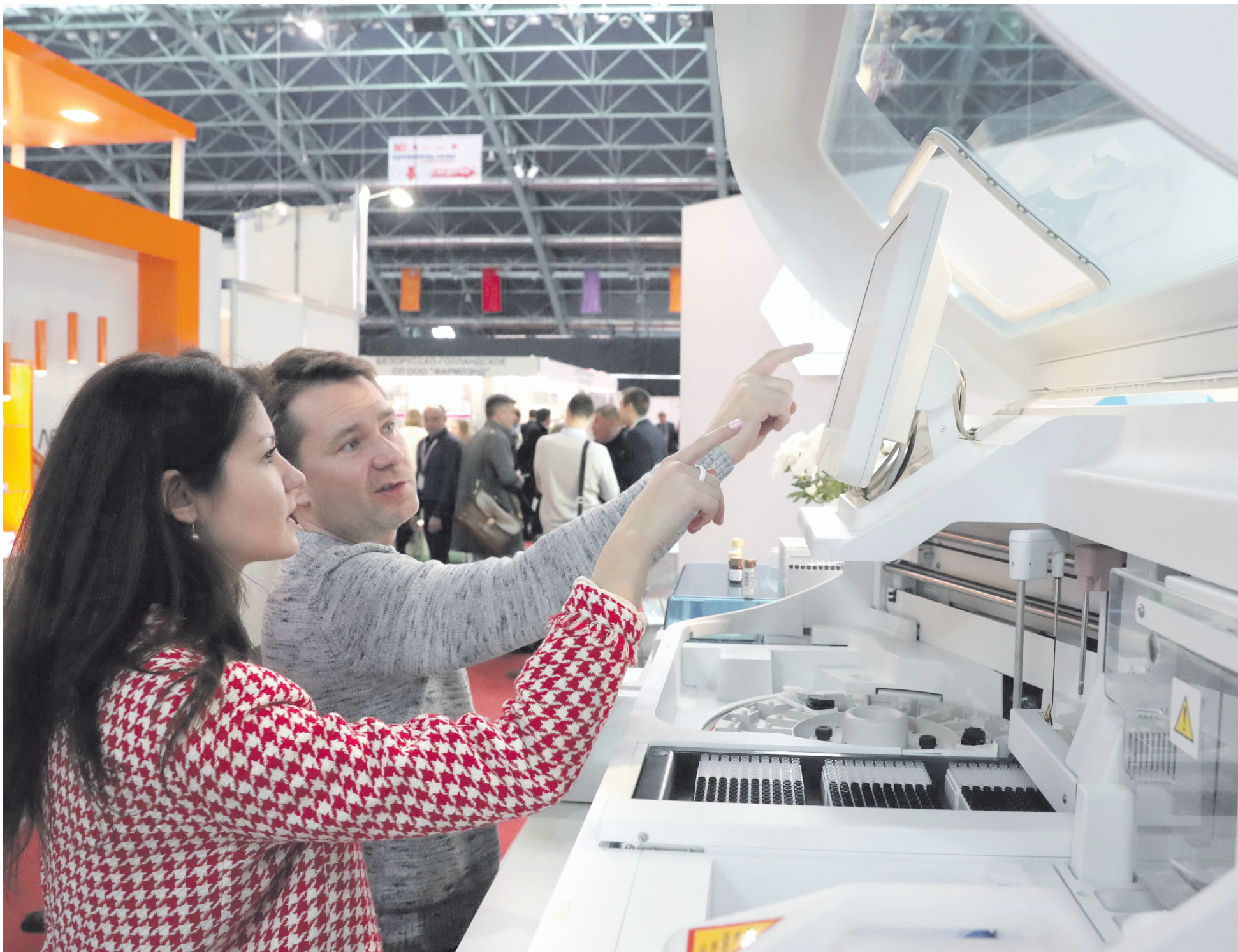


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Just what the doctor has ordered to take

For four days Minsk has become a venue to bring together the latest achievements in medicine, showcasing electronic healthcare, 3D models of human organs, robot surgeons and virtual surgery → 5



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Life in the capital and satellite towns

When recently appointing the new Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee, Anatoly Sivak, the President pointed out that as soon as the Mayor has familiarised himself with affairs, there should be a detailed conversation about prospects for the capital. It hasn't taken long to prepare: a working meeting was held at the Palace of Independence.



ACCENT

Minsk is a large city and, accordingly, its challenges are on a large scale. The capital is increasingly hosting major international events — including political, cultural and sporting. Minsk is becoming a brand for free and open dialogue.

Minsk today

By Vladimir Velikhov

The main topic of the working meeting was construction. “In good times, we adopted a policy for Minsk’s future development and improvement. We agreed that we would gradually curtail construction in Minsk and move to satellite towns, so as not to repeat the sad fate of our minor cities,” the President said.

Another important topic was the construction and development of regions adjacent to the National Airport. “We previously agreed that we would provide reliable connections between Minsk and the airport, so that people could easily get there. We planned to launch a train service — considering existing railways. We should realise this idea in 2019 or next year,” he added.

The President was also interested in the development of the area on the site of the old airport in Minsk. He asked what the problems are? It’s a landmark place. Minsk City Executive Committee has developed proposals for the construction of rental housing for those on the waiting list in Smolevichi — which is Minsk’s satellite town. Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that, “People should know that every year, after the

2nd European Games, we will reduce the volume of construction in Minsk.”

Special attention is paid to the costs of construction. The President recalled his decision to limit the profitability of the industry’s efficient industrial structures by five percent. This was enough for the production of building elements and needs to be continued.

Reduction of housing construction in the city of Minsk is

not only an administrative decision: this deals with creating incentive mechanisms that would attract people to satellite towns. Mr. Sivak noted after the meeting that the state does not aim to impose any restrictions. It’s important to inspire interest in Belarusians to live in the satellite towns. One of the strongest incentives, of course, is the cost of housing. It’s necessary to limit the level of profitability for the developer and to construct more efficient houses: state customers can provide a minimum price.

Another important element of the modern city and its satellites is a well-developed transport infrastructure. It will be improved in several areas. Several transport hubs are planned to be built in Minsk. Importantly, these will be built under the so-called principle of ‘dry feet’. Mr. Sivak said, “We should ensure that people who are changing transport do not come out into the open.”

The high-speed tram is a novelty of urban transport. The President was informed that a business plan is being developed which will detail prices and costs for it. According to Mr. Sivak, the estimated cost of the project will be lower than the building of new metro lines. The subway costs about \$80m per kilometre. The price of this high-speed tram will seek to reduce this at least four times.

As for the development of the region around Minsk National Airport and the former airport in the city, the President approved the transfer to Minsk of a land near the airport which now belongs to the Minsk Region. According to city officials, this will give an opportunity to more effectively and comprehensively develop these areas. Meanwhile, the Minsk-Mir residential district is being built on the former Minsk airport.

Important foundations of independence

By Alexander Pimenov

Unique documents about the constitutional foundations of Belarus’ statehood presented in Minsk

The Modern Belarusian Statehood Museum — a branch of the National History Museum — is hosting an exhibition entitled *The Major Documents of the Country: The Past and Present*, dedicated to the 25th anniversary since the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. The exposition relies on unique sources from the archives of the Presidential Administration, the National Archives, the Presidential Library and the National History Museum of Belarus.

The exhibition displays a facsimile edition of the 1919 Constitution, alongside the 1927 Constitution, released in four languages: Belarusian, Russian, Polish and Yiddish, as well as other documents reflecting the chronology of the constitutional framework in Belarus. The project allows visitors to see the preparation and adoption of the 1994 Constitution of the Republic of Belarus and the introduction of changes and amendments to law because of the fast changing political and socio-economic situation at the time. The major guidelines of the current Constitution are revealed in detail, as is its



At the exhibition dedicated to the Constitution

role and place in the system of the state structure.

At the opening of the exhibition, Vladimir Drazhin described the process of creating the document. In 1990-1995, he was a people’s deputy and had direct involvement in its development. “It was a crucial stage for our country, with the economy and political processes being very complex. Under these conditions we had to create a law that would respond to the requirements of each person in Belarus.” He said it wasn’t only the deputies who took part in the creation of the country’s major document. “Local authorities, labour teams and the creative intelligentsia — all layers of society were joined in

the creative task. Even though there were some opposition-minded deputies in the Supreme Council, we finally voted for the Constitution with an absolute majority.”

Artefacts such as original documents, newspaper publications and various working materials show the importance of the development of the Constitution while adding interest to the exhibition. Opening the event, Director of the National History Museum, Pavel Sapotsko, expressed confidence that it would be interesting to people of various ages and professions. The first visitors included students of the Maxim Tank Belarusian State Pedagogical University’s History Department — Marina Veles and Svetlana Lalaeva. They

commented that they enjoyed the event and were confident that it will be useful for them as would-be historians. “The Constitution is a very important document for the country, as it defends the rights of citizens. Without it a state wouldn’t exist,” said the girls.

One of the authors of the current Constitution — Honoured Lawyer of Belarus and Doctor of Law, Professor Grigory Vasilevich — is an expert and consultant for the exhibition project. In tandem with the exhibition at the museum, the all-Belarusian campaign — *We Are Citizens of Belarus!* — was launched on March 13th, dedicated to the Day of the Constitution. The campaign was held in all regions of the country. As is traditional, young people are given tickets to adult life by the heads of legislative and executive power, as well as public figures and other honoured and authoritative figures. On this day, 14-year-old teenagers were granted passports by the Head of the Presidential Administration, Natalia Kochanova. The most important participants of the ceremony were 25 young people from all regions of the country and the city of Minsk. All are ‘A’ grade pupils and participants of scientific-practical conferences, winners and prize winners of the Republican competitions, festivals and subject Olympiads.

Protection of national values is an exclusively natural product

Information security concept submitted to Security Council

By Vasily Kharitonov

The document was drafted on the instruction of the Head of State, considering the peculiarities and difficulties of the modern situation. Alexander Lukashenko believes that practical measures dealing with information security provision should include a greater focus on the protection of the major constitutional frameworks of society, primarily those connected with state sovereignty. “We see how information flows are used to degrade national mentality and the distinctive character of countries and nations. Principles of humanism and justice and the priorities of strong family relations and a healthy lifestyle should balance negative influences, particularly on social media,” noted the Head of State at the Security Council session.

Mr. Lukashenko commented that, today, the information environment plays a key role for any state and every person. People’s interests are expanding while communication technologies are developing. Belarus is making dynamic progress in the formation of the information society, proven by its high position in the global ratings.

At the same time, just like other countries, Belarus cannot ignore new risks emerging from IT development. Moreover, escalating conflicts in the world and the absence of clear-cut rules of conduct in this sphere turn these risks into real threats to the constitution and comprehensive development of any state.

The President warned about the growing destructive impact on society, the manipulation of mass consciousness and the distribution of fake information arouses concerns. As a result, millions of people are suffering, and the political map of the world is changing. Universal ethical norms are put on the back burner. The functioning of any state becomes more susceptible to computer incident.

Safe operation of the cyber-infrastructure is important for the sustainable development of the country. “We don’t widely advertise our efforts to ensure cyber-security. However, we’ve been taking measures for a couple of years and they are seamlessly integrated into corresponding international services. At the same time, Belarus is not immune to cyber-attacks and cyber-crimes,” added the Head of State.

The President also urged everyone to step up efforts in their zones of responsibility, underlining that most problems emerge because of lackadaisical approaches and the lack of discipline. He also focused on the state of affairs in the economy. “Such



things as information security, concepts, laws, rigorous methods and disciplined approaches will be useless without a strong economy. Unfortunately, it’s all tied up in good discipline and prompt efficiency,” emphasised the Belarusian leader.

“We badly need to expand the sphere of influence of our domestic mass media outlets and we shouldn’t shy away from new solutions in the media space,” said Mr. Lukashenko. “We need to start turning fake news against its distributors.” The President noted that it’s imperative to convey the truth to people in a fast, clear and comprehensive manner. “If we fail to do it, they will take advantage of it, as happens every now and then.”

this is not permissible: not only because we have the Internet, but also because society has changed, the world is different now.” The President added that Belarus should be a comfortable and safe place for everyone, not only for those few individuals who try to achieve their goals at the expense of the interests of other people.

The draft of the national information security policy is a Belaru-

account agreements on co-operation in ensuring the information security of the CIS and CSTO member states, as well as bilateral agreements and other commitments of Belarus in the area of international information security. The draft policy also covers the main provisions of acts of international organisations, including resolutions of the UN General Assembly and OSCE recommendations.

DIRECT SPEECH

“We see how information flows are used to degrade national mentality and the distinctive character of countries and nations. Principles of humanism and justice and the priorities of strong family relations and a healthy lifestyle should balance negative influences, particularly on social media.”



Mr. Lukashenko believes it’s necessary to enhance the volume, diversity and quality of the national broadcast and trust towards the official mass media from the population. It’s also important to think of establishing system-based control over the distribution of illegal information.

According to the Head of State, there should be order in the information sphere; however, no one should muzzle others. “Otherwise, people will have these discussions in their kitchens. They will indulge in speculation — we have gone through this period in our history. Sooner or later this will spill over onto the streets and

sian national product designed for broad domestic and foreign consumption, said the State Secretary of the Security Council, Stanislav Zas, at the Security Council session. “It’s purely our own product intended for broad domestic and foreign consumption and builds on the national security concept. It’s primarily designed to streamline information security efforts, add thoroughness and drive to achieve results. It’s also designed to enable the conditions for further advancement of this issue,” he said.

The document was developed considering Belarus’ geopolitical interests and its role in the modern world. It takes into

“The policy was briefly outlined and discussed at more than twenty international meetings and conferences. Furthermore, the main points have been published in the Republic of Belarus and in foreign publications and have elicited genuine interest,” noted Mr. Zas. “In January, the draft was approved by the inter-agency commission on security in the information sphere under the Security Council.”

The document reflects modern challenges and threats, which are evolving in the information sphere and pose a danger to the constitutional foundation and operation of states, such as: manipulation of the collective

consciousness, discrediting of ideals and values, erosion of national sovereignty and instability of the information infrastructure, etc.

The draft policy stipulates information sovereignty as an inalienable and exclusive supreme right of the state to independently determine rules of ownership, usage and management of national information resources, to pursue an independent foreign and domestic state information policy, to shape the national information infrastructure and to ensure information security.

It’s expected to be achieved by pursuing the policy of information neutrality, which provides for recognition of universally acknowledged and accepted rights of any state in this sphere and rules out interference with the information sphere of other countries.

It’s the first time the draft has stipulated the readiness of the state to detect risks, challenges and threats in the information sphere and respond to them. The document officially introduces the term ‘cyber-security’. According to its authors, this novelty clearly identifies the government’s intention to embrace the internationally acknowledged and rather well-established approaches to counteracting computer incidents and crimes.

Apart from the effective work of mass media, the draft policy underlines the importance of the active presence of the state in the Internet. In addition to official websites of government agencies, the document mentions blogs, instant messaging apps, and social networks.

After the session, Stanislav Zas told journalists that the draft information security policy had been supported by members of the Security Council. The document’s adoption will allow the establishment of systemic work in this sphere, forming the necessary legal base.

According to the State Secretary, participants of the session also discussed the practical implementation of the policy. More active work of government agencies in the Internet was mentioned, alongside public oversight of the information space. This approach has already been tested in several countries.

An entire chapter of the document is dedicated to the protection of traditional values. The State Secretary remarked that traditional values are believed to be a key asset worth protecting in the information space. It’s no accident that the need to pass a dedicated programme to protect traditional values and foundations of our society is being considered.

Solemn steps into adult life

On Constitution Day, the Head of State personally presented passports to twenty-five young citizens of Belarus, with a solemn ceremony first taking place in one of Independence Palace's hall

By Vladimir Khromov

The event brought together 25 young Belarusians from various regions of the country. These 14-year-olds have already made significant achievements in education, social life, sport and culture while also taking an active part in academic Olympiads, creative contests and competitions.

The ceremony was held in the hall where the President usually receives the credentials of foreign ambassadors. This grand environment made the event even more significant.

Alexander Lukashenko warmly and sincerely congratulated the youngsters on their Constitution Day celebration and personally presented everyone with passports and *I'm a Citizen of the Republic of Belarus* book.

The Head of State stressed that in every young participant of the ceremony lives the centuries-old dream of our ancestors to be the owners of their land. "This dream has become reality for you. You study the history of the country and realise that it's a huge honour and a priv-



Participants of the ceremony in the Independence Palace

ilege to be born and live in a strong and independent state," noted the President.

Mr. Lukashenko described the participants and their peers as the new generation, citizens of the world in their world outlook. "Digital reality has long been part and parcel of your everyday life and has erased geographical borders and barriers in com-

munication, cultural and language differences long ago. However, you must always remember that your Motherland, your own home is your native Belarus," he said.

The President added that teenagers make their first steps in adult life when they receive their passports. "This document symbolises the beginning of a new stage in life — full of in-

teresting and important events, including political ones," he noted. "You'll soon be making important decisions in the history of Belarus, aiming to protect our country's national interests. You will create the future of the country and think about its wellbeing, about the legacy that you will leave to your children. It means that you will do your best to preserve our spiritual

values, cultural heritage and the main thing, peace in our country."

Alongside passports and books from the Head of State, on this special day, the young citizens of Belarus were also taken on a visit to the Palace of Independence. The boys and girls were shown into various halls of the Palace which have hosted major state events, international meetings and summits, including the long negotiation marathon in the Normandy format. They eagerly shared their impressions from the meeting with the President and took photos inside the Palace.

The children also toured the museum at the Palace of Independence, which displays various presents made to the President by other heads of state, significant figures and foreign delegations. The main exclusive exhibit is stored in the President's office. It's a first copy of the working Constitution of Belarus. It is especially symbolic that the guests of the Palace of Independence saw it on the 25th anniversary of the country's Fundamental Law.

Keeping pace with the requirements of the time



By Alexey Fedosov

Speaking at the opening of the 40th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Belarus' Deputy Foreign Minister, Andrei Dapkiunas, points to alarming trends in international relations which increasingly limit the ability of states to ensure everyone's right to life and right to a decent life

According to Belarus, these include trade, information and hybrid wars, armed conflicts and terrorism. In the light of these challenges, Mr. Dapkiunas drew the attention of the Council to the initiative of the President of Belarus to launch a new comprehensive dialogue on global security. Belarus' Depu-

ty Foreign Minister noted with regret that the Human Rights Council mirrors the trends of degradation of the international law system and serves as a platform for escalating new crises and legitimising violent actions against sovereign states. In this regard, the head of the Belarusian delegation urged the Council to re-organise so that it can keep up with the latest challenges, to better protect socio-economic rights and assist states in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Taking part in the discussion dedicated to the role of small states in maintaining international peace and security, Mr. Dapkiunas stressed that only an urgent launch of new large-scale multi-lateral negotiations to over-

come a whole range of disagreements is answer to the current security crisis. The Belarusian side proceeds from the necessity of the participation of small states in dialogue, measures to strengthen trust and partnerships to overcome existing disagreements. Small and medium-sized countries should counteract the appearance of new division lines between spheres of influence of great powers and reject artificial or imposed ideas from outside geopolitical forces. According to Mr. Dapkiunas, the creation of the global network of various multi-level and multi-lateral thematic partnerships can also facilitate the easing of tensions. The representative of Belarus called on small and medium-sized countries to be a moral force for good in the world.

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is an intergovernmental body in the UN system responsible for the promotion of universal respect for and protection of all human rights throughout the world and for dealing with violations of these rights. In terms of format and coverage of human rights issues, the main session of the HRC is comparable to the session of the UN General Assembly in New York. Belarus is an observer at the HRC.



Number of guests has increased significantly

By Olga Korneeva

Around five million foreigners visited Belarus in 2018, with more than 100,000 using the visa-free regime

According to the data of the State Border Committee of Belarus, last year, the Republic was visited by 4,791,951 foreigners — almost 500,000 more than in 2017. These figures were announced at the final session of the Sports and Tourism Ministry of Belarus.

Over 100,000 foreigners used the opportunity to visit Belarus without visas in 2018. This year, the number is expected to grow as Minsk hosts the 2nd European Games in

June and a Europe vs United States athletics match in September.

Overall, from January-November 2018, Belarus exported \$207.2m worth of tourism services, up 14 percent compared with the same period in 2017. The Belarusian tourism industry is developing within the framework of the state programme *Hospitable Belarus*, which aims to grow a modern competitive tourism industry and increase its contribution to the national economy. The number of infrastructure facilities for tourists in the country is increasing every year. In 2018, Belarus' tourism potential was showcased at thirteen international expos and eighteen presentations.

Just what the doctor has ordered to take

By Olga Savitskaya

For four days Minsk has become a venue to bring together the latest achievements in medicine, showcasing electronic healthcare, 3D models of human organs, robot surgeons and virtual surgery

The 26th International *Healthcare in Belarus* Specialist Exhibition united more than 200 participants from 15 states: from Austria to China. Our country doesn't lag behind world trends. It's no accident that the central event of the business programme and major topic for discussion was the development of a system of electronic healthcare. According to the Health Minister, Valery Malashko, the most important task nowadays is the launch of digital technology in medicine, "The creation of the national electronic system of healthcare will cover each resident of Belarus — 9.5 million people. It will also account for each specialist — more than 50,000 doctors and over 120,000 middle-ranking healthcare workers. Furthermore, it will encompass every manager and all institutions that provide medical assistance. It's necessary to prepare for it from a technical point of view, as well as to prepare society in general. Which innovations from the exhibition attracted our attention?"

Simulator for students

In the pavilions we tested lots of simulators for would-be medical workers: it's possible to attend a true intensive-care ward, a surgery block and the dental room... Students (some excited to do this for the first time) took real medical instruments and 'conducted' their surgeries. It was very crowded near the simulator for laparoscopic procedures. The simulator ideally matches lessons to students, conducting surgery step-by-step, with prompts. It will also be useful for practicing surgeons, enabling them to polish and improve their skills.

Anatomy with one click

The human-sized interactive anatomy visualisation table, developed especially for students of medical colleges and universities, gives the opportunity to study the human body in detail. The subject is presented so systematically that it's a pleasure to study using the model.

"More than 5,000 objects have been uploaded and each of them can be stud-



At the exhibition of contemporary medical technologies

ied in detail," said the director of the 'Pirogov' interactive anatomy project, Vadim Gvozdkov. "It gives the opportunity to study whole systems, as well as separate organs. There's also the comparison feature, enabling would-be doctors to see how a healthy organ looks like and compare it with pathology."

Online platform for professionals

The first professional mobile application for doctors, pharmacists and pharmacologists — PharmBonus — has been available to download for several years and has proven its efficiency: during this time, more than 7,000 users have joined the portal. It's a closed medical community (only professionals of a certain level can enter it) where an expert can find all the necessary information in one place.

"This specialised application is ed-

ucational," notes the Director General of the company, Alisher Kolchman. "It contains up-to-date news from the Health Ministry, the Expertise Centre, as well as Belarusian and foreign pharmaceutical manufacturers. It has also collected and digitised all clinical protocols and boasts a convenient interface in the form of a mobile guide which is always at hand."

A separate section contains training, with a large number of video lessons, presentations and even online testing to consolidate knowledge. It also works as a calculator, enabling professionals to calculate the daily dose of medication for a patient.

Genes tell us the problem

The Institute of Genetics and Cytology at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus also offered surprising

innovations. This time, the scientists presented their developments in revealing lactose deficiency and gluten intolerance.

"Around 1 percent of people on the planet suffer from celiacia — a hereditary disease connected with intolerance of gluten," Yelena Guzenko, Deputy Director for Scientific and Innovative Work, explained the essence of the problem. "Only 20 percent of patients are aware of their diagnosis. It's not easy to identify, as symptoms are similar to other diseases. However, if it's not detected on time and a gluten-free diet isn't prescribed, significant issues can occur. After receiving the data from our analysis it's possible to significantly improve the quality of patients' lives, to make recommendations and prepare a diet."

Earth is generously nourished by science

By Vasily Gedroits

Domestic food has been overproduced for many years and the surplus enabled Belarus to become an exporter of meat and dairy goods. However, this is no reason to rest on our laurels. We need to move forward and use all our existing reserves: technological, financial and human, otherwise it won't be possible to achieve the targets set out in the Directive No.6.

In breeding, for example, this can be achieved by enhancing the genetic potential of animals, including selective and stock breeding work and by using genome methods of assessment. Last year, we passed the milestone of 5,000kg milk per cow. According to the

Directive 'On the Development of Rural Areas and Higher Efficiency of the Agrarian Industry', we need to increase further to 6,000kg. We can, of course, improve animal diets but this also has its limit. One of the top managers of the agro-industrial complex joked that if the cow's potential is 5 tonnes you can even feed it with chocolate, but it won't produce any more. We must look to science for help and to improve the genetics of animals.

For more than a year, geneticists have been working to create a specialised dairy breed, the 'Belarusian Holstein'. Director General of the Scientific and Practical Centre for Animal Breeding at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Nikolay Popkov,

is firmly convinced that the process will be completed by late 2020. What are the advantages of the new breed? Its potential is 12-15 thousand kilograms per cow annually, considerably higher than the traditional black-and-white variety.

Directive No.6 aims to improve the scientifically-grounded structure of agriculture, considering soil and climatic peculiarities. Minsk District's Gastellovskoye JSC knows that its land is primarily clay loam, and wheat is the most suitable crop. However, three quarters of the grain area are occupied by winter crops. As a result of favourable conditions in recent times, the crop yield exceeds 100 centners per hectare.

The head of the farm, Stanislav Sokolovsky, explains that the harvest



Spring angle

needs to be managed rather than simply planted. To ensure a good harvest it's not enough just to add mineral fertilisers. It's also necessary to use various micro-additives. In general, it's impossible to receive 100 centners without using scientific innovations, while Directive No.6 is aimed at their development and the application of breakthrough and non-standard solutions.

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Robot, be human!

United Institute of Informatics Problems at NAS develops anthropomorphic robot

By Alina Kasel

When thinking of the future, we all imagine that robots will perform all our work for us. At present, they already work in factories — mostly carrying heavy loads. In our houses, robotic vacuum cleaners are common. Of course, they are not everywhere but the tendency is obvious.

The trend is now being developed at the United Institute of Informatics Problems at the National Academy of Sciences. In addition to basic research and development, it's working on educational robots for students, making a spherical robot which will be much better than the famous BB-8 robot from *Star Wars*, as well as 3D printing a humanoid robot at full height. Our *MT* reporter learns more.

Half a man?

We visited the laboratory of robotic systems at the Institute to meet software engineer Yevgeny Pechkovsky, who is engaged in additive technologies and monitors the work of a 3D printer which makes another important detail for a 'Newman' — a new robot that looks like a man.

"This robot has been developed by French designers and engineers," the expert explains. "Electronic models of its mechanical parts have been posted on the Internet by its authors — for universities, research laboratories and anyone who has the desire can make and study it or engage in research based on it. Of course, we would like to create our own similar robot in the laboratory but for this, we need to know and understand how analogues function."

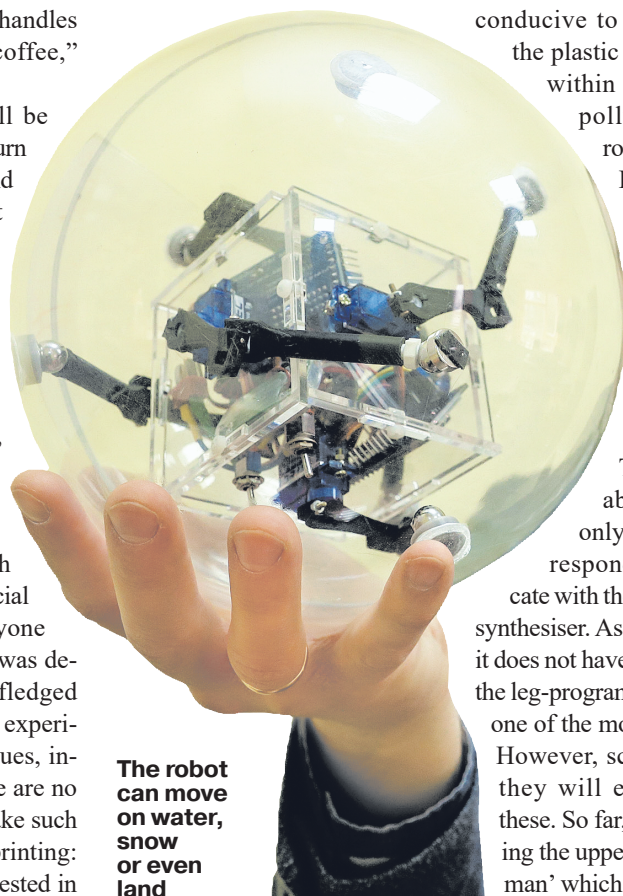
We are shown 'a half man': the head and bust of the robot.

It will listen and talk (special hearing and speech aids will be installed in its head) and even be able to feel the touch of objects through its fingers equipped with sensors. "It will also know where it is," Yevgeny adds, pointing to the chest. "A 3D camera is installed here, allowing the robot to 'understand' the space around it, do mapping and conduct facial recognition. It's a true treasure for engineers as it has man servos. For example, its hand has eleven degrees of mobility. Our programmers are responsible for recreating the movement of a human hand. We'll try to ensure that the robot could open doors with handles and lift a full cup of coffee," smiles Yevgeny.

The 'Newman' will be able to raise its hands, turn them, move the wrist and fingers. Interestingly, it all began with the hand: a few years ago, at the 2nd Congress of Scientists of Belarus, the laboratory staff demonstrated it. A web camera was installed nearby, and it recognised the image shown. Anyone in front of it could make a movement with their hand and the artificial hand repeated it. Everyone liked it so much that it was decided to make a fully-fledged person — based on the experience of foreign colleagues, including Russians. There are no textbooks on how to make such a robot, or for the 3D printing: our scientists were interested in studying this process — such as the shrinkage of plastic and its dependences, moisture levels in certain materials... It appeared that a good printer is not simply an office machine but a tool for an engineer.



▲ Will robots ever become man's best friends? Grigory replies, "Yes, they will be friends: on the basis of partnership and healthy competition."



The robot can move on water, snow or even land

"To make one physical part alone — the body — we used 7.5kg of PLA plastic: it is the closest to green technologies. The manufacturer says that, if it is placed in an environment

conducive to decomposition, the plastic will disintegrate within 5 years without polluting the environment," says Mr. Pechkovsky.

Along with Yevgeny, other researchers are also engaged in the creation of an artificial man. Ivan Podmazov and Ilya Tuzin aim to enable the robot not only to hear but also respond: to communicate with the help of a speech synthesiser. As regards walking, it does not have legs so far, since the leg-programming function is one of the most difficult tasks. However, scientists say that they will eventually print these. So far, they are perfecting the upper part of the 'new man' which may become the forefather of the first Belarusian human-robot...

They are among us

The laboratory staff also work on other robots. Among them are universal constructors for the modelling of robots for various purposes: RoboCake. The RoboCake line has three types of robots: Beginner, Student and Professional. The latter is already used at the Belarusian State University as a training set.

The head of the laboratory — Grigory Prokopovich — lays them out in front of us and explains: such small-scale mobile robots are designed to easily show and teach the principles of robotics, electronic components and electrical circuits, teach programming at different levels, conduct scientific experiments and even prototype service robots which can often be found in industry and in clinics in developed countries.

The industrial robots were the first: they replaced people in complex and monotonous work. Then there was a need for extreme robots able to work

in the most difficult conditions where a person might face danger (for example, moon rovers). Afterwards, sapper-robots were developed, as well as service and house robots.

"There are robot-assistants such as the voices 'Alisa' and 'Siri', but these have no physical form yet. When robots like them acquire a body, they will be personal robots — the pinnacle of evolution," notes Mr. Prokopovich. "In the meantime, we scientists conduct research and projects in all areas of robotics. We receive various requests from private and public enterprises, but we are also generators of ideas — trying to contribute to the service, personal and industrial robotics."

The expert also turns to the topic of the robot-ball. "Our robot-ball has an advantage over competitors: it will be able to move in all directions with a zero turning radius — now we are working on it." Mr. Prokopovich demonstrates a mysterious ball, inside which there are 6 engines, a control unit, batteries and other elements — combined into the single working body of a parallel manipulator. All these are completely manual work done by the laboratory staff. It is better than its rival from *Star Wars*: BB-8, as the latter cannot accelerate like a car and go 'neutral' to save energy. In turn, ours — thanks to the movement of the working body inside the ball — can change direction, be more mobile and manoeuvrable."

"Our spherical robot will not just glow and roll, it will be able, for example, to reproduce the situation from all corners of your home on the same smartphone. It will see everything, there will be no blind spots. We will also work on ensuring it can transmit the image," he adds.

Mr. Prokopovich does not exclude the possibility that in the future, such a robot will be able to solve the problems of movement: inside the smart sphere it will be possible to go like a car.



A 'Newman' robot

Variety of books are in demand

More than 250 Belarusian editions on show at Latvian Book Fair in Riga



al one. “We should consider adopting this approach, as it encouraged a large number of young people to visit the fair,” added Mr. Buzovsky.

Yelena Pavlova, the Head of the Publishing and Printing Office of the Belarusian Information Ministry (also a member of the delegation) noted that the fair in Riga paid close attention to the youngest visitors. “All kinds of venues offered not only the latest books for children but also a puppet performance, workshops, games and a sand-lamp zone. I think we should also offer more venues for children during Minsk book expos,” she added.

During the forum, the Belarusian delegation discovered the latest book publishing technology. Mr. Buzovsky described how they visited a publishing house in Jelgava, where they saw advanced printing equipment. “They update their printing technology every year because without it, it’s impossible to compete in the book market. Those who use cutting-edge technology will win. Staying up to date and professional is the key to



At book trade fair in Riga

success in book publishing,” emphasised the Deputy Information Minister.

Mr. Buzovsky said that Belarusian book publishers made sure they are moving in the right direction as they change approaches to the distribution of books, printed products and periodicals, by renewing and coming up with new forms of

delivery, including through smart Belsoyuzpechat newspaper vending kiosks and new shops. During the recent meeting with journalists, Belkniga Director, General Alexander Vashkevich, announced the opening of the flagship bookstore, Svetoch, in the European format, scheduled for April 30th.

MY REFERENCE

22nd Latvian Book Fair brought together around a hundred exhibitors from eight countries: Latvia, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Russia, Turkey, Germany, Belarus and Ukraine. As many as 102 cultural events were held during the forum, including 24 new-book celebrations. Over 150 meetings with authors were arranged, with some 16,400 people visiting the fair.

By Alexander Pimenov

Books dedicated to folk art and folklore, as well as medicine and psychology, aroused the greatest interest at the exhibition, as did books for children, noted Belarus’ Deputy Information Minister Igor Buzovsky, who headed the Belarusian delegation during the expo.

“At every international book exhibition, we don’t just

promote Belarus but also gain new experience, determine economic strategies and plans for the printing industry, book publishing and distribution business. We also take note of what will help make Minsk book events even more interesting,” said the Deputy Information Minister.

As part of the Latvian Book Fair, one pavilion hosted two expositions: one devoted to books and an education-

Miraculous return more than a century later

An historical copy of the unique Kolozha icon of the Mother of God, created in the early 20th century, has been returned to Grodno a hundred years later

By Olga Korneeva

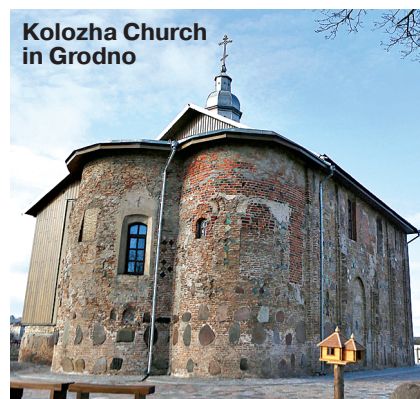
The exact and only known historical copy of the icon, which disappeared more than a century ago, was unexpectedly discovered in late 2018 at one of the antiquarian auctions in Germany where it was immediately purchased.

“Restoration works took several months, and it was discovered that the work was created in the early 20th century. At present, historical and scientific researches on the icon continue. There’s an inked inscription on its reverse noting that the image was painted in the Lavra icon painting workshop by hieromonk Grigory,”

said Alexander Bolonnikov, senior priest of the Kolozha Church.

It’s now being determined in which lavra it could have been created. It’s not impossible that the copy of the icon was done for an important event. According to one story, the work was handed to the Emperor Nikolay II, during his visit to Grodno.

The miraculous icon of the Kolozha Mother of God, created, it is believed, in the 16th century, has been an important relic of the Grodno area for several centuries. It was kept in the church until its destruction in 1853. Many miraculous events and healings are connected with it, including the escape of Grodno from destruction by the Kaiser’s troops in 1914. After a prayer service to save the city, the enemy, which was practically at the city gates, retreated. In 1915, the icon was evacuated. One version of events has



it taken to the Nikolo-Ugreshky Monastery, near Moscow, and all traces of it have been lost since then.

The return of the copy was accompanied by another more significant event. In late 2018, icons were found in the sacristy of the Holy Protection Cathedral in Grodno, previously unused because of their unusual style. During detailed investigation, an inscription was found on one of them, dating back to 1897. It said that the icons were painted specially for Kolozha Church, and they have now been returned there.

The church of St. Boris and Gleb (Kolozha), of the 12th century, is one of the oldest operating churches in Belarus. In late 2018, large-scale works to preserve the ancient building were completed; the repair of the church’s wooden wall. The load-bearing capacity of the building’s frame was restored, with a wooden wall levelled horizontally and vertically and the façade covering replaced. The area around the church was also improved, with external lighting installed. The works were financed from the President’s Fund for the Support of Culture and Arts and the regional budget, as well as sponsor funds. Inside the church, the wooden screen was completed, with the ceiling being replaced, as well as the flooring



Kolozha icon of the Mother of God

in the altar section. Balconies for the choristers and a gallery were constructed. All these elements are wooden and made in durable oak. A solid glass ‘archaeological’ window was also put into the church floor: under which parishioners and visitors to the church can see the foundations, alongside the remains of one of the lost columns of the church.

Work on the church continues today. It’s expected that a solemn ceremony to mark the permanent installation of the historical copy of the icon will take place on May 1st. This date is expected to become the future day of celebration in honour of the Kolozha Mother of God icon.



Parliament votes to postpone Britain's departure from the European Union

With just several days left until Britain is scheduled to leave the European Union, the Parliament voted to postpone the fast-approaching departure date

British lawmakers last Thursday voted to seek a delay to the March 29th deadline for the UK to exit the European Union by 412 votes to 202, but rejected an amendment to the motion that sought to hold another referendum during the delayed period.

The decision comes at the end of two years of tortuous negotiations over a plan for withdrawal that Prime Minister Theresa May has failed twice to push through Parliament, leav-

ing the process in limbo.

British Prime Minister Theresa May must now seek a one-off extension from the European Union, initially until June 30th, because according to the motion passed by the House of Commons any time-frame beyond that would mean the UK joining in the European Parliament elections scheduled for the end of May.

"MPs have voted in favour of the government's motion to extend Article 50 and delay

Brexit beyond March 29th. The government will now seek permission from the European Union to delay Brexit beyond this point," a government statement said.

A spokesman for the European Commission said extending Article 50, the mechanism taking the UK out of the EU on March 29th, would need the 'unanimous agreement' of all EU member states.

And it would be for the leaders of those states 'to con-

sider such a request, giving priority to the need to ensure the functioning of the EU institutions and taking into account the reasons for and duration of a possible extension'.

Mrs. May remains in power but is seriously compromised. Many Conservatives backed the anti-no-deal motion, against her wishes, and several members of her cabinet declined to vote against it, leading to speculation she has lost control of her party and the process.

Capsule has returned to the Earth

SpaceX's Crew Dragon capsule returned safely to Earth, wrapping up its inaugural mission to the International Space Station and signalling that the US may soon be able to ferry astronauts to and from space without relying on Russian spacecraft

The uncrewed capsule splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean, off the east coast of Florida, after spending almost a week at the space station. The Crew Dragon capsule was lofted into orbit by a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Cape Canaveral.

The flight was a crucial test of the new spacecraft, a seven-passenger vehicle that SpaceX has been developing for the past five years. The Hawthorne, California-based company has been flying robotic supply missions to the space station since 2012.

For this mission, the capsule was loaded with 450 pounds of cargo and a spacesuit-clad test dummy named 'Ripley' after Ellen Ripley, the fictional character played by Sigourney Weaver in the 1979 film *Alien*.

NASA is expected to schedule one more uncrewed flight of the Crew Dragon capsule to test the spacecraft's emergency abort system. After that, the space agency could authorise a Crew Dragon flight to the space station with two NASA astronauts onboard. The US hasn't had a way to carry humans into orbit since 2011.

Future-cities visionary sees urban areas becoming smarter



What will cities be like in the future? Scientists, engineers and architects have made all sorts of predictions about changes they expect to see in the urban landscape, from flying taxis to package-fetching robot dogs — even a colossal skyscraper suspended from an asteroid.

Carlo Ratti is more down to Earth. "I think that the city of tomorrow will not be too different from the city of today," says the architect and designer who heads up MIT's Senseable City Lab. "As humans, we will always need horizontal floors for living, vertical walls in order to separate spaces and exterior en-

losures to protect us from the outside."

But Mr. Ratti says urban landscapes and lifestyles will undergo big changes within the next decade. "New technologies will have an impact on the experience of the city more than on its physical form," he says. "The way we move, communicate and shop will be radically different from how it is today."

Alongside self-driving cars or maybe autonomous drones, there will be also other options. Digital data can empower individuals to pick from a 'transportation portfolio', a menu of options based on real-time information [that could include] bicycling, sharing a car, walk-

ing, taking an on-demand taxi, using the subway or train and hitching a ride with friends. This will require an integrating platform in a similar way to what happened with the airline industry a few decades ago.

As far as roads are concerned, the adaptable paving system, called 'The Dynamic Street', was developed for the *Quayside* project in Toronto. It represents a vision of a future where living and mobility become more flexible and responsive with the use of digital technologies, and as a consequence, public, communal spaces can increase.

Meanwhile, how buildings will change in the future is how human experience of them will change, as they will no longer be solely physical, but hybrid physical and digital entities. Buildings in the future will also increase the use of sensors to respond in real time to their users' needs and desires.

Speaking about new approaches to buildings, it's worth mentioning that architecture has always been about finding new materials or improving the use of old ones. Wood certainly belongs to this category.

Tim Berners-Lee: Web in 'downward plunge'

The creator of the World Wide Web is calling for an urgent global campaign to tackle the Internet's 'downward plunge to a dysfunctional future'

He made the comments in an interview to mark 30 years since he submitted his proposal for the web. Sir Tim said people had realised how their data could be 'manipulated' after the Cambridge Analytica scandal.

However, he said he felt problems such as data breaches, hacking and misinformation could be tackled. In an open letter, the web's creator acknowledged that many people doubted the web could be a force for good. He had his own anxieties about the web's future, "I'm very concerned about nastiness and misinformation spreading."

But he said he felt that people were beginning to better understand the risks they faced as web users. "When the Cambridge Analytica thing went down [people] realised that elections had been manipulated using data that they contributed."

He added that in recent



years he has increasingly felt that the principles of an open web need to be safeguarded.

Sir Tim outlined three specific areas of 'dysfunction' that he said were harming the web today: malicious activity such as hacking and harassment; problematic system design such as business models that reward clickbait; and unintended consequences, such as aggressive or polarised discussions.

These things could be dealt with, in part, through new laws and systems that limit bad behaviour online, he said. He cited the Contract for the Web project, which he helped to launch late last year.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Creative portrait in the museum's interior

By Alexander Pimenov

Undoubtedly, the name of Vladimir Prokoptsov is associated with the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus. He has been head of the country's major museum for more than twenty years. During this time, large-scale reconstructions of Mir Castle (at that time a branch of the National Art Museum) and of the Byalynitsky-Birulya Museum in Mogilev have been completed, with a new building of the National Art Museum also opened. Moreover, the whole museum district in Minsk — another of Mr. Prokoptsov's initiatives, is currently in the final stage of construction.

What gives him the energy and inspiration for new projects? Mr. Prokoptsov explains in the film, with the documentary crew visiting his small homeland in the Dobrush District, Vitebsk where he studied...

Much becomes clear from the dialogue with Mr. Prokoptsov:

In our artistic environment, people connected with Vitebsk always stand out. How have your studies in the city influence you?

Vitebsk did affect me with its artistic atmosphere. Vitebsk streets may not be as wide as Minsk avenues but there has always been a special feeling associated with the 1920s, Chagall and Malevich. In our department, everyone wanted to become as famous as Marc Chagall. I also applied to the Theatre and Art Institute in Minsk; at the time, competition for all places had ten or more applications. Since I had no way of improving in the village I was from and some Minsk residents even had their own studios, I was told that I had to take preparatory courses. I do not regret that I did not get into Minsk, because in Vitebsk, at the Art and Graphic Department, we were trained in a wider area. Perhaps there was not enough time for painting, although we stayed on to work in the evenings, but we got more professional skills. I'm still tinting the frames myself, and I know which one will work better. There was preparation for life, a lot of different disciplines, we got valuable training — we were poor but could do everything with our own hands. I even think that our graduates are more active in artistic terms, because the city has great traditions and our teachers have taught us to be versatile.

As you hold the position of director of the National Art Museum, your taste and view of art inevitably affect the priorities of the institution as a whole...

It's easy for me to work here because I have three specialties. Thanks to my art education I can talk to any artist on equal



As part of the 80th jubilee of the National Art Museum, there was a presentation of the project by Oleg Lukashevich and Alexander Alexeev — *Modern Art of Belarus*. A new series of documentary and educational films was dedicated to the museum Director, Vladimir Prokoptsov.



During film presentation

terms. In addition, I graduated from the Institute of Art at the Academy of Sciences and defended my thesis — as a result, I'm practically and theoretically knowledgeable. I gained considerable experience working as an administrator for six years and a half at the Council of Ministers. I learned not only to prepare governmental documents but to look at everything globally.

I can maintain a conversation with each artist and manage my own administrative resources. Not every member of the Union of Artists can exhibit here, there is no pop culture or celebrity artists here. Twice we have been asked to exhibit Nikas Safronov, I said, "No, it will not suit us." It's easy for me to work here. I couldn't be a rector of the Academy of Music because I know little about music.

Tell us what the museum focuses on in the replenish-

ment of funds and its exhibition activities?

It has occupied its own niche. We do not rush to pop culture because there are other appropriate spaces for them. At the same time, we are not only interested in academic realistic works: as an experiment, we organise 'formal' exhibitions — catering for other tastes and great artists. The museum strictly adheres to its aims and I follow this policy. Some artists will never be able to exhibit here. Only the best of the best can come.

What is happening between the layman and the artistic sphere? In an interview you said that 'our people are not yet ready to go to museums, as in Europe'.

They are not unable, but much depends on family situation. We are in the centre of Europe, but we do not have an established tradition to go to ex-

hibitions. We also lack the tradition of meeting with friends for a cup of coffee — although young people are turning to it now. Now that our museum is open seven days a week however, we may see many people coming to visit us on Saturday and Sunday. Perhaps things are not developing as fast as we would like, but the mechanism has been put in place.

You are fascinated by art. Don't you regret that you have not devoted your life to painting; you work at the office from morning to evening?

If I'd entered the Theatre and Art Institute, maybe I would have become an artist. However, I came to the museum and, since then, I'm constantly involved in the process of construction. I was engaged in the reconstruction of the Mir Castle — our site. I devoted fifteen years to that. Every Tuesday, we covered a hundred kilometres to hold a working

meeting. As soon as we finished, the castle was taken away from the museum. We are now engaged on work in the museum quarter. I don't have enough time for painting physically. This is my life: if not me, then who? Every year, I have 'business meetings' with all the ministers. It is impossible for me to paint as much as others. I can recall my colleague from Armenia: he goes to the workshop in the morning, paints for a while, goes to the museum, signs financial documents and returns to his studio. In turn, I have construction problems, meetings and more. However, my painting makes it possible for me to switch to a new activity and helps keep my life balanced.

The friends of the National Art Museum were the first to see the new film, which shows everything they and the Belarusian audience are grateful to Vladimir Prokoptsov for. The major focus, however, is not on Prokoptsov as a director but as a painter — his much less famous 'role'. Many viewers say the film has revealed a new side to Prokoptsov for them, showing that he is primarily an artist.

The documentary and educational series of films — *Modern Art of Belarus* — began in 2016. Since then, ten films have been created, alongside ten creative portraits of our contemporaries. These include a laureate of the State Award of the Republic of Belarus, Valery Shkarubo, laureates of the President's special prizes to figures of culture and arts, Konstantin Kostyuchenko and Igor Barkhatkov, as well as People's Artist of Belarus, Leonid Shchemelev. As part of the project, the audience has an opportunity to get to know the unique style of the Vitebsk painter, Oleg Kroshkin, a painter from Grodno, Valentina Shoba, and Minsk artist, Sergey Rimashovsky.

The authors of the project have managed to take unique pictures with People's Artist of Belarus, Anatoly Baranovsky, and Honoured Figure of Arts of Belarus, Vladimir Kozhukh, who passed away in 2017. These acquire new meaning as documentary evidence. A separate film was devoted to the reconstruction of a church in the village of Vishnevo. A thorough and detailed approach was shown towards the restoration of sacral art traditions by young painters Gleb Otchik, Polina Omelyanovich and Konstantin Kostyuchenko on the example of fresco paintings, sculptural compositions and mosaics for iconostasis.

It should be mentioned that Priorbank, which, over many years, has been curating one of the country's largest corporate collection of pictorial works, acts as a partner for the project.

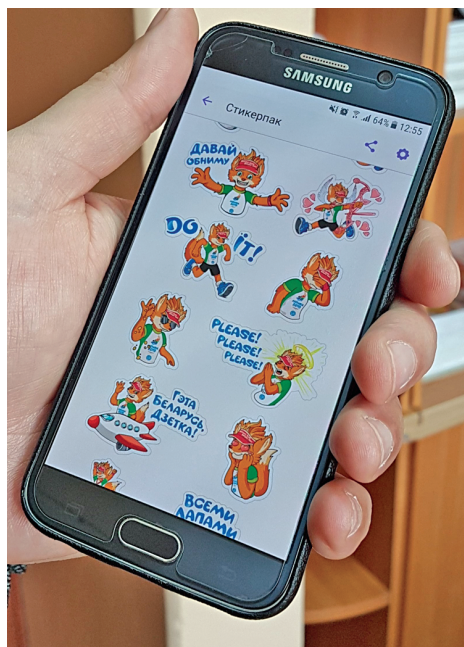
The 2nd European Games is an opportunity for each Belarusian to become part of a large-scale international event



“This project is truly multi-national, the forthcoming events will become the largest in the modern history of Belarus,” notes Director of the Minsk European Games Organising Committee, Georgy Katulin, in a welcome speech 100 days before the start of the multi-sports event.



Download stickers and join the Viber community



By Svetlana Savelieva

One of the world's leading companies, developing applications for free and safe communication, released, in partnership with, a free sticker pack, dedicated to the largest multi-sport forum of Europe which starts in Minsk on June 21st

The pack features Lesik the Fox — the mascot for the 2nd Eu-

ropean Games, consisting of 24 images and showcasing the sporting mottos: ‘Victory!’, ‘Do it!’, as well as the national ones: ‘Proud to be a Belarusian’ and ‘That’s Belarus, Baby!’

The stickers show common situations from the lives of sport fans and athletes. They are universal and can be used to convey emotions in chats with other sports fans.

The pack is now available to download. It’s free for all countries and is designed to be another tool to share opinions and light up communication with bright sporting colours.

The Minsk European Games Organising Committee (MEGOC) press service noted that after downloading the pack with the Fox Lesik, a user is automatically added to the Viber-community ‘2nd European Games 2019’. It will post updates on all events of the upcoming forum which will take place in Minsk in June.



ELOQUENT LANGUAGE OF STATISTICS

The 2nd European Games will last for ten days and will feature competitions in **15** sports and **199** sets of medals. The Games are expected to gather representatives of **50** countries from around the Old World, over **4,000** athletes, more than 1,000 accredited journalists and over **200** television cameras for international broadcasting. The total amount of broadcasting from the sports arenas will exceed **500** hours.

More than **8,000** volunteers selected from over **24,000** candidates from all over the world will make their invaluable contribution to the implementation of the 2nd European Games 2019. The event will also attract many thousands of foreign guests, who will come to Minsk to appreciate not only the sports but also the cultural programme of the forum. They’ll be able to rediscover or get to know Belarus.

See you in the fan zone



By Olga Korneeva

Ten fan zones will be working during the 2nd European Games in Belarus: three in Minsk and seven in the regions

The 2nd European Games are exciting competitions, as well as a unique opportunity for Belarus to show its treasures, culture and traditions. The Minsk European Games Organising Committee with the Culture Ministry and the Minsk City Executive Committee are preparing a programme of events which will take place in cultural and educational institutions.

The opening and closing ceremonies of the Games represent some of the most important events. The organisers are preparing a unique show for Belarus. “Never before has our country seen such a large-scale event. All the spectators who come to the stadium to watch

the ceremony, will also participate in an interactive element, which will not be part of the televised version,” said Olga Grigorieva, Head of the Cultural Programme Organisation Department of the Minsk European Games Organising Committee (MEGOC) at the press conference.

The cultural programme of the competitions will include events in the fan zones. The main zone near the Sports Palace will open on June

19th. It will have public catering outlets, shops to sell merchandise, alongside an arts and crafts fair and presentation sites for the Belarusian regions. Fan zones will also be located near Minsk-Arena and Chizhovka-Arena, as well as in the country’s regions. These will open on June 21st. Fan zones are urban celebration places with a big screen, sound and lights, where spectators will be able to get together and watch the most interesting events of the European Games from various sporting venues and get into the spirit of celebration. In the evenings, the zones will be used as concert and entertainment venues featuring Days of Culture of the European participating states.

Furthermore, official and unofficial award ceremonies for the athletes will take place in the fan zones. Performances by popular artists and regional music bands, who will be able to show Belarus’ national spirit, will be an indispensable part of the programme. Foreign guests will be treated to contests, games and other activities organised by sponsors and partners of the Games.

“Every fan zone will have its own theme — national, sporting, youth or family. There will be lots of entertainment. Plans have been made to arrange exhibition performances in sports not included in the main programme of the competitions. There will be exhibition performances in historical fencing in the Upper Town on June 22nd-23rd. In addition, the Mikhail Savitsky Art Gallery will display unique valuable ancient swords and masks. It will be open from late April to early September,” added Ms. Grigorieva.



Highly comfortable living conditions

All the facilities of the Student Village will be ready for 2nd European Games by May

By Lyudmila Yevgenieva

The Student Village will serve as the Athletes' Village during the 2nd European Games, accommodating over 6,500 members of official delegations, athletes and participants of the Games. "This is a great responsibility and has strict requirements for us, and we have been consistently fulfilling them. All the facilities of the Student Village will be handed over to the Minsk European Games Organising Committee for further preparation in May," noted Belarus' Deputy Education Minister, Sergey Rudy, following the

meeting of the subcommittee on construction, restoration and equipment of facilities for the 2nd European Games.

Overall, nine hostels of the Student Village will be used during the Games. "The renovation is on schedule and within budget. Work in the hostels at the Student Village is to be completed soon, with more furniture and equipment being installed. Then we'll move on to the surrounding area. Our main goal is to provide guests and participants of the Games with highly comfortable living conditions so that nothing upsets their training and performance," added the Deputy

Minister.

The participants of the subcommittee meeting attended the Student Village to inspect the readiness of its facilities to accommodate official delegations and athletes.

They have also visited the newly constructed 25-storey hostel with 1,800 places and attended hostels where finishing works are currently underway, inspecting fully completed rooms which have already been provided with new furniture and the necessary equipment. They also inspected progress in the preparation of catering facilities for participants.

There's plenty to choose from

More than 24,000 people from all over the world wish to become volunteers at the 2nd European Games



By Maria Svetlova

Applications will be accepted until April, then around 8,000 volunteers will be chosen to work in more than 25 areas during the 2nd European Games. "We are not talking about enlisting but shortlisting volunteers, with more than three applicants per position," explained Alexey Bogdanovich, Manager for Communication, PR and Mass Media of the Minsk European Games Organising Committee (MEGOC). The applicants must pass an interview, some of which are held online.

The candidates are selected based on their foreign language proficiency, teamwork skills and other aspects.

The geography of volunteers for the sporting forum covers all continents, noted Mr. Bogdanovich. There are applications from the USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina and

Asian countries. A lot of volunteers are expected from Russia. As far as Belarusian volunteers are concerned, some have already gained valuable experience during the FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia.



Well-coordinated task

At a briefing in Minsk, Manolo Romero, Managing Director of International Sports Broadcasting (ISB) announced that around seven hundred experts will be taking care of broadcasts during the forthcoming 2nd European Games

By Kristina Nikonova

The head of the company emphasised that it will be the third time he has been at the central arena of the European Games, but this time he has brought a large team to Minsk. "We don't foresee any difficul-



ties with broadcasting per se. The stadium suits TV broadcasting well. We will just have to find the most spectacular angles. Certainly, the opening and closing ceremonies deserve close attention. Our task is to show a perfect picture of what's going on at the stadium to the TV viewers. During the Games, we intend to use about 700 specialists and about 150 of these will be hired locally. We'll organise training sessions, which will help the personnel improve their professional skills. About 300 interviews have been held recent-

ly and we're happy with those we've chosen to work with us. Moreover, the experience of working during such events will be an excellent boon to the Belarusian specialists, who may continue working in the mass media business," noted Mr. Romero.

The ISB Managing Director described the special equipment that will be used to cover the broadcasting from Minsk. "Right now, we're talking about 30-40 heavy trucks full of equipment, which will help us offer top quality pictures. We've also discussed the con-

struction of a broadcasting centre to serve as our base for the duration of the Games. We intend to start installing equipment in mid-May and finish in mid-June, enabling us to prepare personnel right before the start. The schedule is tight, so we don't want to lose a minute. We're now testing the grid that will connect the arenas with the broadcasting centre. I'd like to point out that it works very well, we're impressed with the speed of the work," he added.

Mr. Romero also mentioned brisk sales of the rights to show the 2nd European Games 2019 on television.

"So far TV companies have bought rights to broadcast the Games in over 150 countries. Broadcasts from Minsk will be available even in New Zealand and Latin America. Even now we may assume that the TV audience of the 2nd European Games will be unbelievably large," he said.

MT REFERENCE

The 2nd European Games will take place in Minsk from June 21st-30th across twelve sporting facilities. More than 4,000 athletes from fifty countries will compete for 199 sets of medals in 15 sporting disciplines. The competitions in eight sports will become qualifiers for the 32nd Olympic Games to be held in 2020 in Tokyo, while competitions in badminton, boxing and judo will be held as European championships.

ARENA

The Minsk Times
Thursday
March 21
2019

11

Contest of the week



Minsk hosted *Global Weekend* international dance competition, featuring show ballets from Belarus, as well as CIS and non-CIS states

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 31st March. *On the Eve*
Until 28th April. *Tkachev Brothers. Beginning of the Journey*
Until 30th June. *Salvador Dali*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 Karl Marx Street
Until 31st March. *Pictures of Anna Makat: Biblia Pauperum*
Until 7th April. *In Co-authorship with Nature*
Until 30th May. Exhibition of party dresses: *Invitation to the Ball*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 1st April. *Who Am I?*
Until 7th April. *Fantasy Land*
Until 14th April. *Path to Constitution*

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

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

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

47 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st March. *Jazz! Cats! Spring!*

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM

8 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 31st March. *Echo of Fiery Mountains: Afghanistan*

LOSHITSA ESTATE

8-2 Chizhevskikh Lane
Until 31st March. *Circle of Time*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

3 Nekrasov Street
Until 23rd March. *Marco Antonio Lillo. Glad to Meet You*
Until 30th March. *Native Corner*

MAXIM BOGDANOVICH LITERARY MUSEUM

7A Bogdanovich Street
Until 8th April. *I Am Mother*

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*

TROITSKY SUBURB

7A Bogdanovich Street
Until 7th April. *Insects and More*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
21.03. Carmen
22.03. Chopiniana. Bolero. Carmen-Suite
23.03. Don Pasquale
24.03. Don Quixote
26.03. The Grey Legend
27.03. Romeo and Juliet / Romance
28.03. Iolanthe

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
21.03. How to Become Rich
22.03. Dangerous Liaisons
23.03. Circle of Love
24.03. Divers
26.03. Bridegrooms
27.03. Inn-Keeper
28.03. OblomOFF

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
21.03. Who Laughs Last
22.03. Anna Snegina
23 and 24.03. Wolves and Sheep

NEW DRAMA THEATRE

16 Liza Chaikina Street
21.03. Polonaise Sounds Heard
22.03. I Will Live
23.03. Important to Be Serious

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street
21.03. Weltmeister-Accordion
22.03. Evening / Radio Homeland
23 and 24.03. Paulinka
26.03. Pan Tadeush
27.03. Seagull
28.03. People of the Marshes

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street
21.03. Belarus. Didactics
22.03. Wisdom Measurer
23.03. Adam's Jokes
24.03. Concrete
27.03. Ticket to Brest Train

MODERN ART THEATRE

5 Oktyabryaskaya Street
22.03. House Upside Down
24.03. House Upside Down 2

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
21.03. Invented Not By Us
23.03. Caught by Love
24.03. Vanyushin's Children
26.03. Hotel of Two Worlds
27.03. Fool
28.03. Rich Brides / Decadence

CHAMBER DRAMA THEATRE

5 Frunze Street
23.03. Veronika Decides to Die
27.03. While She Was Dying