

BELARUS

MAGAZINE FOR YOU

ISSN 2415-394X

Politics, Economy, Culture



MELODIES OF MINSK AUTUMN

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

Events in Belarus and abroad

**Weekly
newspaper
read in
dozens of
countries**

Don't be late to subscribe

CONTENTS



4 HIGHLIGHTS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

8 Pragmatism of substantial dialogue President of Belarus pays official visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan from October 4th-6th

11 Many important tasks lie ahead Alexander Lukashenko addressed deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the fifth and sixth convocations

36 Hospitality in the first place Belarus accounts for almost half of all Russians' trips to the CIS states, since our country is so conveniently close, as well as being interesting. Moreover, travel to Belarus avoids complications of borders, visas and language barriers, as well as offering security, comfort and unusual hospitality

38 Place worth coming to: five reasons to visit Bobruisk

40 Good work Worldwide famous group from Belarus was started at one time with a same-name village

48 Touching audiences with classics Ballet master Alexandra Tikhomirova takes post of director at the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus

50 Miraculous game with light People tend to say that stained glass evokes a special atmosphere, inspiring an emotional response, and spiritual calm

14 Not receiving but earning

18 Road quickly leading to goal UNDP organises unprecedented campaign in Belarus: Bike4SDGs to support the Sustainable Development Goals

22 Ten out of ten Rovshan Atayev, 18, a Turkmen student with the Mechanics and Mathematics Department of the Belarusian State University, has surprised many with his knowledge, breaking stereotypes about foreign students by achieving top marks across all his subjects



ELECTRO-BUSES OF TOMORROW



52 SUCH SOULFUL EYES

Беларусь.Belarus

Monthly magazine

No. 10 (997), 2016

Published since 1930

State Registration Certificate of mass medium No.8 dated March 2nd, 2009, issued by the Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus

Founders:

The Ministry of Information of the Republic of Belarus

"SB" newspaper editorial office

Belvnesheconombank

Editor: Viktor Kharkov

Executive Secretary:

Valentina Zhdanovich

Design and Layout by

Vadim Kondrashov

Nadezhda Ponkratova

Беларусь.Belarus is published in Belarusian, English, Spanish and Polish.

Distributed in 50 countries of the world. Final responsibility for factual accuracy or interpretation rests with the authors of the publications. Should any article of **Беларусь.Belarus** be used, the reference to the magazine is obligatory.

The magazine does not bear responsibility for the contents of advertisements.

Publisher:

"SB" editorial office

This magazine has been printed at State Entertainment "Publishers "Belarus Printing House".

79 Nezavisimosti Ave., Minsk, Belarus, 220013

Order No. 2492

Total circulation — 1939 copies (including 788 in English).

Write us to the address:

11 Kiselyov Str., Minsk, Belarus, 220029.
Tel.: +375 (17) 290-62-24, 290-66-45.
Tel./Fax: +375 (17) 290-68-31.

E-mail: belmag@sb.by

Subscription index in Belpochta catalogue — 74977

For future foreign subscribers for 'Belarus' magazine, apply to 'MK-Periodica' agency.

E-mail: info@periodicals.ru

Telephone in Minsk: +375 (17) 227-09-10.

© "Беларусь. Belarus", 2016

Goals That Unite

Time is always rushing on, obliging us to hurry. The pace of life is rapid, in every sphere, and the same is true of our international contacts. It wasn't always so that the President of Belarus would have two international visits within a few days of each other, but it's becoming the norm. His high status visits to China, followed by Pakistan, provide eloquent proof, as you can read in **'Highlights of strategic partnership'** and **'Pragmatism of substantial dialogue'**.

It's worth paying attention to the fact that China has established comprehensive and strategic partnerships with about two-dozen countries. Belarusian-Chinese relations have grown in under three years. China enjoys a special level of co-operation with a few select countries, with experts naming the UK, Russia and Pakistan. Now, Belarus has joined this club. Bearing in mind the size of China and its degree of influence, membership of this 'club' is a great honour.

High hopes are also pinned on Belarusian-Pakistani relations, the contours of which are becoming clearer: pragmatism, mutual benefit, and the use of new opportunities in interested cooperation.

Despite the importance of the political side of international contacts, economic issues dominate, determining the degree of profitability for both parties. As a rule, sustained success requires parity, and interest can be found in many areas. For example, there are more than four million vehicles of all kinds in Belarus. In our **'Electro-buses of tomorrow'**, we look at how cooperation with Chinese companies will help reduce significantly harmful emissions from Belarusian buses into the atmosphere.

Our next edition, entitled **'Road quickly leading to goal'**, states that transport is more than a convenient way to get from

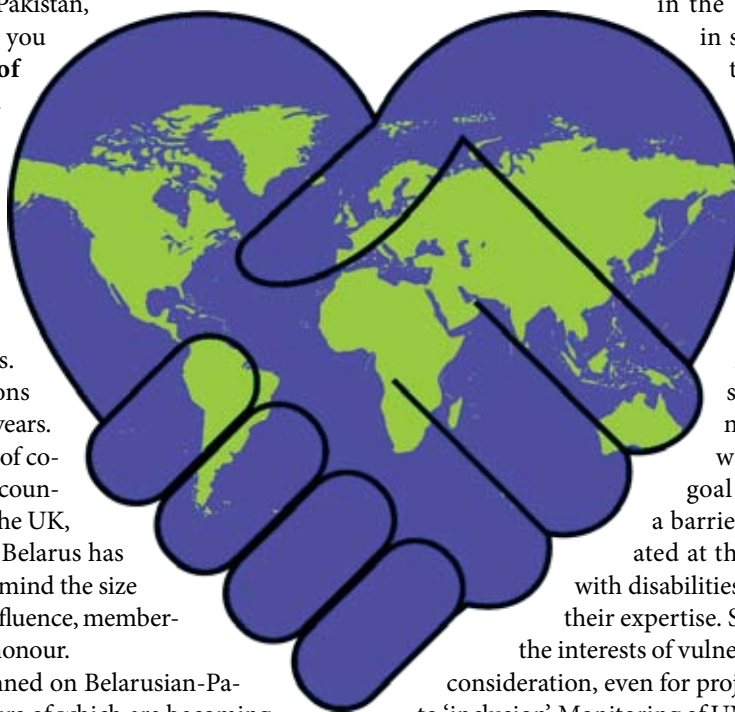
one place to another, and that riding a bicycle is more than environmentally-friendly behaviour. Adopting an active life helps us participate equally in society, with the results seen not only in the world of work but in education, leisure, our health care system, and at trade and service sites.

UNDP in Belarus has organised an unprecedented event in the **'Bike4SDGs'** cycling event, in support of the Goals of Sustainable Development. We describe how the involvement of vulnerable groups of society can raise work efficiency and stimulate creativity.

UNDP in Belarus has been involved from the very beginning. At first, like most organizations, it ran single campaigns and implemented individual projects, without an obvious long-term goal of sustainability. Gradually, a barrier-free environment was created at the UNDP office, and people with disabilities began being invited to offer their expertise. Special consultations allowed the interests of vulnerable groups to be taken into consideration, even for projects without an obvious link to 'inclusion'. Monitoring of UNDP projects has shown how much has been achieved.

In conclusion, I'd like to point out that, a year ago, the UN member states, including Belarus, adopted the Agenda for Sustainable Development until 2030, demonstrating readiness to contribute to reducing poverty, combating climate change, and promoting universal equality and partnership.

These are noble goals, but they require better effort, from the whole global community. Achieving stability isn't easy in our unstable world. Nevertheless, good deeds quickly unite us. Achieving goals then becomes a reality.



VIKTOR KHARKOV

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Viktor Kharkov'.



Consent as a model of civilised relations

The only phrase — voiced by the President on meeting the Synod of the Belarusian Orthodox Church — fully explains the depth of long-term mutual understanding between the state and the Church: 'I put these values at the basis of my politics: justice and love to all'

Alexander Lukashenko meets the Synod on a regular basis. This time, the President has called upon bishops to a particularly open, trusting and sincere conversation — meeting the spirit of the times and lacking the retouching of the present objective problems. The state expects not only bilateral cooperation but The Belarusian Orthodox Church is expected to continue its mission of maintaining peace in the hearts and minds of many different people.

“It is important that the Orthodox Church continues to promote interfaith harmony in Belarus, demonstrating an example of civilised relations. We have always existed peacefully through the balanced policy of the state and the Orthodox Church as regards Catholic and other believers. My position is clear: we have nothing to divide us in this world. As a powerful and large reli-

gion, you should respect and support others,” Mr. Lukashenko said.

These expectations fully coincide with the Belarusian Orthodox Church's aspirations. Archbishop Pavel says that nobody can see the Orthodox Church as a competitor to the state or other faiths. It is a reliable and creative pillar of the country and society.

The Belarusian Orthodox Church will pay even greater attention to the social services and care for the needy. It also has its place

in the education of the younger generation — including through training of young priests whose words would be appealing to the young generation. Another mission is to build — figuratively speaking — the hierarchy of effective interaction. The dialogue between the Church and the country's leadership is bearing fruit. It should be promoted everywhere — through thoughtful and more active cooperation of parish heads and local authorities.

Alexander Lukashenko:
I put these values at the basis of my politics: justice and love to all

► Past and future

Minsk has become an arena for brainstorming about the past and future of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Over 200 CIS representatives have met during the international conference, dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the CIS.

The major announcements of the Minsk forum are as follows: soon trade within the CIS will enter a qualitatively new level — the CIS Executive Secretary, explains, “At present, the draft agreement on service free trade within the CIS is being improved and it's expected to be signed next year.”

This will open the way to the second agreement, outlined by Belarus' Prime Minister, Andrei Kobyakov, “The agreement on free trade in services will enable



us to work in the WTO+ format. Under the conditions of the current unstable financial situation, the work conducted by us to establish mutually beneficial economic cooperation, seems a positive factor that softens the negative effect from the problems of the global market.”

Belarus' Information Minister Lilia Ananich familiarised the CIS scientific elite with the Belarusian experience of coverage of integration processes, while expressing hope that our developments are interesting for the CIS.

The Vice President of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, Ibragim Guliev, expressed the common view of participants of the conference, “From the economic point of view, we're for the union. However, it would be great if the efficiency of our collaboration could improve.”

Highlights of strategic partnership

Alexander Lukashenko's visit to China opens a new page of active partnership

During his work in Beijing, Alexander Lukashenko has negotiated with Chinese President, Xi Jinping, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Le Keqiang, the Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Yu Zhengsheng, and the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, Zhang Dejiang. The schedule was very busy -- similar to the intensity of development between our two states.

The Chinese are masters of the art of graceful diplomatic language and delicate politesse. It was no accident that, almost a month before Mr. Lukashenko's visit to Beijing, Xi Jinping delivered warm words to his Belarusian colleague. These were voiced by the Sec-

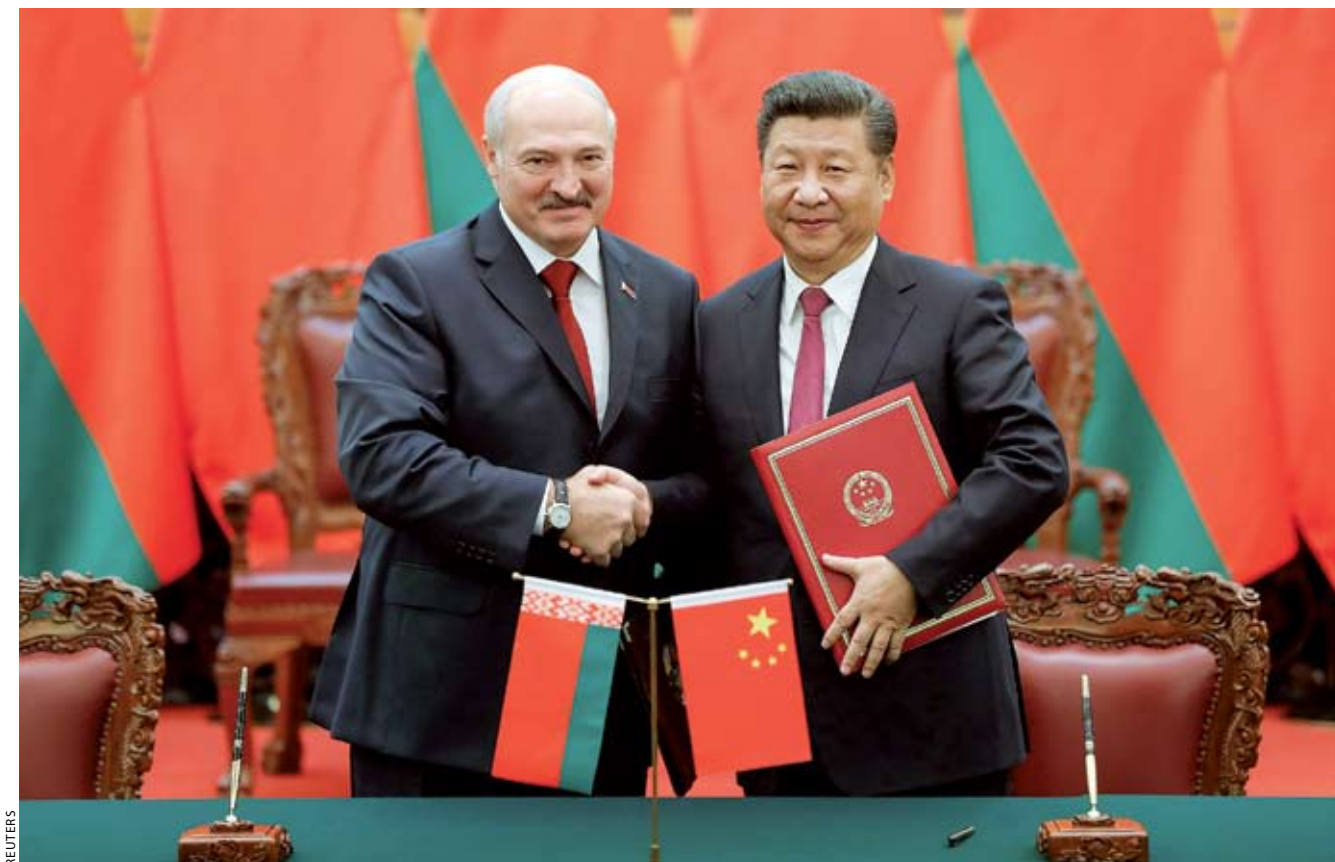
retary of the Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China, Meng Jianzhu, as he met with the President: 'President Lukashenko is my closest friend... Among all leaders of the world I can reveal my thoughts only with the President...' after this, journalists had no doubt that an announcement regarding bringing the two countries' relations to an even higher level would be the result of the Belarusian President's work in Beijing.

In 2013, the 'all-round strategic partnership' was announced between our countries. Our partnership has since moved to an even more trustworthy footing. This is stipulated in the joint declaration, signed by Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Jinping; its complete title is 'Declaration on Establishing Relations of Trustful Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and Mutually Beneficial Cooperation'. Thus, external observers now have a clear signal that Belarus in

China and China in Belarus are being taken seriously in the long term.

This alliance was confirmed not only by the pragmatism of strategic economic interests. There are issues that can't be written in the language of diplomatic protocol or measured in dry statistical figures. Our partnership has stood the test of time, ensuring that both Minsk and Beijing trust each other. They conduct sincere dialogue on open topics, in the interests of their nations. Moreover, they see these interests similarly: political and economic interaction at interstate level which should bring tangible benefits to their people.

Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Jinping paid considerable attention to political and economic topics, of course. The determination to develop interaction across these areas is also stipulated in the joint declaration: 'The sides are unanimous that trade-economic, investment and financial cooperation is



Alexander Lukashenko and Xi Jinping during the meeting in Beijing

a motivating power of Belarusian-Chinese relations. The two sides will take measures aimed at shaping mutual benefit and joint profit, which is described by multi-dimensional, large-scale and multi-level collaboration.

All necessary conditions have been created to implement these approaches. At present, these tasks are seen not as goals in themselves, but rather as a consequence of even deeper joint aspirations. The document encapsulates this thought in the unusual declaration that Minsk and Beijing have agreed 'to develop an all-weather friendship, to create a community of common interests and a community of single friendship...'

In this respect we should pay attention to one significant aspect: China has established a level of comprehensive strategic partnership with around two dozen states. Belarusian-Chinese relations have grown in less than three years. The People's Republic of China

has a higher, special status of interaction with just a few countries. Experts believe these include the UK, Russia and Pakistan. Now, our country has also joined this club. Comparing sizes and the degree of influence of China and its closest friends, one understands that such membership is highly symbolic.

Concrete areas for the development of collaboration are stipulated in a package of agreements and memorandums, signed in the presence of the heads of state. Completing official talks in an expanded format, Mr. Lukashenko and Mr. Jinping communicated privately for some time. The personal leanings of the two heads of state and their will to develop rapprochement between our two nations have led to the current level of partnership. The President of Belarus and the President of China were publicly speaking of this while thanking each other for their support of mutually beneficial initiatives.

Mr. Lukashenko also awarded Mr. Jinping a medal 'For Strengthening Peace and Friendship'. In this way Belarus marked the considerable personal contribution of the Chinese President to the development of trade-economic, sci-tech and humanitarian ties between Belarus and China, as well as exceptional merit in strengthening friendly relations and collaboration between the states. This is a new award bestowed for the first time.

The Minsk-Beijing train of partnership and trust continues to gain momentum.

On his last day in Beijing, Alexander Lukashenko met the Premier Minister of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Keqiang. He spoke to students of the Beijing University and laid a wreath at the Monument to the People's Heroes before departing.

Journalists, political experts, economists and specialists will be analysing

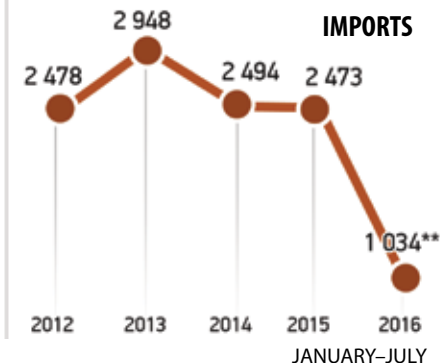
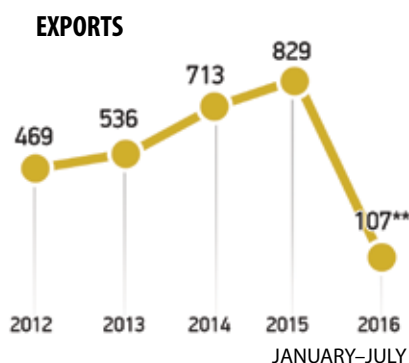
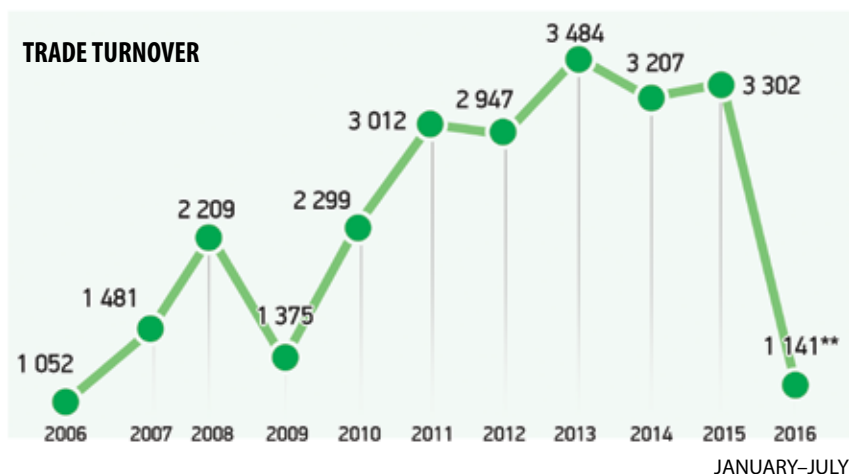
BELARUS — CHINA

TRADE-ECONOMIC COOPERATION



IN 2015, CHINA WAS AMONG BELARUS' TOP THREE TRADE PARTNERS

Dynamics of trade in goods between the Republic of Belarus and PRC (\$mln)*



* Including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

** Data for January-July 2016 for Belarus and Mainland China.

the results of the visit for a long time. However, the most important effect is that Minsk-Beijing relations have been raised to a special level. Our country is a member of the small 'club' of close friends of China, and this opens up the wider prospects for business amongst other things.

The economic dimension of the visit is also rather impressive, regarding the list of signed agreements and memorandums alone. They outline concrete projects with China to be implemented in Belarus. A new chapter in cooperation has been opened up, where exchange and the attraction of direct investments are the cornerstones. We have initially established efficient mutual trade, followed by China beginning to provide loan support to the Belarusian economy. This has allowed us to renewed many areas of industry, including cement production, power engineering and road construction. At the same time, the first joint companies were set up in China and Belarus.

The grandiose Belarusian-Chinese project of the Great Stone Industrial Park is being realised not far from Minsk, with the initial infrastructure already complete. In the near future, the park's residents will begin their work on projects involving direct investments from China. The park is only one of the pillars of the global Chinese idea of the Silk Road Economic Belt. It corresponds to the Belarusian initiative of 'integration of integrations'. We'll be working together on this and advantages for both sides are expected.

The state visit was intensive and fruitful. However, fulfilment of the decisions, adopted at the top level, will require even greater efforts. The President spoke about the spirit of Belarusian-Chinese friendship, the world role of the People's Republic of China, Minsk's view on agricultural problems and other topics, with students of the Beijing University. You can form your own opinions by reading the published text of his speech.

Meanwhile, uniting efforts in implementation of joint projects seems even

more important — including those of the global significance. At present, our Government serves 32 credit agreements with Chinese financial institutions — totalling approximately \$7.5 billion. At the same time, no more than \$4 billion have been used by now. Definitely, the Governments and business circles have much space for maneuver in this field. Moreover, some agreements and arrangements envisage financing of mutually interesting ideas for about the same amount. Actually, this potential could hardly be called exhaustive.

China views Belarus as one of the main pillars of its global initiative of the

Silk Road Economic Belt. Here, the key element is the Great Stone Industrial Park which is being built near Minsk. Its initial infrastructure is now being prepared but 8 residents are already registered. Moreover, another 30 foreign companies have concluded agreements on their intention to become the project participants. According to some estimates, the total investment potential of the Great Stone may exceed \$50bln.

As a result of the visit, over 30 joint documents were signed — covering areas of political and strategic cooperation, investment, industrial, commercial, credit, scientific and technical coopera-

tion. Judging by the rich and meaningful programme, it would be appropriate to assume that the Belarusian-Chinese agenda can get a new, higher status. In any case, the visit cannot serve as a catalyst for the further deepening of relations and cooperation between Minsk and Beijing.

On his last day in Beijing, Alexander Lukashenko met the Premier Minister of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Keqiang. He spoke to students of the Beijing University and laid a wreath at the Monument to the People's Heroes before departing.

By Dmitry Kryat

From the speech of the President of the Republic of Belarus at the meeting with students and teachers of the Beijing University

...Our country stands for the undisputed supremacy of law in international relations, which should be based on the current fair and multipolar world order. This is the basis of the international agenda, and both China and Belarus similarly realise this agenda. Only a multipolar world can save our planet from destruction. The more these supports are put in place, the more powerful it will make the system. Yesterday, I told my friend Xi Jinping that one of the pillars of the multipolarity and stability of our system is the Chinese People's Republic. We are keen to support this relationship. We believe that a strong and powerful China

will be an asset to a sovereign and independent Belarus. This is because the country is our friend, on whose shoulders we can always rely. Belarus is a state which has subordinated its foreign policy to pragmatic and clear goals; a key part of which is to increase the well-being and living standards of our people. Ensuring the country's security and neighbourliness at our borders is also vital. We are at the geographical centre of Europe, and without claiming any global geopolitical ambitions, we were able to create an 'island of stability' in the region, forming a friendly and sufficiently trusting relationship with all our neighbours: Russia, the European Union and Ukraine. It is natural for our country, whose territory has, since ancient times, been a crossroads where East and West, North



and South literally met. When a dangerous conflict began at our borders with Ukraine — which is our closest brother along with the Russians — it was Minsk that turned out to be the ideal platform for all parties to negotiate a settlement of the crisis. The role of Belarus and our sincere desire to be a stabilising factor has been appreciated by many states, who consider our country as a point of support in the promotion of their own, especially economic, interests in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. Belarus is not just an active participant, but also the initiator of the different levels of integration in the post-Soviet space. In integration, we see the future of not only our state but also the whole of Europe, the whole of our continent and the entire Eurasian space.

Pragmatism of substantial dialogue

President of Belarus pays official visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan from October 4th-6th

This event can be compared with the recent state visit to the PRC. Pakistan is known to be among the closest partners of China. Belarusian-Chinese interaction has been brought to a higher level after the visit to Beijing. Strategic ideas of inter-state cooperation are also similar: both Pakistan and Belarus view China as supports in their global transport and logistic

initiatives. This completely corresponds to the interests of the partner-states, since it causes the inflow of direct foreign investments to the development of infrastructure, new productions and, later, the growth of revenues from transit.

Almost two dozen documents summed up the negotiations between the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, and the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, in Islamabad. The documents reinforce intentions and concrete agreements on

cooperation across various spheres, while the protocol on the exchange of ratifying certificates launched the treaty on friendship and cooperation between the two states. The mutual aspirations of Minsk and Islamabad towards rapprochement received a legislative base. Since the first visit of Alexander Lukashenko to Pakistan, the dialogue has been active for over a year already.

The desire to expand the geography of foreign political and economic contacts of Islamabad is logical. This

Alexander Lukashenko and Nawaz Sharif expressed their common position across major areas of cooperation in a joint statement. The two states declared their desire to continue supporting each other further on the international arena. They will be also stimulating the development of interaction at ministerial level and between the regions, in the sphere of small and medium-sized businesses



is a strong and influential state; one of the world's nine nuclear powers. The most important transport arteries in the region pass through its territory and their stability primarily depends on Pakistan, as well as the solution of issues dealing with security in the region. Minsk is also not a novice to transit issues, so sharing experiences will be extremely useful. Moreover, our largest and most significant projects in this sphere are implemented in cooperation with the People's Republic of China, as well as the Pakistani-Chinese project to create a joint transport corridor. This idea is supported by society and business circles. It's very con-

venient to interact with the neighbouring countries of the region from Pakistan. This also explains Minsk's interest towards collaboration with Islamabad. It refers not only to bilateral interaction but to close cooperation with third friendly states, and collaboration with China, is among top priorities here.

Alexander Lukashenko and Nawaz Sharif expressed their common position across major areas of cooperation in a joint statement. The two states declared their desire to continue supporting each other further on the international arena. They will be also stimulating the development of interaction at ministerial level and

between the regions, in the sphere of small and medium-sized businesses. The negotiations also tackled the topic of collaboration in nuclear power engineering. Like Minsk, Islamabad is realizing a range of projects in this area, so the exchange of opinions will be mutually beneficial. In total, the final document will be universal, declaring the interest of the states to reinforce interaction in policy, trade, industrial cooperation, investment, humanitarian and the social sphere.

The practical implementation of these initiatives was discussed at the Belarusian-Pakistani Investment Forum whose opening ceremony was attended by the President. He addressed

entrepreneurs, saying, “I call on Pakistani businessmen to make wider use of our industrial opportunities in the implementation of various infrastructural projects in our country. Minsk Tractor Works, Belarusian and Minsk Automobile Works, as well as Amkodor, Bobruiskagromash, Gomselmash, Lidselmash and other large enterprises that have gained popularity on the world markets, are ready for collaboration.”

The tactics proposed are traditional, offered to all partner-states: to determine 3-4 key projects for the two countries and to implement

should be within four years — not less,” noted Mr. Lukashenko.

Entrepreneurs regarded the directive favourably.

Mr. Lukashenko also had negotiations with the President of Pakistan, Mamnoon Hussain, and the Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, Sardar Sadiq.

A lighter moment in the visit was when a working tractor was unexpectedly seen in a street in Islamabad. In line with local tradition, the vehicle was generously decorated with fringes and sparkling toys. It resembled a Christmas tree rather

visit. This is a serious legislative basis for the development of interaction across all areas and the practical elements won't be far behind.

Belarus' Industry Minister, Vitaly Vovk, also sees promising prospects on the Pakistani market, “I believe that we have a good chance, taking into account the relations between the heads of our states. This will enable us to gain a foothold on the Pakistani market.”

According to the Minister, almost all large industrial enterprises will be working actively in Pakistan. MTZ, BelAZ, MAZ, Bobruiskagromash, Belshina, Amkodor and other companies have interests there. Moreover, their intentions have been already discussed with potential Pakistani partners at the business forum and the necessary documents have been signed. For example, a contract for the supply of products was signed by Belshina JSC and is currently discussing the possibility of setting up joint production under its brand with Pakistan's only tyre manufacturer. The Pakistani Province of Sindh will purchase BelAZ quarries, as they are going to develop one of the largest open pits to extract fossil coal. Next year, up to twenty Belarusian vehicles will start working here. The project will develop quickly, in several stages, each of which will demand the purchase of 20-30 quarries. Moreover, Amkodor JSC will launch the production of special machinery in the city of Lahore within a month.

It's clear that we have common plans, if we take into account the personal support of business initiatives by the heads of state and their good relations. On the last day of his visit, the President and the Prime Minister had a warm informal meeting in the countryside residence of Nawaz Sharif. The leaders of Belarus and Pakistan have demonstrated their personal interest in the active development of fruitful inter-state interaction.

Last year, Minsk and Islamabad signed 58 documents on the development of cooperation across various spheres, as well as almost two dozen memorandums and agreements that were concluded during the current visit. This is a serious legislative basis for the development of interaction across all areas

them in the best possible way. This will be an example to others, as well as an impetus for the expansion of business contacts. Of course, the heads of states will personally support these initiatives. For this, an agreement has been reached in their regular meetings, enabling them to control processes of the fulfilment of decisions, adopted at the highest level. Mr. Lukashenko invited Mr. Shariff to visit Belarus at any convenient time. Moreover, the President of Belarus urged businessmen to focus on the achievement of a major orienting point.

“We've agreed with the Prime Minister to bring our trade turnover to \$1bn within four years. Agree with each other as you wish but \$1bn

than serious machinery. However, its trademark could be guessed even behind the fringe: ‘Belarus’, produced back in the Soviet era yet still working perfectly on the clearance of a construction site...

Pakistan has long been aware of our country and the goods we manufacture though they didn't always relate it to a location on the map. ‘Belarusians’ were an illustration of the once large-scale cooperation with the USSR. Local specialists speak fondly of the reliability of our machinery.

Last year, Minsk and Islamabad signed 58 documents on the development of cooperation across various spheres, as well as almost two dozen memorandums and agreements that were concluded during the current



BELTA

Many important tasks lie ahead

Alexander Lukashenko addressed deputies of the House of Representatives and members of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the fifth and sixth convocations. Below are some extracts from his speech.

An important stage is beginning in the political life of our country. The term of the House of Representatives' deputies and members of the Council

of the Republic of the fifth convocation is coming to an end. Parliamentary elections have been held and the time has come to pass the baton to the next National Assembly. Today's event should herald a new tradition of an independent Belarus in the development of parliamentarianism. The basis of this tradition

is in the unity of our people. Its purpose is to analyse the work of the outgoing Parliament and encourage the newly elected deputies.

The work will be complex and demanding. The country needs to overcome the negative trends in the economy and reach stable dynamic growth rates. We have all the necessary conditions for this, the most important being the unity of our people and the political will of the leadership of the country to move forward — which is eloquently confirmed by the recent parliamentary elections. They are a serious challenge for us since they were held under complex conditions.

Firstly, we had to prove wrong the bias prevailing in Western countries that democratic norms are not met in Belarus during national voting. However, to date, nobody has defined these democratic norms. Therefore, the entire electoral process was under the close supervision of numerous foreign observers: we invited them from both the West and the East.

We welcome the opportunity to demonstrate to the world community the transparency of our electoral system and the legitimacy of governments. The Belarusian commission gratefully accepted constructive recommendations regarding the improvement of electoral legislation from foreign colleagues. For us, everything that is good for business and not contrary to the interests of the Belarusian people is to be welcomed.

Any electoral process has its own Rubicon: the line which cannot be crossed by the authorities — the President in our case. He occupies a place of power over all branches under the Constitution and has to create equal conditions for campaigning for candidates and opportunities for voters. I did my best to achieve this. I'm absolutely not against the increasing role of parties; however, this should not be done artificially or from a place of antagonism against the authorities.

At the moment, the opposition is already present in Parliament. Why then did they fail to win? Why are there so few of its representatives in Parliament? I would honestly like there to be more — if only so that I am not accused of not allowing them. The answer is simple: our opposition is too far from people's interests. Those who were closer to their interests, who were representatives — rather than the enemy of what is being done in the country; those people joined the Parliament. Moreover, our nation cannot be fooled with tales of luxury living overseas. Victory by several true opposition members — as I said, thinking deputies — has caused quite a stir among the leadership of their parties. The question is, do they want to take power into their own hands and are they aware of what to do with it? Believe me when I say again that I have known them since childhood. They do not know what to do.

As a president in office I cannot give power into these hands. But I will act in full compliance with our Constitution, particularly in order not to



BELTA

Alexander Lukashenko:

We need peace and security, friendship and cooperation between nations.

Our Belarusian nation is the kindest and most international one

be criticized in the West and in order not to embarrass our friends in the East. Everyone clamoured for access to TV. We gave it. But the majority, including the opposition, who desperately wanted to go on air — had nothing to say. They say Lukashenko held the elections in order to please the West. I would like to answer this question directly. Not just me, but the entire Belarusian power structure did everything not only to please the West and the Americans, but also to make our friends in Russia, China, Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic countries, Asia and Africa feel proud of us. We wanted our elections to be appreciated all over the world. Isn't this natural? Moreover, the economy of the country, the lives of our people depend on it to a certain ex-

tent! Yes, we wanted to please certain people, but we did it in a decent way without violating the Constitution.

Certainly, our economy is facing challenges today, but they are surmountable, not disastrous. These challenges are a result of our mistakes, mainly those of the government. The major issues are associated with our exports, but we never returned from business trips without signed agreements. There may be billions of dollars in China and hundreds of dollars in Pakistan we are just starting to work with. The latest parliamentary elections demonstrated that there is no dissent in society and there are no reasons to change state policy. They also reaffirmed the growing role of parliament in the preparation of the



The speech of Alexander Lukashenko didn't leave anybody untouched

country's development strategy and parliament's growing political base. This is proved by the participation of political parties and public associations with various views in the election campaign as well as the fact, that their representatives won parliamentary seats in a fair fight.

The National Assembly of the 6th convocation includes worthy representatives of our people. Over the next four years they will improve existing and adopt new laws aimed at improving the efficiency of the economy, the elimination of barriers to business, attracting investments to the country, job creation and regional development. Still, a lot is to be done for further improvement of the social sphere, support of financially disadvantaged citizens, improvement of the educational system including higher education, as well as housing and labour legislation. The previous composition of the National Assembly deserves our gratitude. Its term fell in a difficult period in world history. Especially dramatic events took place abroad. Recall the violent change of power in the once-prosperous countries of the North Africa and the Middle East. I say this with responsibility, because I have been to those countries more than

once. I'm an old President. I know well not just Bashar al-Assad, who is now being bombed there, but even his father — Hafez al-Assad. You cannot imagine how intelligent he was. Once Fidel Castro and I, believe it or not, spent the whole day and night, just having a drink, listening in wide-mouthed astonishment, as if students of history, to world history from his mouth. And it differed completely from what we were taught! Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, who was impaled, hanged, mutilated. He was not a fool and he was a very brave man who did not leave his country even knowing that he would be killed.

I sometimes think, recalling former US President Bush. The world drifts into open and hot confrontation. The situation is worse than during the Cold War period. Rule of the gun, hypocrisy, insincerity in international relations, especially between the geopolitical players dominate today. International law is trampled under specious excuses. All countries tries to find their niche, new regional integration structures are being created that are trying to protect themselves by high protective barriers, particularly in the economy. You may have noticed that today there are a lot of talks about a confrontation between

Russia and the United States in Syria. We are politicians, who knows what the essence of this confrontation is? Dangers of the modern era are born from such confrontations. In these circumstances foreign policy is playing centre stage.

I have to admit that in the past we often talked about a multiple-vector policy but in reality we've been flying on one wing. However, life demonstrated to us that in a crisis we face excessive risks of being dependent on political moods in the relevant countries. Our task is to secure a real positive balance in relations with all our neighbours as well as all the leading geopolitical centres of power. This is an extremely complicated task. We are forced to pursue this policy not to offend anyone, to avoid damaging anyone's interests, to stay strong and to avoid becoming someone else's province once again. Do you think it is a wrong point of view? It is not my idea. It is an embodiment of the hopes and desires of the entire Belarusian nation. This is our policy as it is. And we are ready to cooperate with everybody for the sake of this goal.

...The task of the newly elected deputies is to open the door wider not only for our neighbours but for all who want to live and make friends with Belarus. You should use a variety of information on the economy, geography, culture and history of our native country to be able to present it at its best, to attract potential investors, businessmen, tourists. We need to work systematically with our neighbours and allies. Belarusian MPs traditionally actively cooperate with representatives of Belarus — the Russian Union Parliamentary Assembly, parliamentary structures of the CIS — the CSTO, and it is our main direction. We know them, we speak the same language, and we have much in common in our mentality.

We need peace and security, friendship and cooperation between nations. Our Belarusian nation is the kindest and most international one.



BELTA



ITALIA 82



Boris Panshin, Doctor of Engineering Science, Professor with BSU's economic Department. Author and co-author of more than 200 works on the problems of informational support, information technologies, computing systems, philosophy and sociology, management, marketing and state procurements

Not receiving but earning

Government goal to create 50,000 new jobs annually

Prof. Boris Panshin, with BSU's Economic Department, tells us, "We haven't seen a catastrophe with jobs and it is unlikely to happen. However, enhanced labour productivity and increased wages remain acute issues. Company modernisation takes years and offering even a single workplace costs about \$300,000, inspiring wider use of robots, including in agriculture."

He adds, "Previously, a large herd of cows was overseen by a shepherd, with two assistants. Now, it takes just one guy on a bike, assisted by an electro-shepherd charged with solar panels. Job cuts in industry and agriculture are a global trend. Meanwhile, these basic branches need to be constantly developing, creating highly developed industry and agriculture."

Prof. Panshin continues, "At present, more jobs are opening in the field of services, small innovative production, eco-tourism and farming. Programmers, translators and designers are also in demand; this is common for all spheres connected with knowledge and creativity. We enjoy great reserves and possibilities in this respect, for all ages and abilities. Joint work in co-working centres is becoming increasingly popular among creative youngsters. As a rule, they're located within production buildings at former enterprises where simple cosmetic repairs are needed. Two such centres successfully operate in Minsk and their numbers are on the rise. Every European capital has around 5-7 major successful centres. This isn't surprising, since the number of people wishing to engage in business and enlarge their entrepreneurial activity is growing. The



There are a lot of possibilities at the market of professions in Belarus

market for services is developing rapidly. Moreover, there's a global trend for collective forms of ownership. The Nobel laureate in economics, Elinor Ostrom, has proven that collective ownership is no less effective than state or private."

"Markets for intellectual services are especially promising for Belarus, with its high level of human development. The High-Tech Park's experience

in creating the best conditions for developing innovative entrepreneurship and small businesses. In crisis conditions, small businesses play a key role in improving employment and social stability. They have importance and relevance. Efficient production and innovation are next in line of importance, when small businesses gain their feet and grow stronger."

new jobs and new types of entrepreneurs to appear quickly, working not under the 'buy-sell' principle but 'invent-produce-sell'. This encourages innovative products to be made, able to compete on international markets. Small businesses are flexible — able to adjust quickly. It's only necessary to clearly indicate their role and place in the economy."

He goes on to explain, "Transition to home working, in its broadest sense (including manicurists and accountants) creates prospects for new employment. This is very advantageous, since it enables employers to save money on office rent. Home-based work can be a lifesaver for those interested in crafts, or who wish to run child care services. Villagers from Vetka District make embroidered napkins and cases for mobile phones but need help with sales, which is where student information centres and e-commerce can come in. There are many similar examples."

"Results are inevitable if work is being done. After five years of coherent and hard work, tangible results will be evident. Ten years later, results will be undeniable and, in fifteen years, the country will change. The Government should act as the main driver in this respect and people will definitely respond," he concludes.

By Boris Panshin

Results are inevitable if work is being done. After five years of coherent and hard work, tangible results will be evident. Ten years later, results will be undeniable and, in fifteen years, the country will change. The Government should act as the main driver in this respect and people will definitely respond

demonstrates that we rival the West in this area and are quite competitive in the global market. In some positions, Belarus could become the best in the world. Each single job in the field of innovative technologies generates 3-4 vacancies in the production of goods and the provision of traditional services. To progress, it's necessary to continue, at state level,

He adds, "We can create new jobs in the field of intellectual services and crafts quickly and efficiently, at universities, if there are premises available, and the necessary help for repair and utility bill payment. At the same time, curriculums for training courses need updating. In the USA, it takes seven weeks to train a programmer, allowing

Electro-buses of tomorrow

Vehicles on Belarusian roads annually increase in number, with over four million now keeping urban streets busy, but cooperation with leading Chinese companies should significantly reduce harmful emissions by our buses into the atmosphere

In recent years, we've seen a welcome fall in the volume of harmful emissions from vehicles, notes Sergey Novoselov, who heads the Labour Safety and Ecology Department at the Belarusian Research Institute of Transport Transtekhnika (BelNIIT). Between 2010 and

2014, emissions fell by

6.5 percent (equating to 881,000 tonnes), thanks to more eco-friendly engines. Our domestic enterprises are manufacturing buses to a minimum of EURO-4 standards, while using modern 'greener' fuels.

This year, the Minsk bus fleet received ten buses running on gas. For every thousand litres of liquid oil motor fuel, between 180kg and 300kg of carbonic oxide is released, alongside 20kg-40kg of hydrocarbons, and 25kg-45kg of nitrogen oxide. The benefits are evident but domestic production of electro-buses remains in its early



MAXIM TARNALITSKY

Belarusian electro-bus charges in just five minutes, enabling it to drive 12 kilometres

stages. Several have arrived via an international technical assistance project, entitled 'Supporting the Transition to a Green Economy in the Republic of Belarus'. Meanwhile, two Belkommunmash E433 buses will appear in Minsk by late 2016, with eighteen more expected by 2018.

Specialists assert that electro-transport is the future. Once Belarus' nuclear power station launches, there will be little difficulty in finding electrical capacity for recharging stations, notes Olga Prudnikova, who heads the Production and Technical Board at Belenergo State Production Association. She tells us that an extensive network of stations is planned, for use by private and public transport.

Many countries are promoting electro-buses via preferential purchase terms, such as free parking and free recharging. Such vehicles are also given their own lane, and are exempt from ecological tax. So far, the only move Belarus is currently discussing is the possibility of duty-free import.

Major cities do need to take action to avoid pollution from transport emissions, and to take measures to limit traffic noise (which comprises 60-80 percent of all urban noise at present). Innovative transport can improve the situation but what can be done with constantly growing number of cars? Some cities, including Moscow, have introduced 'park and ride' schemes, encouraging drivers to leave their vehicles outside urban centres, transferring onto public transport. Success in decongesting roads speaks for itself.

Are we ready to rely more on buses and trams? It's still a big question. Mr. Novoselov comments, "Buses use five times less energy per passenger than a personal car, while trams and the metro use ten times less. Development of public and green transport (via bicycle infrastructure) will help solve problems of air quality, as well as easing traffic jams." He argues that we don't need new motorways, but 'alternative solutions'.

Undoubtedly, Belarusian automobile builders are trying to keep up with the times. Residents of the Chinese-Belarusian Great Stone Industrial Park, who are taking part in related projects in Belarus, include Chengdu Xinzhu Silk Road Development Company. It has plans to make supercondensers for electro-buses, being mass-produced by Belkommunmash OJSC Holding Management Company: a leading producer of contemporary urban electric transport in Belarus. The enterprise's engineering staff are monitoring the latest global trends, suggesting modern and safe transport options. Prospects for electric transport development in Belarus are huge and Belkommunmash is preparing to switch production, to mutually benefit both sides. Belarus is interested in innovative technologies while the Chinese are keen on ready-made goods for supply to the Chinese market.

Belarusian electro-buses have aroused interest in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. According to BELTA (Belarusian news agency), Belkommunmash will supply three electro-buses to the Russian Federation's Sakhalin Region. A protocol on intentions has been signed by the Belarusian Ministry of Agriculture

and Food's Leonid Zayats and the Governor of Sakhalin Region, Oleg Kozhemyako. Moreover, Belkommunmash will be creating corresponding infrastructure in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, establishing two charging stations, as well as supplying electro-buses, by late 2016.

By the end of the year, Belkommunmash will have manufactured two sample electro-buses for Minsk, with new vehicles planned for launch on central routes across the Belarusian capital. These will be equipped with supercondensers (produced by Chinese Chengdu Xinzhu Company) that have already proven successful on urban routes in Bulgaria and China.

Electro-buses will be equipped with a single arm pantograph, allowing recharging within a mere seven minutes. A further 18 electro-buses should become operational in Minsk in H1 2017, with Gomel and Grodno also keen to acquire similar transport. The Belarusian hybrid bus is being piloted in Moscow from early 2017.

By Vera Artemieva

By the way

A scientific research centre and a production facility to manufacture supercondensers for electro-buses is being constructed at the Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park, implemented by Chengdu Xinzhu Silk Road Development. Supercondensers will be used by Belkommunmash OJSC Holding Management Company for electro-buses, trolley buses and trams. A 1.1 hectare land lot has been allocated for the project, to house 20,000sq.m of production facilities. The annual volume of production (reaching project capacity) should be worth between \$400mln and \$600mln. Chengdu Xinzhu Silk Road Development was created by Chinese Chengdu Xinzhu Investment, registering as a resident of the Great Stone Industrial Park on May 6th, 2015. Chengdu Xinzhu Investment is a subsidiary investment enterprise of joint company Xinzhu: a large manufacturer of communal transport and construction equipment with a statutory fund of 6.5bln Yuans. Since 2001, it has been a platform for Chinese and international investment projects in the sphere of railway transport.





Moment of start of the Bike4SDGs bike ride. The go-ahead is given by the heads of UNDP and the Delegation of the EU to Belarus

Road quickly leading to goal



Inclusive forest concert is a creative platform for demonstrating the potential of the inclusive society



Participants of the canyoning. 12 km on the winding route of the River Isloch

The increasing popularity of the bicycle movement is already contributing to global goals worldwide.

This eco-friendly transport is helping the environment and people's health but is also assisting inclusion, economic growth and the fight against inequality

UNDP organises unprecedented campaign in Belarus: Bike4SDGs to support the Sustainable Development Goals

Transportation is not only about getting from one point to another. And cycling is not only about eco-friendly behaviour. It's about staying active. Through mobility comes equal participation in society, including access to employment and edu-

A year ago, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by the UN member states, including Belarus, showing commitment to targets of eliminating poverty, fighting climate change, promoting equality and partnership in pursuing these aims



Installation of solar collectors on the roof of the first energy-efficient building of the second generation in Mogilev



86 people with disabilities have driven on the Bike4SDGs bicycle route. A lot of them have crossed the finish line successfully

cation, leisure, health care and enjoying services and shopping.

Especially for Bike4SDGs, two new eco-tourist routes have launched at Nalibokskaya Reserve, in Minsk Region's Volozhin District: the Road to Global Goals 22km bicycle route and a 12km canoeing route along the River Isloch.

On September 21st, over 600 Belarusian government officials, diplomats, sportsmen and ordinary citizens gathered in the central square in the town of Pershai. Aged from nine to seventy, they represented various nationalities, religions, physical abilities and positions. Approaching the start-line, they shared a common goal.

Even those with disabilities crossed the finish line, riding bikes, or paddling a canoe. Really, there are no obstacles to 'getting moving'. The event was followed by a fair showing local initiatives and an inclusive forest concert, showing how partnerships drive forward creativity.

Since it launched operation in Belarus, UNDP has been promoting 'inclusion'. At first, like many other organizations, it launched implemented specific projects rather than focusing on sustainable programmes. However, UNDP office has gradually created a barrier-free environment, with disabled people joining the team to offer their consultation, explaining the problems of vulnerable

groups. UNDP office in Belarus' monitoring of projects has revealed where the focus now needs to be, to ensure maximum impact.

UNDP projects presented at the fair demonstrated that inclusion aims to ensure equal access to social benefits and technology. Inclusion is present in all UNDP projects, from energy-efficient buildings and conservation of peatlands to combating greenhouse gas emissions and preventing hereditary diseases.

'Energy Efficiency in Schools'. Apart from introducing energy efficient technologies into educational institutions, the project includes a strong education-

al component. The project team, jointly with the administration at pilot sites, is working to ensure that training activities are inclusive. For example, preschoolers at Oshmyany kindergarten #6 are performing matinees at various institutions in Oshmyany, including at the department of daycare at the Territorial Centre of Social Services of Oshmyany District. There, they're using games to teach energy efficiency to the elderly and disabled.

In Mogilev, for example, a multi-storey residential energy-efficient building for large families is being constructed. Each apartment is being equipped with an intelligent system, providing economical energy consumption. This device enables young mothers to control energy costs more easily. Meanwhile, buildings are being given ramps, with wide hallways and spacious lifts incorporated into architectural plans, to offer convenience for wheelchairs. Disabled

women concerned about our beauty and grace," say Anna and Irina, international award winning wheel-chair dancers, who took part in a beautiful eco-fashion show. "Today, we had not only perfect access, thanks to a totally barrier-free environment, but were able to enjoy the attention of stylists and make-up artists, who made us look gorgeous."

The UNDP's Bike4SDGs ride has demonstrated the strength of the human spirit, as well as our innovation and



Talent, free of barriers. The performance of professional dancers in the wheelchairs touched everybody's feelings



Fair of global goals — local entrepreneurship and creativity for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

'Belmed'. As part of preparations for a competition of local initiatives, the project held training focusing on the needs and interests of people with disabilities, and creating an inclusive space in the planning of local initiatives. Working with local communities across the regions, it's become possible to raise awareness in a simple and affordable way, to create an inclusive environment.

'Energy Efficiency in Buildings'. This introduces intelligent and energy-efficient heating and hot water supply to residential buildings — ensuring more comfort and convenience for residents.

residents will enjoy easy access to their apartments.

The fair of global goals featured diverse local initiatives, entrepreneurs, environmental and social non-profit organizations, demonstrating the results of their work, and sharing their contributions towards goals of inclusion.

The inclusive concert that followed featured singers, musicians, dancers and an eco-fashion show. Inclusion was a common thread running through the whole show, with performers of all styles and abilities proving that talent is independent of limitations. Prejudice is the only barrier.

"Despite the trauma or illness that obliges us to use a wheel-chair, we remain

resilient. The United Nations in Belarus aims to continue working on disability, inclusion and inequality issues as the highest priority this year.

On 23rd October, the #INCLUSIVE-BELARUS campaign was launched, to discover obstacles to socially vulnerable groups and to define how these can be overcome. The campaign aims to travel to each region of the country and visit twelve cities. Over 200 events are planned across eight weeks, facilitating dialogue on inclusion. Truly, the path to an inclusive society is long and challenging but could help rapprochement and prove useful for all.

By Vladimir **Mikhailov**

Rovshan Atayev, 18, a Turkmen student with the Mechanics and Mathematics Department of the Belarusian State University, has surprised many with his knowledge, breaking stereotypes about foreign students by achieving top marks across all his subjects



Ten out of ten

Tall and strong, Rovshan is heading back to his home city of Ashgabat, back to his son and parents, who haven't seen him for a year. Of course, they've kept in touch via social networks and Skype. Rovshan's parents, too, were straight A students.

We meet at Pervomayskaya metro and begin chatting. He tells me, "I'm looking forward to going home. However, even though I haven't left yet, I'm keen to return to Minsk." We stroll along the river, close to his dorm, and he notes, "My mother's asked me what I'd like her to cook for me. In fact, she can cook potato pancakes. However, they're different in Minsk — delicious in their own way."

Rovshan has lost 13kg while living in Minsk, so he could do with some home cooking. He's been a straight A pupil since childhood, receiving only the highest grades (fives in Turkmenistan). He studied at a language school with extensive learning of French, English and German. Rovshan studied French for twelve years: first at school, then at the French Embassy's Language Institute. He also studied English for six years and German for eighteen months. Nevertheless, he chose to proceed with physics and maths. After entering the 9th grade, he specialised in mathematics, and began to study his favourite subjects profoundly. As a 4th form pupil, he took part in city mathematics Olympiads, coming first.

When the time came to decide where to receive his higher education, he was torn between Moscow and Minsk but finally chose Minsk: a decision involving the entire family. Previously, Rovshan's cousin, Serdar, had graduated from the Belarusian National Technical University and returned home to work. He was full of recommendations regarding Belarusian education. Meanwhile, Rovshan's elder brother, Arslan, is studying design engineering in Brest. Why shouldn't the two brothers live closer to each other? Thus, Rovshan, his father Mergen, and his father's brother, with his daughter Jennet, who has entered the BSU's Economics Department, boarded the Ashgabat-Minsk plane.

“My first impression of Minsk was that I liked it. My first impression after I entered the Mechanics and Mathematics Department was ‘oh, I have to study again,’” Rovshan jokes.

Algebra was the first discipline he passed, during his first end-of-term set of exams. He was the first of his group-mates to enter the examination room. He recalls, “I drew a card with the task of proving two or three theorems and solving a problem. The examiner looked at what I’d written, asked me additional questions and wrote something on his paper. I peeped and saw the mark — 10!”

place at the National Theoretical Mechanics Olympiad in Gomel. Gomel also hosted an international Olympiad, where the Mechanics and Mathematics Department’s team ranked 6th. Now, Rovshan is studying diligently to take revenge next year.

He tells us, “In the second term, I started to pay more attention to my studies. Now I always sit at a front desk and listen to the teacher attentively. Mechanics and mathematical analysis are two complicated but very necessary subjects. I’m sure that, if you’re well-prepared, the teacher sees your knowledge. We don’t receive good marks for nothing.”

concentration. We have the chance to learn and must be single-minded.”

Rovshan hasn’t made up his mind yet whether he wants to take up a career in theoretical and applied mechanics or in bio- and nano-mechanics. In the former case, he may be engaged in robotics and satellite development, for instance. In the latter, he’ll invent prostheses and study human anatomy from a mechanics prospective.

He has five more years of study ahead, intending to take a post-graduate course. I wonder how upset he’d be on failing to take top marks in his exams. He replies that he’d be fine with an average grade of nine points, but not so if it dropped to eight. He admits, “I’d study harder and re-take the exam. Watching the news the other day, I saw that a National Graduates’ Ball takes place in Belarus. I’d like to take part.”

Some of Rovshan’s teachers have questioned whether he is just 18 years old, thinking that he might have another degree already. He doesn’t pass his exams automatically just because professors like to listen to a clever student speaking. He comments, “Your people are very responsive and open, which I like. Next year, I won’t go home, as my country will be hosting the Asian Games, and the city and airport will be overloaded. I plan to visit some Belarusian cities and lakes. I’ve been telling my parents about my studies in detail and have chatted with my grandfather, who teaches at the International Oil and Gas University: he needs to write about our students studying abroad.

By Alina Kasel

Your people are very responsive and open, which I like. Next year, I won’t go home on holiday, I plan to visit some Belarusian cities and lakes

Rovshan didn’t celebrate the end of his first end-of-term exams, but spent his winter vacation reading, taking part in sports and playing the guitar. In Minsk, he began taking music classes, and bought his first classical guitar, learning to play ‘the blues’; it was a long-held dream.

Besides being good at his studies, Rovshan undertakes research for the Mechanics Chair. Recently, he joined others from the Mechanics and Mathematics Department in taking first

Rovshan eagerly shares his secret for how best to revise for exams, saying, “Don’t let yourself be distracted; it’s inadmissible. Once, my roommate invited other students to our room. They leaned out of the window and started shouting for good luck to find them and help them with their exams. I was confused at first but then realised their intent. Of course, it’s no help at all. I’m a realist. My fellow students ask me how I manage to study so hard but I always say that it’s a matter of

Comments

Dmitry Medvedev, associate professor, PhD in physics and mathematics, dean of the Mechanics and Mathematics Department of the BSU:



“This foreign student isn’t really such a rarity; we’ve had others similar in the department over the years. He speaks languages, communicates excellently with other students, represents the university at Olympiads and studies well. It’s impossible not to notice such a talented young man; he

seems mature and responsible, despite being only 18! He’s self-motivated and he knows what he wants. So far, we’ve a very good impression of him and hope it’ll continue. He passes many exams with ease and pleases his teachers and the university with his knowledge. Boys do tend to love mathematics more than girls, and enter the Mechanics and Mathematics Department. However, not many receive the highest marks. I’ve told Rovshan to continue learning. We’ll provide him with a discounted education at the end of August, for his good results.



VITALIY PIVOVARCHIK

► Learning with useful application

Education Ministry and High-Tech Park launch Programming is the New Literacy project across fifteen educational institutions, in Lida, Voronovo, Vasilishki, Krasnoselsk, Novopolotsk, Vitebsk and Orsha, to help schoolchildren form logical and algorithmic thinking and to master programming skills, while learning team work

HTP Press Secretary Yulia Katash tells us that the first group of those being trained for regional children's IT-academies, alongside university teachers and those from regional education development institutes have received coaching certificates in Scratch programming: a visual object-oriented programming environment for teaching junior and middle schoolchildren.

Teachers will now share their knowledge with colleagues: elementary school teachers, as well as subject teachers and senior students on pedagogical courses. From September, pupils in the 2nd-4th grades will be offered optional lessons on Creativity in the Scratch Programming Environment. Those studying in the 5th-6th grades are to be offered The Creation of Computer Games via Scratch Visual Programming.

The First Deputy Education Minister of Belarus, Vadim Bogush, believes that these skills will be useful to schoolchildren regardless of their future professions.

► Extremely serious intentions

Belarus and China to set up joint design institute

Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister, Anatoly Kalinin, has met the General Representative of China Merchants Group in Central Asia and the Baltic States, the Chief Executive Officer of the Industrial Park Development Company JSC, Hu Zheng, as well as representatives of China IPPR International Engineering Corporation.

The parties have agreed to sign a memorandum between the Belarusian Construction and Architec-



招商局
CHINA MERCHANTS GROUP

ture Ministry and China Merchants Group. Specialists from China's IPPR International Engineering Corporation will be sent to Belarus to help address emerging issues. Meanwhile, China is ready to receive representatives of the Belarusian Construction and Architecture Ministry to show them the operation of IPPR.

Mr. Kalinin has taken note of Belarus' great interest in the development of a joint institute with Chinese design organizations. The institute will help expedite the implementation of joint projects in Belarus and will drive forward the implementation of the China-Belarus Industrial Great Stone Park project.

► A landmark project

Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House plans to release Diplomat's Guide

This year, the Belarusian encyclopaedic diplomatic guide is to be released jointly by the Foreign Ministry of Belarus and the Belarusian State University's International Relations Faculty. "This book will show that diplomacy has been active in Belarus since the times of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It will provide information about the major achievements of diplomacy in both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Contemporary Belarusian diplomacy has also achieved significant results and this will be reflected in the book," explains the Director of the Publishing House, Vladimir Andrievich.

In the Year of Culture, the publishers will be preparing for the

500th anniversary of the publication of the Bible by the Belarusian Frantsisk Skorina (to be celebrated in 2017), several landmark projects are scheduled for this event. In particular, the Editor-in-Chief, Larisa Yazykovich, noted that it's high time an encyclopaedia was published dedicated to the first printer. A detailed volume was released 25 years ago and is already out-of-date, so a new version is being prepared.

Another book, dedicated to Skorina, will appear as part of the Encyclopaedia of Rarities series, being prepared together with the National Library of Belarus and dedicated to the world heritage of the first printer and his books, which are kept in the libraries of other countries. "This will be an illustrated edition in the Belarusian and English languages," adds Ms. Yazykovich.

Moreover, editions from the children's encyclopaedia series will also be devoted to Frantsisk Skorina.

► Cross-country museum

Mobile exhibition of the Great Patriotic War History destined to travel countrywide

On Independence Day, the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History launched its new, mobile exhibition, entitled Liberation of Belarus. September 1943-July 1944.

The museum's de-puty director for scientific work, Anna Galinskaya, tells us that it's taken the past year to select items for the touring museum, to allow even those living in remote areas the opportunity to see key exhibits. She notes that those who live far from the capital might never have the chance to visit the museum, which has inspired the project. She comments, "Vitebsk was the first point in the route, arriving on the eve of Slavonic Bazaar. We've received

many requests from the regions and are now drawing up a route for the year. We have a cross-country MAZ lorry hosting the exhibits, able to navigate snow and mud, to reach the farthest corners."

The museum is located in a mobile semi-trailer. Its first section is devoted to the country's liberation, from September 1943 to February 1944, while the second is about Operation Bagration (Belarus' strategic offensive) from June 23rd until August 29th, 1944. The third section is dedicated to the cooperation of the Red Army units with partisan groups, and the fourth looks at the partisan parade that took place in liberated Minsk on July 16th, 1944.

Rare photos and documents from the museum have been supplemented with maps, posters, newspapers, leaflets and personal items once owned by soldiers. Rare items include partisan group Derout's banner and a blasting device used to derail more than a dozen enemy trains.



BELTA

► Foundations laid

A project to build social housing with the technical and economic assistance of the People's Republic of China has begun in Vitebsk

The regional city played host to an official groundbreaking ceremony for the country's first social housing apartment block. This will be constructed by Belarusian builders using domestic building materials and China's grant assistance. The 10-storey residential building containing 120 apartments will be constructed in the Bilevo-3 residential district.

Belarus is set to implement a series of social housing projects with the technical and economic assistance of the People's Republic of China. The first phase of the project includes construction of 16 houses

in different regions of Belarus for about 1,400 families. It was noted at the ceremony that the start of this large-scale social project was preceded by considerable preparatory work from the two states' governments. The joint construction of social housing will be another milestone in the development of friendship between Belarus and China.

Attending the official ceremony was the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of China to Belarus — Cui Qiming — and Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee's Chairman — Vladimir Belous. They left their signatures on the first block in the foundations of a new house planned for completion in February 2017.



BELTA

Leading the way in learning

Have you noticed that every fourth resident in our country is being educated in some fashion? Besides those in secondary higher education and postgraduate studies, there are students attending over 8,000 educational establishments, at various levels: 2.5 million in all.

Belarus is an undisputed leader within the CIS for preschool education: last year, the number exceeded 409,000. Our country has a higher indicator than Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, the USA, Canada, Switzerland, Austria, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

Unfortunately, we lack the diversity of education of the Soviet times, but we still support talented children, having developed our own system, which is working well. Looking at international

academic Olympiads alone, between 2010 and 2015, 253 national teams of pupils from general secondary education took part, winning 199 medals: forty medals a year on average!

We have 43 establishments of higher education: thirty universities, nine academies and four institutes. Our people like to study: there are 383 students per 10,000 of the population: the highest indicator within the CIS.

People from foreign countries love to come here to study, especially those from Turkmenistan, Russia and China. The answer is simple: we offer high quality education.



► Success placed on the programme

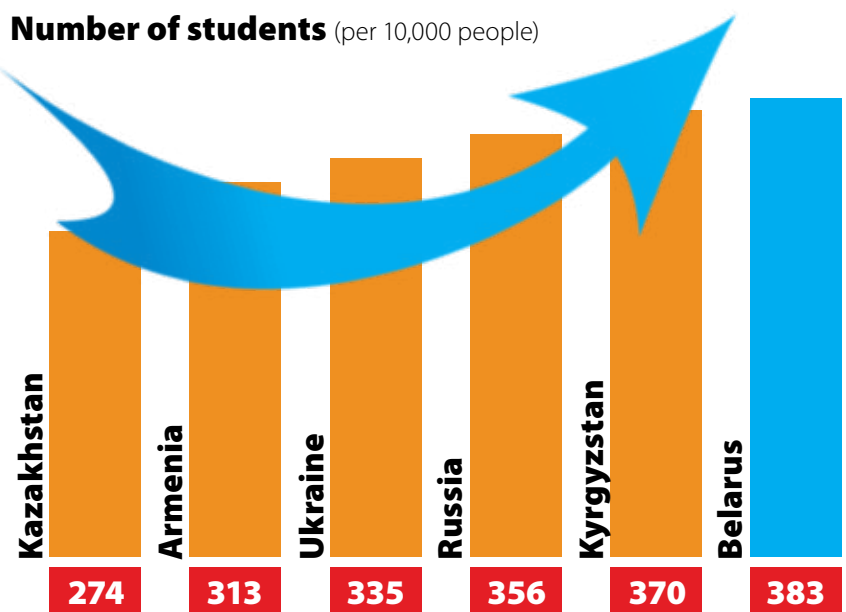
If your crossword puzzle ever asks for the name of the 'strongest programmer' in the world, try Korotkevich. Gennady, aged 21, from Gomel, has a promising future, and has already claimed various prestigious victories at international competitions. His last was in New York, for Google Code Jam 2016.

Just 26 participants took part in the four-hour final, chosen from 27,000 initial entrants. The finalists were given a number of algorithmic tasks, for solving within a set time, using any programming language or development framework. Gennady was the only one who managed to solve all tasks, and also broke a record, being the first to win three times in a row.



The \$15,000 prize is accompanied by the right to participate in Code Jam's finals in 2017, without pre-selection. Gennady Korotkevich graduated from the Gomel gymnasium, and now studies at the ITMO University in St. Petersburg. He is sought by major IT-companies but prefers to continue studying. Recently, in one interview, he admitted, "After graduating, I'll probably work for a large company, to see if it suits me. If I realise that it's not right for me, I'll launch my own business. This is all distant. If I receive an interesting job offer in Belarus, I'll be ready to stay; many IT giants have offices in Belarus. I'll have to wait and see what terms are offered."

Number of students (per 10,000 people)



NADEZHDA PONKRATOVA



With open hearts

Days of the Union State held in resorts where war veterans recuperate

Truly, kind hearts are healing. Veterans of the Great Patriotic War recuperating at the best health resorts across Belarus and Russia (paid for with Union State vouchers) gain not only medical treatment but a chance to chat with front-line comrades and recall their military youth. The recent Days of the Union State were a true holiday for all staying at health resorts.

Karacharovo sanatorium, in Tver Region, prepared a rich programme for its 204 veterans (and those equated with them) from Belarus and Russia. Activities included screening films dedicated to the war, singing 'old time' songs, and various competitions. The local library hosted a thematic exhibition dedicated to the historical community of Belarusians and Russians and, during a celebratory dinner, veterans spoke of their life paths and exchanged views with representatives of the Union State Standing Committee.

Sosnovy Bor sanatorium, located 40km from Minsk, in beautiful countryside, this year hosted 117 war veterans (and equated citizens of Belarus and Russia's Bryansk and Smolensk Regions). Paid for with Union State vouchers, it is the sixth such mission for the sanatorium, after winning a competitive tender. Director Mikhail Zmitrovich explains, "Our staff are very friendly and highly qualified. Holidaymakers are served by 35 doctors across various specialties, of the highest and first categories. Our medical and wellness facilities are also superb, our rooms are comfortable and our skillful chefs cook tasty meals (including those to fulfil special dietary requirements). We take into account the needs of the elderly, collecting guests by bus from the station in Minsk, and giving ground floor rooms, so that veterans avoid climbing stairs."

Honourable guests at the sanatorium have included Retired Colonel Yevgeny Lychkovsky, 3rd Rank Captain Anatoly Bachkovsky, radio operator Tatiana Pakhlebin, and a son of the regiment, Eduard Mudrenchenko. Veteran Alexey Bobkov, from Bobruisk, has written nine books about the war. Other participants of the Day of the Union State included former partisans, workers of the rear, those who experienced the Leningrad blockade, and those who survived the horrors of Nazi concentration camps.

A member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Belarus-Russia Union, Svetlana Shilova, joined the Head of the Social Policy and Information Support Department of the Union State's Standing Committee, Margarita Levchenko, in learning first hand how the Union State money is used for recuperative stays for war veterans. They also shared information on measures being taken by the Standing Committee at Sosnovy Bor sanatorium.

Ms. Levchenko comments, "In 2016 alone, 21 million Russian Roubles have been allocated for rehabilitation of veterans, paid for from the Union State budget. Over 600 war participants (and persons equated to them), from our two states, are improving their health. To meet the target, we're choosing the best sanatoriums in terms of equipment and comfort. We're also taking into account their location: the elderly might experience problems in reaching remote locations so, we assume that, in 2017, budget expenditure for this will be increased."

Days of the Union State have also been held at Belarus' Porechie sanatorium and at Peredelkino sanatorium, in Moscow District, where war veterans recuperate.

By Vladimir **Fedorov**



Margarita Levchenko was interested in the veterans recreation organization



YURIY MOZOLEVSKIY

High standards in knowledge

New approaches to harmonising education in Belarus and Russia

The establishment of a single educational space is among the priorities of the Union State, including harmonising the education systems of Belarus and Russia. This topic was high on the agenda during the 46th session of the standing acting seminar at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union of Belarus and Russia, hosted recently by Rostov-on-Don. Representatives of authorities attended, alongside teachers and heads of our two countries' leading universities, as well as young people and students. Needless to say, debate on the direction for our schools and universities was hot.

There are many reasons for the discussion, at all levels of education. As the Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Belarus-Russia Union State, Sergey Naryshkin, stated in his opening speech, over the years of its existence, the seminar has proven a good platform for the exchange of experience and the development of solutions.

This time, it was decided to place emphasis on the most important issues, including paths of development for the Union State's education system. For the past few years, there have been attempts to unify it. Much work lies ahead but there is every reason to expect success.

Margarita Levchenko, the head of the Department of Social Policy and Information Support for the Union State's Standing Committee, notes that the Belarusian and Russian educational systems share common historical roots, common goals and principles, and long experience of co-development. "For many years, the potential of Belarus' Education Ministry and Russia's Ministry of Education and Science has been united. This has contributed to the quality and improvement of our educational systems, within a single educational space. This meets the needs of each individual, and our real need for a common market of goods and services, with highly qualified specialists of various levels of training," she explains.



The Union State ensures citizens of Belarus and Russia equal rights to education. Universities' focus is gaining popularity and, as a result, joint educational projects are being launched. Not so long ago, under the influence of the Bologna Process, Belarusian State Pedagogical University named after Maxim Tank and the Russian State Pedagogical University (named after Gertsen) began running a joint Master's Course in Pre-School Education.

Is this enough? Sergey Maskevich, the Director of the A.D. Sakharov International State Ecological Institute, has proposed introducing criteria to assess inter-university cooperation. The academic mobility of students and lecturers is a key goal for university collaboration. The more dynamically a university cooperates with colleagues, the higher rating it has. Not only domestic but foreign applicants are paying attention to universities ranked in the top-100 or top 500.

Every now and then, the question of how best to combine university entrance exams is discussed. For several years, the dates of Belarus' centralised tests have been arranged to coincide with Russia's single state exam. Only a limited number of graduates manage to pass both. Accordingly, Russia has recommended recognition of its tests in Belarus, while Belarusian results should be accepted in Russia.

Proposals are now being voiced to establish a scale of transfer for exam results. Ruslan Abramov, the head of the Department of State and Municipal Management at Russia's Plekhanov Economic University, proposes a model from the Bologna system, to which Russia acceded in September 2003 and Belarus in May 2015. He tells us, "Each subject has a numeric expression in the integral evaluation and, if curriculums coincide by at least 75 percent, the result can be accepted without a transfer. In the course of time, a single state exam can be introduced."

Another interesting proposal in the context of establishing a single educational space is the target enrolment for the Union State citizens in modern specialities enjoying demand, such as medicine and education. Over 18,000 Belarusian students currently receive education at Russian universities, while over 2,000 Russians study in Belarus. Moreover, young people enjoy education paid from state budgets in their neighbouring country, receiving allowances and hostel accommodation. Russian medical schools alone are attended by 425 Belarusians, with the figure annually increasing.

The meeting also focused on general secondary education institutions, as a vital point of unity for our nations. Alexander Segodnik, a member of the Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Issues, has proposed that common standards be introduced for Belarusian and Russian regions. He is convinced that the unification process should be gradual. How will this work in practice? Initially, certain subjects will come to the fore, such as

Yelena Afanasieva, the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Social Policy, Science, Culture and Humanitarian Issues:



Our future depends exclusively on us. As never before, our Union State now needs highly qualified personnel. Of course, their training comes down to education. Meanwhile, the number one task is the education of each individual. This is the task of the education system. We face dual responsibility in choosing which professionals to train, raising our citizens of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus.

mathematics and physics. During the next step, the Union State assumes the introduction of common educational programmes in these subjects. The process will progress until the common programme makes it possible to apply single approaches to final and entrance examinations. Mr. Segodnik comments, "If we want Belarusian citizens to successfully work or receive a profession in Russia, and for Russians to enjoy the same rights in Belarus, we need to create a common classifier and single requirements. Speaking of the gradual introduction of common programmes, their launch could begin next year."

Some important practical steps towards a single educational space have already been taken. A normative base is ready, providing citizens of the Union State equal rights to education. In addition, there are intergovernmental agreements on cooperation in culture, education and science, as well as documents on mutual recognition and equivalence, for education, academic degrees and titles. Proposals on the results of the Rostov-on-Don seminar have been sent to relevant ministries in Belarus and Russia.

Belarus' magazine reference:

The seminar was held as part of the Youth for the Union State Festival, held upon the initiative of the Parliamentary Assembly for the past eleven years. This year, the youth forum brought together 10,000 talented young people from Belarus and Russia. The central event of the festival was a contest of youth songs, judged by professionals from our two states. The first festival, dedicated to the 10th anniversary of signing the Treaty to Establish the Community of Belarus and Russia, took place in Anapa, in 2006. Since 2007, it has taken place in Rostov-on-Don.

By Olga Pasiyak



Physics with no lyrics

The Union State programme helps Belarusian and Russian scientists to create unique nano-materials for space industry

Scientists of Belarus and Russia have recently begun implementing a new scientific and technical programme, Technology SG, approved at a meeting of the Union State Council of Ministers in 2016. Its main task is to create a scientific basis for reducing the weight and size of spacecraft up to three-fold, while increasing the reliability of systems and components.

In Belarus, the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Heat and Mass Transfer (the NAS' largest institution) is the executor of the project. Director Oleg Penyazkov explains the goals, saying, "The new programme is in line with the global development of space technology, which seeks to minimise spacecraft, reducing weight to 150-180kg while increasing space technologies. This will dramatically reduce the cost of devices used for space remote sensing (and for other purposes). However, the problem can only be solved by developing materials with new properties, such as high strength, and resistance to radiation and electromagnetic radiation. The programme comprises three sections and tackles fifty specific scientific and technical problems."

In fact, the new Union State programme continues the recently completed 'Nanotechnology-SG' project, which has involved the Institute's team. "For several years, we've been closely liaising with our Russian colleagues from the Institute of Space Systems, the Institute of Chemical Physics, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Baranov Central Institute of Aircraft Manufacturing and other research organizations," continues Mr. Penyazkov. "As a result, we've developed over 25 models of experimental equipment for the space industry, and 36 experienced and experimental samples of special technological equipment and individual devices. We've also made 17 proposals to adapt technical developments across other sectors of the economy."



VITALIY GIL

The Heat and Mass Transfer Institute of the National Academy of Sciences has achieved high-tech success thanks to its unique combination of specialists across various fields: applied mathematics, plasma physics, phase transitions, thermodynamics and quantum mechanics. It has developed prototypes we might image from science fiction, about travelling in deep space. Among them are micro-engines for correcting the position of a spacecraft in flight (using manoeuvrable thin nozzles, ejecting a jet of gas). An engine has also been created which resembles cells from dozens of cell-micro-engines (controlled from the Earth).

"It's vital to have the corresponding innovative fuel for these devices," says Mr. Penyazkov. "If nano-particles of metal (which have a combustion temperature 1.5 times higher) are introduced into ordinary fuel, the efficiency of jet propulsion, and of the device overall, will increase similarly, cutting required fuel volumes and thus the weight of the spacecraft."

It's evident that a fundamentally new material, with unique properties, lies at the heart of such inventions. Another confirmation is the use of a silicon-based nano-material capable of converting light into electricity. Resistant to extremes of radiation and temperature, it's ideal for spacecraft solar batteries.

Some scientific developments have already been tested in space and others are awaiting their turn. Only carefully tested components and units can be sent into orbit. The Union State's Technology SG programme aims to make long-distance space flight a reality, shifting from prototypes to experimental studies. In particular, innovations are to be tested via a microsatellite now being developed by students and teachers at the Belarusian State University.

By Vladimir Yakovlev



Following a Union State military-patriotic gathering of cadets and Suvorov school pupils at the Russian Orlyonok Children's Centre, a similar event has taken place at Zubrenok's National Children's Educational and Health Improving Centre, near Belarusian Lake Naroch, in September and October.

Over 500 youngsters from across Belarus and Russia gathered under the traditional slogan 'For the Fatherland's Honour' for the tenth time. The two countries were represented by an equal number of participants, comprising 21 teams on each side. The Deputy Head of the Union State's Standing Committee in Minsk, Sergey Misyurov, read a greeting sent by the State Secretary of the Union State, Grigory Rapota: 'This bright project aims to raise responsible citizens for our two countries, while facilitating the development of the Union State.'

Cadet sessions raising true patriots

Such meetings offer a perfect opportunity to chat with peers, including asking about careers. Darya Drobynyak, from Grodno Cadet School, loves dancing but sees herself as an officer either with the militia, or the Emergency Ministry or with the border troops. Pupils at Minsk Suvorov Military College have almost made their choices.

Eating army buckwheat porridge with tinned meat, Belarusian boys and girls joined Russian peers in games of volleyball, basketball and football. Competitions were also held in military-applied sports, and there were quizzes on military history, including the Great Patriotic War. The youngsters visited Minsk, touring the Great Patriotic War History Museum, and Khatyn Memorial Complex. There was even a concert by the academic ensemble of the Armed Forces of Belarus for the youngsters.

The Day of the Union State culminated the campaign, with Alexander Segodnik, a member of the Belarus-Russia Union State Parliamentary Assembly, joining Irina Pavlovskaya, who heads the Department of Finances and Fiscal Policy for the Union State Standing Committee, in speaking to the children.

"Our youngsters are receiving a good foundation for the future," asserts Belarus' Emergency Minister, Vladimir Vashchenko. He arrived at Zubrenok for the official opening of the Union State session, saying, "The most important thing is to take this opportunity to spend time fruitfully, chatting and acquiring new friends."

Irina Pavlovskaya, who heads the Department of Finances and Fiscal Policy for the Union State Standing Committee, inspected not only the youngsters' accommodation and menus but the numerous events organised at Zubrenok, and took part in a session to consider the Union State draft budget for 2017. Financing of civil and patriotic campaigns for cadets and Suvorov school pupils was high on the agenda.

"These events aim to increase numbers of children and teenagers becoming aware of Union State care," explains Ms.



Pavlovskaya. "They are our future. We try to create all conditions to allow the young boys and girls of our two countries to learn more about each other, becoming friends. Despite the current difficult economic situation, the Standing Committee isn't reducing its funding of such programmes. We don't spare spending on children."

The result is eloquently proven by experience at the Smolensk Cadet Centre, whose pupils have come to Zubrenok for the tenth time. The head of the Smolensk team, reserve Lieutenant Colonel Sergey Naumov, notes that almost three-quarters of male alumni and many girls continue on to military-education establishments, having participated in civil-patriotic events. Of course, it matters not whether all those taking part in the recent cadet session will go on to have careers defending the Fatherland. Undoubtedly, they'll gain a deeply understanding of military-patriotic morality, and will long remember how they marched together under common banners, and sang around a farewell fire. Of course, they'll remember also their new-found friends.

By Vladimir **Bibikov**



Igor Petrishenko: **‘We need growth drivers’**

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Russian Federation speaks developing interregional cooperation, the potential of the Union State integration, and topical issues of social and economic interactions to be addressed by joint efforts

Mr. Petrishenko, how would you describe the level of inter-regional cooperation between Belarus and Russia?

At present, Belarus maintains direct trade and economic relations with almost all Russian regions, including via direct agreements on long-term cooperation with over sixty of them. Belarusian and Russian cities, regions, territories and districts are united by around two hundred treaties, agreements and protocols on cooperation, in the spheres of economics, science and technology, trade and culture. These are proving efficient, and around 80 major joint assembly plants have been established across almost forty Russian regions.

Within the Union State, there are more than two hundred distribution network outlets using Belarusian charter capital, while over 3,300 have Russian funds in their capital. Industrial cooperation connects over 8,000 Belarusian and Russian companies. There are over a thousand joint ventures, and all of this has become possible thanks to inter-regional relations.

What arguments are required to persuade Russians and Belarusians of the need to further develop our integration?

I think Belarusians and Russians need not search far for additional arguments. Anyone at an agricultural or industrial enterprise, and any Belarusian or Russian family, can explain simply and clearly why integration is a good idea. They can do so even better than diplomats. They would surely stress that not everything can be measured in tonnes, cubic metres or decalitres.

In the 20 years of our joint work, we've created a common humanitarian, social and economic space, stretching from Brest to Vladivostok; it has no borders and boasts little bureaucracy. Within this territory, Belarusians and Russians have equal rights in the spheres of education, social security, and medicine, as well as property buying and doing business. Nowhere else in Europe, or even the whole world, is there a stronger example of friendship, or of tighter integration, than between our peoples and countries.

At the same time, we need to speak openly: there's always potential for greater efficiency in cooperation, including the economic aspects. We need a single industrial policy and greater coordination in the agricultural industry and the transport sector. We speak much of high-tech and science-intensive production and, with this in mind, we could have joined third country markets with a single Product of the Union State. Barriers are not yet fully lifted to the free movement of goods, or regarding access to public procurement and state defence orders. Meanwhile, issues remain to be fully settled in the system of equal rights ensured to our citizens. Conceptual problems have been solved but some issues still need settlement, such as recognition of medical records and various certifications. Evidently, there are targets to achieve and spheres to work upon.

Could activating interregional cooperation significantly increase trade between our countries? We need to raise turno-



ver, using every aspect of integration, both within the Union State and regarding interregional cooperation.

We shouldn't create obstacles for each other in the form of restrictions to supply of goods. We need to conduct a coordinated industrial and agricultural policy, while striving to deepen regional ties, to achieve the final practical result. We should expand industrial cooperation, establish new assembly facilities and enhance localisation for existing plants. It's not easy, I agree, but no other way is possible.

As Ambassador, you must be pleased that relatively small Belarus has ranked among Russia's major trade and economic partners for many years. Can Belarusian products withstand competition on the Russian market? How can the concept of 'a domestic producer' be explained: is Belarusian 'domestic' or 'foreign' for Russians?

I visit Russian regions quite often and, in honesty, it's nice to see our MAZ trucks on Russian roads, Belarusian BelAZ in quarries, Belarus tractors and Polesie harvesters in the fields and Belarus-made buses and trolley buses on passenger routes. Apparently, they withstand the competition with dignity. We've opened trading houses in the Russian regions, in addition to dealer centres to sell and service our equipment. Demand for our machinery is consistently high across Russian regions and is rising continually, generating more income. As regards food, there's no question that Belarusian food enjoys great demand and popularity in Russia.

Nevertheless, there is a problem: when as much as half of a Belarusian tractor's prime cost relies on Russian components (excluding metal and energy), shouldn't we view this vehicle as being part-Russian? Or is it 'pure' Belarusian? Our deep industrial cooperation seriously raises questions of how best to define a domestic product.

The policy of sanctions and reciprocal measures imposed by Russia on Europe has made the concept of the 'Union State Product' (as I mentioned above) topical. It may be easier to avoid sanctions from third parties. For example, you've heard jokes about Belarusian shrimps and oysters. However, everything is simple. Belarus buys fish and seafood for processing, making the final product Belarus-made, in line with all regulations. Why shouldn't we apply this principle more widely?

At present, Belarus maintains direct trade and economic relations with almost all Russian regions. Belarusian and Russian cities, regions, territories and districts are united by around two hundred treaties, agreements and protocols on cooperation, in the spheres of economics, science and technology, trade and culture. These are proving efficient

Most meetings with representatives of Russian regions see the President of Belarus call for a coordinated policy in the sphere of industrial cooperation, in addition to establishing joint manufacturing facilities. Only minor aspects remain so it's worth persevering.

Not to underestimate the importance and prospects of Belarusian-Russian cooperation within the Union State, tell us about the current state of Eurasian integration and its prospects?

As part of the EAEC, we primarily solve economic problems. We need to ensure full implementation of the four freedoms (free movement of goods, services, capital and manpower), which are at the heart of Eurasian integration. Regarding many long-term issues, we share views on possible solutions. However, it's impossible to deny that disputes sometimes occur. In such cases, the Eurasian Economic Commission plays the critical role of a supranational body.

We need to learn how to tailor and to relate our national interests to those of Eurasian integration. It's necessary to resolve disagreements in a civilised manner, without pressure, including psychologically and through the media. Yes, the economic situation is pushing us towards

favouring our domestic manufacturers but we didn't establish our Eurasian Economic Union only to abandon its principles and rules in difficult times. We must more actively engage the EAEC platform, to jointly overcome negative aspects.

Our Union is becoming a more serious geopolitical player within the international arena. We're building a system of mutual relations with governments of many countries. However, the ambitious goals announced during the EAEC establishment are not yet fully implemented. We're yet to witness a fundamental breakthrough in the abolition of exemptions and restrictions to mutual trade — which was the first problem put forward. Nor have we realised the principle of 'four freedoms' I mentioned. Only after achieving success in these areas, can we progress. Neither the Union State nor the Eurasian Economic Union are beyond being competitors. They are complementary integration formations, each developing its own, independent and, undeniably, promising path.

By Nina Romanova



More than allies

Rio Paralympics brings display of solidarity with Russian athletes, as organised during opening ceremony by Belarusian delegation

Returning from the 15th Paralympic Games, hosted by Rio, members of the Paralympic national squad of Belarus were welcomed at Minsk National Airport as true heroes: with a military orchestra, bouquets, and a cake decorated with the flags of Belarus and Russia. The twenty athletes comprising the national team of Belarus earned ten medals (eight gold and two bronze), taking prestigious 19th place in the final medal standings.

After expressing solidarity with Russian Paralympic athletes who were banned from the Games (being accused of doping) our team swept millions of fans off their feet. No Russian athlete was singled out for accusation but the International Paralympic Committee chose to ban the Russian national Paralympic team collectively. Meanwhile, the Court of Arbitration for Sport rejected the Russians' appeal against the decision, and its declaration that no evidence existed of doping.

Although the Russians didn't attend the Paralympic Games, their tri-coloured flag was raised at the opening ceremony, carried by Belarusian delegation member Andrey Fomochkin. His father, Vasily Pavlovich, who lives in Yaroslavl Region's Rybinsk, announced, "You may view this as the Olympic medal you didn't earn as an athlete. We all thank you, having hoped that Belarus would support us. We're very pleased to have witnessed this forthright act."

The Sports and Tourism Ministry of Belarus (where Mr. Fomochkin is employed) has received huge numbers of supportive e-messages, from far and wide: from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Yekaterinburg, Barnaul, Kazan, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kaliningrad, Tallinn, Milan, and, even, from the Antarctic! A Russian polar researcher, working at Vostok (East) station, close to the South Pole, raised a Belarusian flag there, while residents of Novosibirsk Region's Bolotnoye have suggested naming a new stadium after Andrey Fomochkin.

Other athletes, naturally, have expressed their support for the Russian team deprived of the Games, signing the flag carried during the opening ceremony. It will be soon donated to the Russian team.



Bobruisk swimmer Igor Boki, who took the most medals at the 15th Summer Paralympic Games, is confident that the Belarusian delegation acted correctly. He tells us, "This was a planned action, so we weren't afraid of anything. In leaving our signatures on the Russian tri-coloured flag we expressed sympathy with Russia's Paralympic athletes. In our opinion, they were given a gruelling."

At the return welcome for the Belarusian Paralympic athletes at Minsk airport, the Chairman of the Belarusian Paralympic Committee, Oleg Shepel, noted that, because of the frenzy around the Russian flag, it was difficult for Belarusian athletes to perform. However, despite this, they managed to do well. Igor Boki claimed seven medals (six gold and one bronze) while track-and-field athlete Alexander Triput clinched bronze, and swimmer Vladimir Izotov and fencer Andrey Pranevich each took gold. This was the second most successful Paralympic Games for Belarus in terms of number of gold medals. We claimed eleven at the Games in Athens twelve years ago.

By Yuri **Bakerenko**

Oleg Shepel, the Chairman of the Belarusian Paralympic Committee:



The atmosphere was tense but what did we actually do during the opening ceremony? We simply expressed our opinion. We believe that Paralympic athletes from all over the world are part of one family. When they say that the Russian team has problems, we'd like to see evidence, not accusations. Explain what's the matter and give us names. In my opinion, removing the Russians from the competition was the worst decision in the existence of the Paralympic movement.

Traveling gets easier

Chinese tourists can now visit Belarus without visas



Starting from this September, Chinese tourists will be able to visit Belarus without visas as part of organised groups. The protocol for the agreement between the government of Belarus and the People's Republic of China on mutual visa-free group tourist trips came into force in August.

The new rule means that groups of tourists (comprising five or more people), organised by tour companies, will be able to come to the country without visas. Members of the group must have documents for travelling abroad while the heads of the party must have invitation letters from tourist organizations, appointed by another contracting party. From last year, Chinese tourists have been able to come to Belarus and remain in the country without visas for three days. Normally, citizens of the People's Republic of China arriving on direct

flights from China need to have a valid visa issued by the state — a member of the European Union or a member state of the Schengen Zone.

At present, Belarus boasts significant potential for the development of all types of tourism. This is an ideal place for those keen on holidaying in ecologically pure and untouched corners of the world. Many natural areas in our country are viewed as exclusive in Europe. In recent years, military tourism has also become fashionable, that is, trips to countries and cities which hosted famous battles. In this respect, Belarus can be viewed as a themed military history park. The country has nowhere untouched by the war. Places are marked by defensive constructions, monuments and memorials, installed to honour famous battles, as well as our military and local history museums.

By Veniamin **Mikheev**



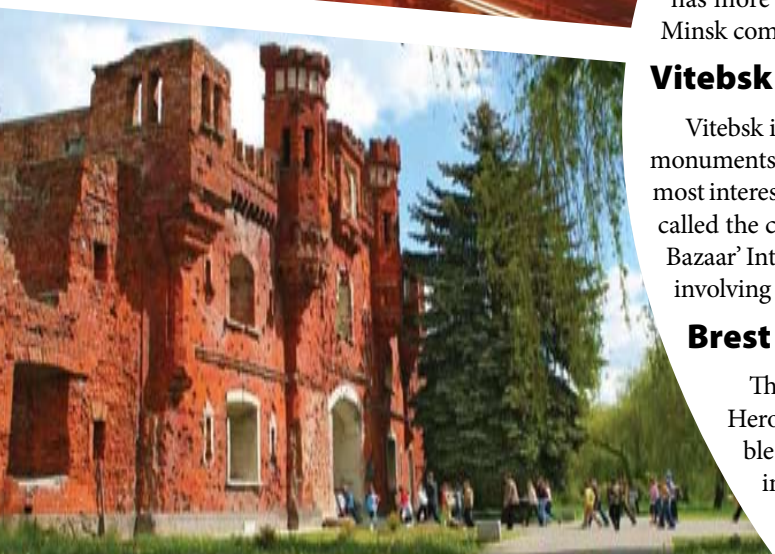
Profitable bonuses for tourists

Gomel hotels offering 'all-inclusive' guest cards to foreign tourists

The 'entrance tickets' will allow entry to all museums, exhibitions and sports facilities in Gomel free of charge, as well as bringing discounts at restaurants, cafes, entertainment centres and other popular tourist destinations. The idea has been initiated by the Department of Education, Sports and Tourism of Gomel City Executive Committee, and is now seeking partners, so that the scheme can grow.

"This practice is common across several European states, and elsewhere, helping attract tourists. The card is sure to be popular during the International Sozhsky Khorovod Festival, hosted by the regional centre," asserts the Deputy Head of the Department of Education, Sport and Tourism of Gomel City Executive Committee, Alexey Zhikharev. He is inviting IT developers to create a mobile application detailing and mapping local sights, from museums and shops to sports and entertainment facilities. In the meantime, he suggests that guests use the Minsk-Minsk popular programme, the directory of which unites all of Belarus' top sites.

By Alexey **Fedosov**



Hospitality in the first place

Belarus accounts for almost half of all Russians' trips to the CIS states, since our country is so conveniently close, as well as being interesting. Moreover, travel to Belarus avoids complications of borders, visas and language barriers, as well as offering security, comfort and unusual hospitality.

Minsk

Minsk is the most popular among Belarusian cities, with organised groups, as well as individual holiday-makers, arriving in the capital of the brotherly country. The latter come for three days on average and pay about 4,000 Russian Roubles for accommodation daily.

In total, according to experts, last year, prices at Minsk hotels fell by 20 percent and reached the level of the neighbouring European cities. 17 new hotels were opened by the 2014 IIHF World Championships and the supply has more than doubled. Meanwhile, five-star services are more available in Minsk compared for example with Vilnius, Warsaw or Riga.

Vitebsk

Vitebsk is ranked second in tourist popularity ranking. Unique architectural monuments almost at every step constantly remind visitors about its ancient and most interesting history. The city on the Zapadnaya Dvina River can be rightfully called the cultural capital of the Union State. Each year, it hosts the 'Slavianski Bazaar' International Festival of Arts in the Summer Amphitheatre in early July, involving musical stars from our countries.

Brest

This city-fortress holds many aspects of shared history and the Brest Hero-Fortress Memorial is the largest architecture and museum ensemble within post-Soviet space, dedicated to the struggle against Fascism in the years of the Great Patriotic War. Hundreds of thousands of Russians travel to the site to pay their respects to the courage of their fathers, grandfathers and great grandfathers.

Belovezhskaya Pushcha

The country's most famous national park is registered into the List of World Heritage. It is home to more than 300 species of animals and birds, including the beautiful giant — an auroch — which is a symbol of Belarus.

The national park annually welcomes more than 0.5mln tourists, with 70 percent of these being from Russia. Various pedestrian routes are laid across its territory, but trips on horses and bicycles are especially exciting.

Lake Naroch

Lake Naroch is a 'pearl' of Narochansky National Park. Belarus' largest lake covers around 80sq.m and is a 'happy hunting ground' for those who love cruising, or who enjoy the adventure of a canoe journey. You can set off from the banks of Lake Naroch, and navigate the rivers Naroch and Viliya.

I like you, Peter's great creation...

Which Russian city is the most popular among travellers from Belarus?

This question is convincingly answered by looking at the way that Belarusians spend their money.

The national air carrier, Belavia, held a campaign during the March holidays, selling tickets for just 20 Euros, with flights to St. Petersburg enjoying the greatest demand.

The cultural capital of Russia has long attracted Belarusians, having lots of museums, architectural monuments, concerts, exhibitions and sport events. Moreover, it offers quite affordable hotel accommodation and the major influx is seen on New Year and school holidays.

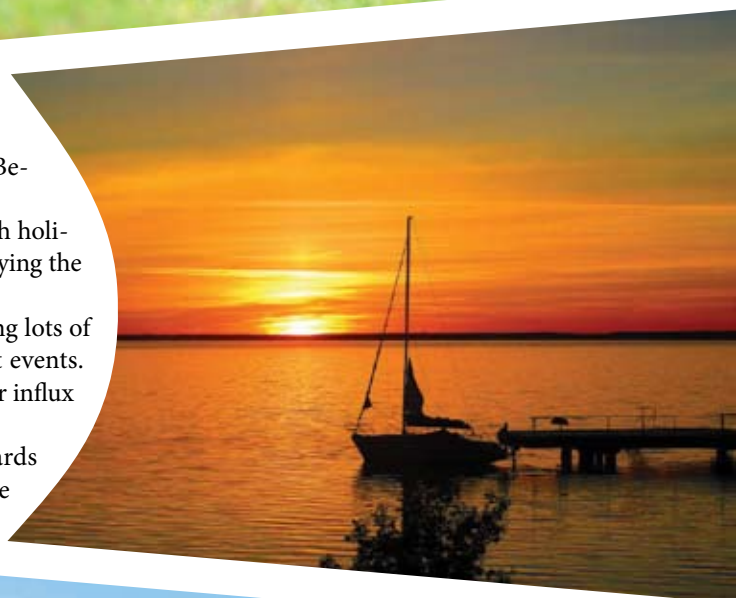
In recent time, the vector of tourist preferences has shifted towards eastward, beyond the Ural range: Altay, Siberia and Primorye which see organised groups and individual holiday-makers. A Belarusian tourist and information centre is even planned to be opened in Novosibirsk, at the premises of one of the large tourist companies, working in the region.

The tourist inflow could have significantly increased but there's no direct air flight so far. Previously there were air flights directly connecting Minsk with other cities. In 2013, they were abolished, and now variants are being discussed to renew direct flights.

Sochi is another tourist favourite, whatever the season. Following the Olympic Games, there's a great choice of hotels, to suit any pocket, as well as some of the world's best ski tracks. With sun, sea and mountains, there's so much to enjoy, and prices tend to be cheaper than in Europe.

In the native countryside

'Rural' tourism is quickly developing. Travellers can get acquainted with traditional scenery of the Belarusian house and touch the roots of national traditions in agro-estates (actually, improved rural houses). In total, last year, 294,000 people visited Belarusian agro-estates, with more than half of these being Russians.





Place worth coming to: five reasons to visit Bobruisk

Have you read Ilf and Petrov's *Golden Calf*? It reads: 'On hearing Bobruisk named, those present groaned but reluctantly agreed to go. In fact, Bobruisk was viewed as a wonderful and highly cultural place.' 85 years ago, the book told of the former BSSR regional centre, making it known throughout the Soviet Union. Unsurprisingly, it is home to a monument to the main character in the *Golden Calf*, Shura Balaganov. The town is worth visiting for so many reasons.

To see the unassailable fortress from Napoleonic times

1 In the 19th century, Bobruisk fortress was one of the mightiest in Europe. Designed by Belarusian engineer and historian Teodor Narbut, and by General Karl Opperman, a Russian cartographer, the citadel withstood a two-month attack by Napoleonic guns in 1812.

For many years, the fortress was one of the most severe prisons in the Empire, housing the Decembrists. Its interrogation and punishment wing was egg-shaped, allowing neither sitting or lying down. Remembering of the political katorga (hard labor in exile), publicist Alexander Herzen wrote that it was better to serve a sentence in Siberia, but not at "the scary prison on the Berezina River."

To walk through ancient streets

2 The city is a true paradise for lovers of history: you can wander its picturesque early 20th century quarters for hours, admiring the ornately shaped brickwork, often painted, from which buildings are made. Plastered brickwork is rare. Rozovsky pharmacy, in Bakharov Street, is essential viewing. Its owner drank poisoned tea to avoid being taken to the ghetto during the dark years of Nazi occupation. Meanwhile, Internatsionalnaya Street boasts the unique dual-towered mansion of merchant Pae-Braine Kt-snelson (who traded with the British). The style is a copy of that seen abroad, and recreated in Bobruisk. Such were the whims of the wealthy of the past.



To appreciate the Japanese 'birdhouse'

3 The 'birdhouse' apartment was built in 1980, to a design by Vladimir Galushchenko, and was a key exhibit at the Soviet Modernism show, celebrating works from 1955-1991, hosted by Austria. Originally painted grey and black, to give a fearful appearance, it's now pink! The architect was inspired by Japanese Kenzo Tange and Kisho Kurokawa to create the design, which resembles Tange's Shizuoka Press and Broadcasting Office and Kurokawa's Nakagin Capsule Tower.

Moreover, the city has its own Port Arthur. The reason for naming the house so is unclear but it may refer to the building's perimeter being fortress-like in shape. Built during the Russian-Japanese War, when the Port Arthur defence was much spoken of, it may honour that time. Others say it resembles the famous Wailing Wall.

To embrace Bobr Samuilovich

4 A bronze statue dedicated to the city's unofficial symbol — the beaver — is situated in Sot'sialisticheskaya Street: a local version of the Arbat. Known as Bobr



Samuilovich Bobruisky, it stands at 170cm tall, and wears a suit, bow-tie and hat. The beaver holds a walking stick and has a ring on its finger. The monument symbolises the average Bobruisk resident of the early 20th century and custom dictates that touching the beaver's nose or rubbing a watch chain on its belly will bring health and happiness.

Another beaver sits on a bench: an exact copy of that situated in Moscow's Bobruisk Yard.

To learn why clocks chime at seven forty

5 Years ago, up to 90 percent of Bobruisk's population was Jewish. With this in mind, the beaver's patronymic is Samuilovich and the local tower chimes at seven forty every day. You may see a man carrying a violin, hurrying to one of the thirteen synagogues still operational. There's a certain atmosphere, which many liken to Odessa. Some sites in the town relate to other faiths, such as the Old Believer Forshtadt and Gypsy Titovka suburbs.

By Maxim Osipov

Good work

Worldwide famous group from Belarus was started at one time with a same-name village



Twenty kilometers from Mogilev, towards Shklov, is the small village of Khoroshki, situated away from the main road. It comprises no more than a dozen or so homes.

Its local people have been fond of singing and dancing since ancient times, while some are true masters, able to make violins, tambourines and dudas (pipes). Meanwhile, Khoroshki women know how to sew colourful shirts and

andarak skirts, as are sought after by even demanding fashionistas.

The villagers' dancing entertains not only local people, as they often give concerts in the regional centres of Mogilev and Minsk. They've enjoyed incredible success, becoming known far and wide. A St. Petersburg couple, Dudchenko and Gaevaya, saw a performance and, several days later, made the trip to the village, helping it 'brand' itself: with a name, a distinctive style and bright creative individuality. Of course, it's now the country's main choreographic group.



We have really inverted consciousness of Belarusians. First — with Polotsk Notebook, later — with Turove Legend we reminded that the nation shouldn't be perceived as 'connected with soil', 'in bast shoes'. We've had magnates, furs, brocade, with high level of education and traditions



Russian Valentina Gaevaya is descended from Cossacks, born in southern Russia. Since an early age, she'd dreamt of becoming an art critic, being attracted by the Renaissance. She entered the Leningrad Academy of Arts and spent days at the Hermitage. However, choreography and directing became her profession.

In Leningrad, Ms. Gaevaya met Nikolay Dudchenko, a graduate of the Leningrad School of Classical Ballet, and they chose to move to Belarus, building careers and family life. At that time, the city of Mogilev dreamt of having its own professional folk group able to worthily represent the region at national or, even, all-Union competitions. A team of brilliant amateur artistes rehearsed at the Kirov Car Factory. After working shifts, they would hurry to the local House of Culture, to take part in singing and dance clubs. They were in need of a talented leader. In the 1960s and 1970s, the director of the House of Culture, Valery Budnitsky, had hired several choreographers, but none stayed. When Ms. Gaevaya and Mr. Dudchenko came from Minsk to offer a couple of classes to Mogilev

artistes, Mr. Budnitsky realised he'd found true leaders for the ambitious Mogilev team.

The most favourable conditions were created for the pair of choreographers, and they met all expectations, launching a dance team with a great future. In fact, Khoroshki had several previous names — including Pramen, Vesnyanka, and Krynitsa.

Khoroshki's creators had to learn the peculiarities of Belarusian dance and were keen to include not just traditions from Mogilev Region. They toured widely, collecting an encyclopedia of folk dance moves from all corners of the country.

"To create a truly national folk troupe, I had to grasp all aspects of Belarusian dance," confesses Ms. Gaevaya. "Initially, I had Ukrainian and Russian ensembles from Virsky and Moiseev in mind but it's important to reveal a nation's character through dance, discerning the differences in our common Slavic family. Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian dance are very alike, as are the nations themselves, and I love each one. Each nation is beautiful. Georgian dances express militancy and passion,

while Ukrainians dance with a different sort of energy, and Belarusians are more fluid and gentle, expressing peace and kindness, which I love. In Belarus, spring arrives in such amazing ways, with soft lark song, gentle sun, and delicate light. I try to evoke this national lyricism."

Investigating Belarusian rites, Valentina began staging them, creating well-thought-out theatrical performances and folk shows, including musical accompaniment. Khoroshki has its own instrumental group, and owns hundreds of unique costumes. It even plans elaborate staging. Ms. Gaevaya shows us authentic Belarus in her choreography, giving us a living archive of dance culture.

She explains her desire to portray various authentic elements of history. "Polotsk Notebook focuses on Slavonic revival. We enjoy a rich cultural flavour and, for me, this programme is symbolic, though it was criticised for a long time. Some accused me of incorporating too much Polish folklore into Belarusian culture, through Polotsk Notebook and then Turove Legend. We try to show that our heritage extends beyond

peasant farming, since we also enjoyed rich traditions thanks to educated and wealthy magnates. The Radziwills were one of the most respected families in Europe. We reconstruct Belarusian ancient times, showing luxurious aristocratic dress. After staging Polotsk Notebook in Poland recently, one Polish audience-member approached us, crying, lamenting that Polish artistes had failed to prepare anything similar.”

Time spent at St. Petersburg’s art universities, and in the study of art catalogues and exhibitions, at the Hermitage, and watching dance shows, such as Falconry, Minstrel and Pilgrims, have helped Ms. Gaevaya reconstruct the dances once enjoyed by the Belarusian gentry. Ms. Gaevaya is a living example of how one can be an expert in many fields of art simultaneously, becoming a library of erudition and versatile knowledge. Khoroshki’s success relies on strong leadership. The team was one of the first to represent Belarusian and Soviet culture abroad during the years of the ‘iron curtain’ and has now performed in almost every corner of the world, dazzling audiences. Even the reserved Finns have fallen in love with our dance group.

“Each time we go on tour, we try to think of a programme which will ‘conquer’ the host country. For our tour of Finland, I tried to comprehend the national character of these people. Some told me that the Finns wouldn’t understand the performance until three days afterwards, finding the will to applaud only then, in their kitchens. However, they greeted us warmly, and gave us a standing ovation. Our tour, countrywide, was a success,” Ms. Gaevaya recalls.

In Finland, Khoroshki premiered its Kokhanochki programme. Actually, the group boasts many performances devoted to love. Several of its members are married but, sadly, the marriage between Dudchenko and Gaevaya did not last, perhaps due to stress and their extremely emotional personalities. Ne-

vertheless, they remain as a creative team and have kept the group strong, with its own distinctive brand, nurtured by its ‘parents’.

All agree that charming Valentina is a true leader and their ‘commissioner’. With open blue eyes and strong will, she has always achieved her goals. Her faith in herself and her artistes has allowed Khoroshki to continue performing, enjoying unquestioned authority.

“I’ve faced opposition and criticism, being told that Belarusians dance differently,” admits Ms. Gaevaya. “I’ve been persecuted, but those times brought me closer to Mr. Mulyavin. We were united by the rejection of our individualism. We helped each other. When Volodya voiced the idea of creating the Song of Fate rock opera, it seemed unreal. We thought, initially, that our programme would not be welcome but we worked hard — even at night. We managed to tour the whole Soviet Union with the programme, which was much appreciated everywhere.”

‘Hurrah, Valentina Gaevaya!’ was the cry, on July 22nd, when the People’s Artiste of Belarus celebrated her birthday. We wish her health and many more art discoveries. Mr. Gaevaya enjoys tremendous experience and energy. Let’s hope her fire burns for many years.

By Alesya **Vladimirova**



ALEXANDER TOLOCHKO



The skills are sharpened daily. At the rehearsal room



SERGEY LOZIUK

To the strains of bagpipe...

The Grunwald International Festival of Medieval Culture and Music brought together over 600 participants from Belarus and the CIS, in heavy plate armour, cotton under wear and knitted armoured hats (a metal helmet would sit on one's head as comfortably as a bucket). Several thousand spectators, keen on spectacular events such as this, enjoyed the atmosphere for two days at the Dudutki Museum of Ancient Crafts and Technologies.

The festival is held for the eighth time and is becoming more diverse from year to year: more military-historical clubs from different countries are keen to come to Belarus to test their military skills at the tournament and to take part in the reconstruction of the famous Battle of Grunwald, which gave the name to the festival.

The Battle of Grunwald is a decisive episode of the 1409-1411 Great War when the allies, the King of Poland Władysław II Jagiełło and the Grand Duke of Lithuania Vytautas, defeated the troops of the Teutonic Order having united their efforts.

"The result of the Battle of Grunwald has completely changed political forces in Europe. This is an episode in our history of which we should be proud," said the organiser of the festival and the head of Berserk extreme

theatre, Alexander Rak, explaining the choice of the event that became the foundation for the re-enactment rally. "The

Poles celebrate the Day of the Battle of Grunwald on July 15th with a large-scale festival. Lithuania also marks this event while we haven't had anything similar for many years

though our ancestors comprised half of the winners' army."

One can argue whether the history of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is directly related to the contemporary Belarus yet the festival attracts crowds of tourists to Dudutki. The unusual spectacle was previously attended by those connected with the historical topic but now the knight's festival is entertainment for a wide audience.

Youngsters come to attend a folk rock concert by bringing tents and staying at the campsite while families with children usually come to experience an unusual weekend and acquaint the younger generation with Belarusian history. There are also those who simply want to go to the countryside for the weekend. Swords and battle axes clink, bow strings are singing, guns are shooting on the battlefield, horsemen meet in a straight fight and those keen on ancient dance cheerfully tap their feet to the sounds of the bagpipes.



SERGEY LOZIUK



Melodies of Minsk Autumn

International Music Day at Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus celebrated with major concert, including premiere of 'Suite for Cello, Soprano and Orchestra', by Konstantin Boyarsky, and opening virtuoso performance of 'Festive Overture', by Dmitri Shostakovich

I love October for its music, which is like the voice of life itself, bringing a sense of joy and contentment. Concert halls across Minsk and the regions are participating in entertaining and uplifting us with timeless melodies.

From September 30th, twelve evening concerts (one each night) formed the 11th Yuri Bashmet International Festival, hosted by three Minsk venues: the Palace of the Republic, the Belarusian State Philharmonic Society, and the 'Verkhni Gorod' (Upper City) concert hall. Yuri Bashmet personally closed the event. What an honour it is that this prestigious European forum is hosted by our capital.

The festival began with a duet by world-famous Belarusian pianist (the co-director of the festival, Rostislav Krimer) and Italian virtuoso violinist Sergey Krylov. They performed the 'Moscow-Vienna' programme, which

has already graced Florence's famous Pergola opera house but was premiering in Minsk. Sergey Krylov has been named by Mstislav Rostropovich among the world's top five violinists of the 20th century.

room melodies by Fritz Kreisler. Truly, the evening was a delight for admirers of the violin, and for all who appreciate refined music.

The next day, on International Music Day, the full orchestra stirred power-

UNESCO established International Music Day in 1975. Classical composer Dmitri Shostakovich gave his support for the holiday, which was celebrated worldwide for the 40th time this year, including leading artists and troupes, not only in Belarus, but far and wide

During the first part of the concert, music lovers were enchanted by 'Sonata for Violin and Piano (in D-minor), op. 134' by Dmitri Shostakovich. The second half presented delicate drawing-

ful emotions, with two piano concertos on the programme, by Sergey Prokofiev and Sergey Rakhmaninov, performed by People's Artist of Russia Nikolai Lugansky. There was also a symphonic

poem by Franz Liszt, 'Les Préludes', and Musorgsky's 'Night on Bald Mountain'.

Visiting the Bolshoi Theatre, I always enjoyed hearing music from the treasury of world culture. It feels as if the very walls sing there, and your soul is uplifted, burdens easing from your mind. The intellect is nurtured by music. We experience catharsis through

scatter sadness, deaden physical pain and feed the mind, while altering our train of thought entirely. It's hard to explain the sensations and emotions music arouses in us.

Hobart Earle, the artistic director and chief conductor of the National Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted Dmitri Shostakovich's 'Festive

and the wonderful work of this classical composer.

'Suite for Cello, Soprano and Orchestra', by Konstantin Boyarsky is an energising piece. In 2010, the composer was acknowledged as the best young classical composer of Great Britain by international website Suite 101 (www.suite101.com).

For this particular festive evening, the musicians of the Opera and Ballet Theatre sat not in the orchestra pit, but on stage. Of course, everyone awaited the conductor, Hobart Earle. He was greeted by a storm of applause as he bowed to Honored Artist of Belarus Oksana Volkova, adored by opera lovers worldwide, and to Moscow cellist Dali Gutserieva, aged just 17.

Dali recently won the International Competition named after Svyatoslav Knushevitsky. David Geringas, a famous cellist of our time, has called her style vivid, showing great technical skill and pure musical sense. Dali began learning at the age of six, and was giving concerts by the age of nine. She now plays with the State Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, performing, so far, as a soloist in Finland, Denmark, Island, the Czech Republic, Spain and Italy.

Dali is thought to be one of the most gifted Russian cellists. Boyarsky created 'Suite...' especially for her. Meanwhile, Oksana Volkova is the golden voice of Belarus, with her velvet-rich mezzo-soprano shaping the suite uniquely. Dali is amazing and attracts much attention, but our Oksana is powerful and spell-binding. She placed the hall under an enchantment. A colleague of mine compares her to a fish swimming upstream, rising above the current, to sparkle in all the colours of the rainbow.

During the second part of the 'Music for All Seasons' concert, the audience enjoyed German composer Carl Orf's vocal and choreographic performance 'Carmina Burana'. 'Carmina' is translated from Latin as 'songs' while 'Burana' was the name of a locality in medieval Germany. As the history goes (<http://www.belcanto.ru>), a 13th century



Magic voice of Oksana Volkova, the prime of the Bolshoi Theatre, is called the golden voice of Belarus

its emotional power, feeling warmth and joy, suffering and grief, fear, love, doubt, strength and tenderness. Music is a revelation and a mystery, bringing divine intervention to our mood, as scientists explain (more at <http://www.rusnauka.com> on how music affects our emotions).

According to Aristotle, music reproduces movement, and each movement has energy in itself, with each person responding to particular music, as corresponds to his character or mood at that moment. Psychological research has found that music is able to evoke extreme emotional states, being used to change our mood utterly.

Visiting the Bolshoi Theatre, I've experienced music's power to evoke joy,

Overture'. He has performed in the world's leading concert halls and is called, in Ukraine, the 'Odessan American'. He studied conducting in the Austrian capital and is known as one of the best conductors to emerge from the Vienna Music Academy. In 2014, Mr. Earle was named among the top thirty conductors of the year, by veteran magazine Musical America Worldwide.

Shostakovich's 'Festive Overture' was written in 1954 for the opening of the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow, to provide a musical soundtrack for the 'Stone Flower' fountain: the first of its kind in the USSR, erected in Kolkhoz Square.

In playing this piece, the theatre reminded us of the joy brought by music



***The 11th Yuri
Bashmet
International Festival
packed the house
at three Minsk venues:
he Palace of the Republic,
the Belarusian State
Philharmonic Society,
and the 'Verkhni Gorod'
(Upper City)***

manuscript of poems, by unknown minstrels, was found in a Benedictine monastery, in the foothills of the Bavarian Alps. It was kept in Munich, at the royal court library, until published by curator Johann Andreas Schmeller, in 1847, named 'Songs from Beuern'. The book enjoyed great popularity, with four print runs across sixty years.

The first page of the book shows a miniature of Fortune's Wheel, with the Goddess of Luck at its centre, and four human figures with Latin inscriptions around the circumference. The man at the top, with scepter and crown, is accompanied by the inscription 'I reign'. On the right, hurrying for the fallen crown, it states 'I reigned'. At the bottom are the words 'I am without reign', and the left, climbing to the top, states 'I will reign'.

A Latin poem about Fortune's changeability, like the moon, is offered as a preface for the book:

O Fortune, like the moon you are changeable, ever waxing and waning; hateful life first oppresses and then soothes as fancy takes it; poverty and power it melts like ice...

Having read this poem about all-powerful fortune, Orf probably imagined the new work at once. In the first act, we're given a constant movement of bright, contrasting scenes, with a dancing chorus. It took Orf only a few weeks to create his opera. It was ready by the beginning of June, 1934. He played it on the piano to his editors, and they were enthusiastic, but the full score

was completed only two years later, in August, 1936.

Carl Orf believed it to be the pinnacle of his creativity. It was praised for its mysticism and hypnotic energy; truly, it has the power to transport you to a place inhabited only by sound and light. It is both joyful and tragic, tender and haunting. It is passionate, revealing the whole range of love, and explores our simple human pleasures and merriment. Best known for the aria 'O Fortuna', which opens and finishes Orf's work, the piece is often performed alone.

The opera offers reflections on the changeable nature of Fortune, the Goddess of Fate, setting in motion her wheel. We see the cycle of love, joy and suffering, brought to life through music and ballet (choreographed by State Award holder Ernest Heidebrecht).

Honoured Artist of Belarus Elena Shvedova performed a solo role, as did Alexander Gelakh and Ilya Silchukov, both laureates of international competitions. Hobart Earle conducted.

The festival concluded with ovations and the presentation of magnificent bouquets.

By Valentina **Zhdanovich**

**Ballet master
Alexandra
Tikhomirova takes
post of director
at the National
Academic Bolshoi
Opera and Ballet
Theatre of Belarus**

Touching audiences with classics

Alexandra Tikhomirova once wrote in her diary: 'I want to live in Leningrad and to dance for the State Academic Mariinsky Theatre.' In time, her dream came true; she graduated from Saratov Choreographic College and received invitations from eight leading Russian theatres. Having danced on the Mariinsky Theatre's stage for four years, aged just 22, she was obliged to retire. However, she then became one of the youngest, and best, St. Petersburg ballet choreographers. She graduated from the N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg State Conservatory (choreography chair) and now lives and works in two cities: in her native St. Petersburg she stages drama performances for the 'Pushkin school' theatre-studio and, in Minsk, works as a ballet master-director for the National Academic

Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. Recently, Minsk premiered a new performance of 'The Little Prince', by composer Yevgeny Glebov, based on Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's story, choreographed by Alexandra Tikhomirova. Let's find out more about her.

Alexandra, we must congratulate you upon your beautiful and very successful premiere...

Thank you, I'm very happy that it went well. Our performance presents a new interpretation of Yevgeny Glebov's music, and of the story told by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. 'The Little Prince' is a philosophical parable, in which there is no strongly expressed conflict or struggle. Rather, there are metaphors and allegories. We refused to retell the plot, choosing instead to seek out hidden meaning, and to show the personality of the writer. The story of relationship between the Prince and the Rose is that of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and his wife Con-

suelo. I would call our performance an exploration of human personality: a story about how to remain human, that a Little Prince lives in each of us.

The widow of the composer, Larisa Glebova, told me that, at first, she had major doubts as whether to allow a cardinal remaking of the work but was persuaded by Yevgeny Alexandrovich's reverent attitude. According to general opinion, he achieved excellent results.

When I heard the adagio for the first time, I immediately knew that I liked the music. Later, I met Larisa Glebova and we at once found a common language, chatting warmly. We worked scrupulously on the libretto, choosing to keep the delicacy of the dramaturgy. Inclusions from other works were added, but very delicately, with reverence to the author.

How important is it that a choreographer connects with the music?

It's vital. It was for this reason that Fiodor Lopukhov organised the

choreography chair directly within the walls of St. Petersburg Conservatory. We analysed the fundamentals of reading and composing a score, since choreography is directly associated with knowing musical laws. I learnt the foundations of score from the Mariinsky Theatre's oldest conductor, Yuri Gamalya.

Is it true that you joined the Mariinsky Theatre as a soloist?

We were employed on reviving the creativity of Leonid Yakobson at the Mariinsky Theatre, his pupils seeking out talented artistes from across all USSR. Oleg Vinogradov headed the project and Irina Yakobson worked with us. It was like a theatre within the theatre. When I was 19, I managed to dance 'Pas de Catre', 'Sextet', 'Rodin' and 'Wedding Cortège' by Yakobson, on the stage of the Mariinsky Theatre. Of course, I also danced classics, such as 'Giselle', 'Les Sylphides', 'Les Millions d'Arlequin' and 'Festival of Flowers'.

You left the Mariinsky Theatre, having worked there for just four years, at the very beginning of your dancing career...

Well, everyone has their destiny. I had a whole range of reasons that made me decide that I simply couldn't dance any more. My exit was a shock to relatives and teachers. At that time, when I was making the decision, St. Petersburg lacked any theatre suitable for me but the St. Petersburg Eifman Ballet. By 22, I'd danced a variety of roles. It was like a breakdown, and the conservatory appeared for me when necessary. Earlier, I couldn't have imagined being a ballet choreographer at 22. A teaching path was predicted for me even at college but nobody, including myself, supposed that it would happen so early.

What can a choreographer know at the age of 22?

My creativity as a choreographer is rooted in dramatic theatre, musicals and operettas. At the Conservatory, my teacher was Nikita Dolgushin and

it was he who worked with me to revive 'La Esmeralda', when I was 24. Together, we staged this ballet across three theatres, including at the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. The performance is still in its repertoire.

Dolgushin employed me as a coach after I'd graduated from the conservatory. We began working together and I had the chance to give master classes and work on a large repertoire. At the same time, I taught at the St. Petersburg Theatre Arts Academy and staged performances at

which a musical and drama performance is set?

I don't like to see Onegin sitting on a toilet, or Aida being carried by a tank. Time is handled strangely today. Old films are being remade in new ways, old plots being reinterpreted. While successful, I see few innovative ideas. This doesn't mean that I'm against modern interpretations of old plots but it seems to me that it's more important to give audiences an understanding of Shakespeare, than to lower Shakespeare to the level of today's teenagers.



other theatres. Over the past 16 years, I've choreographed over 50 stagings at theatres in various countries.

Why did Minsk attract you?

When director Susanna Tsiryuk was invited to Minsk to stage 'The Snow Maiden', I came with her as choreographer: the performance included many complicated ballet scenes. Later, I returned several times. The Belarusian Bolshoi Theatre is unique and attracted me with the opportunity of fulfilling myself as a ballet master.

What's your attitude towards today's fashion for shifting the era in

I also dislike provocation for its own sake. It's more difficult to stage classics in a way that touches people, so I found it fascinating to stage 'Eugene Onegin' in Kazan, with Mikhail Pandzhavidze, the Principal Director of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus. He managed to preserve the historical accuracy in a good way, while adding the inner dynamics of modern people. In general, I've been lucky, never being obliged to follow a course that I disagreed with as a human or professional.

By Maria Ivashevich



VITALIY GIL



Miraculous game with light

People tend to say that stained glass evokes a special atmosphere, inspiring an emotional response and spiritual calm. The art form is back in vogue, being used by modern designers to transform and beautify interior spaces, within windows and doors, ceilings, partitions, folding screens, furniture and lamps. . . "It can even help create zones within a space," says Alexey Losik, a monumental artist who has been working with stained glass for the past ten years.

Mr. Losik's studio features an unfinished piece on the table; dark green, grey, black and white glass fragments are scattered on the worktop. When lifted to the light, they change in appearance, being destined to become part of an artwork in stained glass. The artist shows us a sketch and explains the fundamentals; he makes a preliminary design on the computer, which he magnifies to full size and prints out, for use as a pattern. Each element of stained glass is then cut manually.

He first tried working with glass as a 3rd year student with the Belarusian State Art Academy's Artistic Department. He

studied the technology of classical stained glass making, with lead H-shaped profiles, as used to make gothic stained glass windows in the Middle Ages. This technique, however, does not allow the easy combination of small pieces, unlike the tiffany method, named after its creator, Louis Comfort Tiffany, son of the owner of the Tiffany and Co jewellery empire.

"He replaced lead profiles with copper strings," Alexey explains. "They'd be attached to glass with the help of beeswax and then soldered using tin." The technology was so progressive that the art of stained glass artworks began to develop in two and three dimensions.

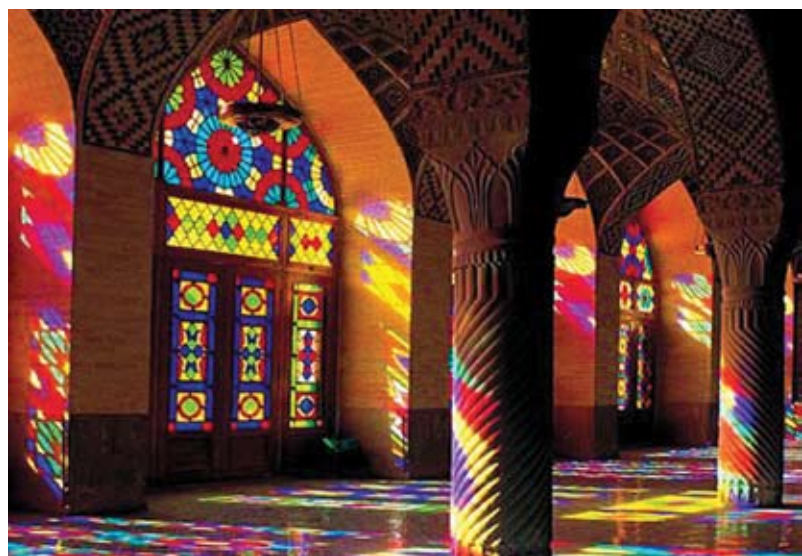
Mr. Losik adds, "Many contemporary masters who use the tiffany technique purchase American glass. Our country doesn't produce such glass, which is available in over 2,000 tints. I remember, once, searching for a 'crushed blueberry' colour. If you add various graphic and texture patterns, billions of variants are possible."

He cuts the glass easily with an oil glass-cutter, as if it were paper. Then, he polishes the edges with a special machine (no more than a 2-millimetre error is permissible), before encasing them in brass foil and laying them out on the table.

I wonder how often he cuts himself but he asserts that it's rare, once you've been working with the equipment for a while. "Soldering is the most difficult process, as you have turn the fragile item over half way through, which is rather tricky. Although we use tin and lead soldering alloy, with minimum content of harmful metal, we still have to wear respirators; it's especially uncomfortable in hot weather."

He covers the thin string, and it instantly hardens with a patina, oxidizing to give brilliance and lovely colorations, in shades of brown through to black. It provides an additional artistic effect.

I ask if he studied cutting and soldering at university and he tells me that he didn't, rather mastering these skills in the



workshop. He notes, “Women tend to be better at work like this, it being related to creating cosy home interiors. What you do need to learn is how to create the right composition, so that all elements are of proper size and fit into the chosen space.”

Techniques of making stained glass designs depend on the complexity and size of the work. For example, a simple design covering an area of one square metre may be finished within three days. Meanwhile, the artist’s workshop took almost six months to complete the 120 sq. m., 11,000-piece stained glass work for the ceiling of the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre. Major projects, like this, are transported to the site in sections, for assembly in situ, using various techniques to ensure that the fragile beauty of a piece is kept safe.

“If we find, once a work is in place, that a piece doesn’t match, we take the whole work out of its frame to remove the piece and replace it with another. Sometimes it seems that it’s easier to redo the whole thing,” Alexey tells us. Fortunately, this doesn’t happen often. However, it’s best to ensure that every detail is thoroughly thought-out during the design stage, taking into consideration lighting and the style of the premises, as well as the mood sought, since stained-glass works are always centrepieces, more so even than paintings.

It’s a shame that they’re so expensive to produce, but Alexey tells us that film (or pseudo) stained glass works are cheaper to make. In this case, colourful film pieces and solder-imitating strings are attached to a sheet of glass. It seems a strange

method but he adds, “Of course, this is much cheaper than a tiffany, but the difference is like that between a piece of glass and a diamond. The light effects are totally different.”

Not only owners of mansions and elite urban apartments order exquisite stained glass works by modern artists. If you look, you’ll see them in cafes, hotels, theatres and holy buildings, with themes ranging from the biblical to light geometrical ornamentation.

Mr. Losik adds, “We may soon receive an order for Slutsk belt-styled stained glass works,” although he won’t reveal the customer’s name.

“We’re supposed to not just imitate the pattern, but to stylise it, making it contemporary yet authentic-looking. It will be a very interesting job. I also want to make stained glass works for ancient Belarusian architectural buildings, to show that our culture and heritage goes beyond material things. Stained glass can be perceived in various ways. Some treat it merely as glass but I think that the way light is deflected through its texture gives it other qualities.”

A stained glass work may endure 100 years, or even 500. Over time, glass melts and moves, so that it becomes thinner in upper sections, and thicker in others, like a candle’s wax. Alexey is delighted to think of his works enduring, saying, “This is not just a job to earn money, but a vocation for me. I want my stained glass works to have an emotional impact on people, to inspire and encourage them to think, and to create a certain mood.”

By Nadezhda **Dekola**





'Still Life with Camomiles.' 1991

Such soulful eyes

People say that Art Director Vyacheslav Kubarev was a servant of two arts: painting and cinema. His cinematic works are widely known for being typical of Soviet cinematography: 'Alpine Ballad', 'Polonaise by Oginsky', 'State Border', and 'Time Presses'. Meanwhile, his painting was more of a hobby, overshadowed by his cinematic success. As often happens, his compatriots realised the value of his artistic legacy only many years after his death.

Recently, Minsk hosted an exhibition devoted to Vyacheslav Kubarev, featuring many works from the collection of Minsk's Yury Bokach: a great admirer of Kubarev's creativity. Visitors admired not only large canvases but smaller works.

Mr. Kubarev worked with graduates of the All-Russian State Institute of Cinematography of S.A. Gerasimov (VGIK) Yevgeny Ignatiev and Vladimir Dementiev, creating classics of Belarusian cinematography. Of course, we often forget who directs the films we see but, in fact, we are viewing through their eyes when we visit the cinema.

Vladimir Ponochevnyi, a graduate of VGIK, a well-known actor and director, recalls shooting the TV-series 'State Border'. For the project, Vyacheslav Kubarev made sketches of almost every scene, for use by the directors and camera operators. Mr. Kubarev was known for finding visual solutions, especially creating huge crowd scenes with limited numbers of participants. Many of his colleagues remember a scene from the film, featuring mass migration, where just three hundred people were used, while giving the impression of around a thousand. Mr. Ponochevnyi recalls, "Slava suggested that we avoid using a wide angle, and make the crowd move as a 'wedge', to give the impression of numbers. It turned out really well."

Vyacheslav Kubarev made daily storyboards, to guide each scene of shooting, making full use of his artistic skills. Even while shooting, he would paint the landscape, and people around him, using the tenderness associated with Russian impressionists. In his rather short creative life, Vyacheslav created more than a thousand canvases, most of which are today stored in museums and private collections, in Italy, Germany, the USA, and Israel.

In Italy, Kubarev is held in the same regard as Marc Chagall and Piotr Krokhlav, his works being constantly exhibited (alongside other Belarusian paintings) in Milan, Venice and Florence. According to Piter Noubles, an owner of an art gallery in Amsterdam, nearly thirty works by Vyacheslav Kubarev decorate his collection. Several of his canvases are owned by the Tretyakov Gallery, while the National Art Museum of Belarus owns his 'At Minsk Sea'.

Well-known Belarusian artist Mai Dantsig has called Kubarev sensitive and multi-talented, finding complex solutions in his works, with thoughtful embodiment of motive. Mikhail Vrubel wrote, in a letter to his sister, "I know an artist who applies colour just as it should be, so that no other option seems possible. Moreover, there is a feeling of delight in beholding the picture..."

Kubarev's depth of feeling always found appeal among connoisseurs.



'Localities of Langar.' 1983



'Saratov.' 1982



National Artist of Belarus Mai Dantsig:

I admire Kubarev's creativity. I seriously appreciate it, with good reason. Kubarev is one of the few artists with a double profile, being a cinematic director. Nevertheless, he always returned to the fine arts for inspiration and, in particular, to his painting, which he adored. He tried to reveal the most secret feelings through his remarkable sketches. We simply yearn for good painting. Even Picasso said that he was not interested in searching but in discovery. Unfortunately, there is far more searching than discovery in the present day world. Today, we lack good painting exhibitions, though we desire them as nourishment, as we find in the works of Kubarev. He shows us good knowledge of outdoor painting, capturing the very air and sky, and the influence of the environment. We feel the warmth and cold. All elements of his painting are strong, in essence and culture.

We were acquainted and I can say that he was a charming person. As people say, he had a magnificent aura, always smiling. It was his essence: goodwill and an abundance of positive emotions. These qualities are evident in his creativity: in his painting, which is beautiful. There is one more quality inherent in Vyacheslav Kubarev: a feeling of utter delight. Each sketch was painted with delight, reflecting the environment, the landscape and the air, filled with colour, in a style we have long forgotten.



'Return'. 1982

National Artist of Belarus Leonid Shchemelev:

Vyacheslav Kubarev was an extremely modest person, and a refined artist. His works reveal him as both Russian and Belarusian simultaneously. He saw Belarus in his own way and expressed all that he saw. He worked in cinema a great deal but he was a landscape painter by nature. He was so sensitive to the beauty of landscape, to its spirit, and to its significance. He presented a figurative view, while also being objective. As an artist, he is very interesting. His works are humane, showing man and nature. I always felt that we viewed the world in the same way. Other artists find him interesting. It seems to me

that his memory is being undeservedly forgotten, despite his fascinating portrayals through cinema and painting. He was inconspicuous among a chaotic company of artists but he and his works are of great importance.

National Artist of Belarus Georgy Poplavsky:

Vyacheslav Kubarev was like a servant to two masters: being both a director and an artist. We accepted him as a painter into the Union of Artists. We can see even now how he worked. There was an exhibition in the Small Arena in Moscow, from the collection, which is being bought by the Interstate Fund for Development, Education and Arts. We know many artists and are on friendly terms with them. We have Vyacheslav Kubarev's

sketches (never before exhibited) which are so earnest and intimate. It makes my heart sing to see those treated badly by history being given remembrance. Kubarev's films are praised and called professional but his painting hasn't been examined so deeply, which is a shame. Slava painted landscapes most of the time, visiting places few artists have been.

We always envy those involved in cinema being able to travel, going to Transbaikalia to shoot a three to five minute scene, or suddenly going to the Baltic. Slava was valuable in opening a new world to us. He approached his art as a professional rather than as a form of earning money, which I admire. As someone once said, 'If you consider your trade as means of income, you are out of place.' It's true. In this respect, Vyacheslav Kubarev simply loved painting.

Film director Vladimir Ponochevnyi:

I was lucky enough to work with Slava. I can call him that because we were friends. We were close. We worked on such complex projects as 'State Border' and 'Black Stork', directed by Victor Turov. How did Kubarev work? We called him Slavushka, but sometimes Kubik (cube) — showing our love and respect for this outstanding person. Before we'd start writing the scripts, Slava and I and camera operator Boris Olifer persuaded director Boris Stepanov (who was not so mobile) that we should go ahead to scout locations. We'd then write the scenes to fit each location, thinking how we'd shoot. We'd sit, reading the text, while Slava would hold up paintings for each shot, to portray the scene. We used this method for scenes in Kulyab, in Termez, and in St. Petersburg (at that time Leningrad) for shooting 'State Border'. We'd find somewhere that we took a strong liking to and Slava would sketch it absolutely as it was. Remarkably, it was never a problem for those we worked with to transform those sketches into the actual scene shot.

No matter where we went, and no matter what the time was, even 7am or 8am, we'd see Kubik outside the hotel with an easel, heading somewhere. He'd return an hour-and a half later, saying, "Here, Volodya, look! I painted with oil paints: mist, fir-trees and the dew. Tomorrow, I'll take watercolours and will try to paint silence."

Once, he complained, "Volodya, it's difficult to be intellectual in the first generation, but it's necessary to try." He tried; he did. He spent his life reaching for intelligence, through his work. For me, Slava was an example of service to cinema and painting.

Critic Tatiana Bembel:

Vyacheslav Kubarev, an honorary worker of arts, became widely known in cinematography as a brilliant art director, after the success of the film 'Alpine Ballad' (1965), which is a screen version of the novel by Vasily Bykov. By then, he was a member of the Belarusian Union of Artists' painting section. While working in cinema every day, he'd also be improving his painting skills. According to memoirs by his filming colleagues, he'd be painting or sketching almost hourly. He created hundreds of sketches to



'Waterscape,' 1989



'Fruits on the Window Sill,' 1992





'Minsk sea'. 1982

It is surprising, how Vyacheslav Kubarev managed to combine the challenging shooting, where it was required to draw in and to give the storyboard of each film episode every day, with no less intensive work of an artist

use as storyboards for films (up to 6-7 daily during shooting). He'd look at light and tone, finding solutions to how best to shoot each scene, creating an individual work for each, in a professional manner. The founders of film masterpieces in those Soviet days used their knowledge of classical principles, methods and styles, across the arts of painting, sculpture and graphics.

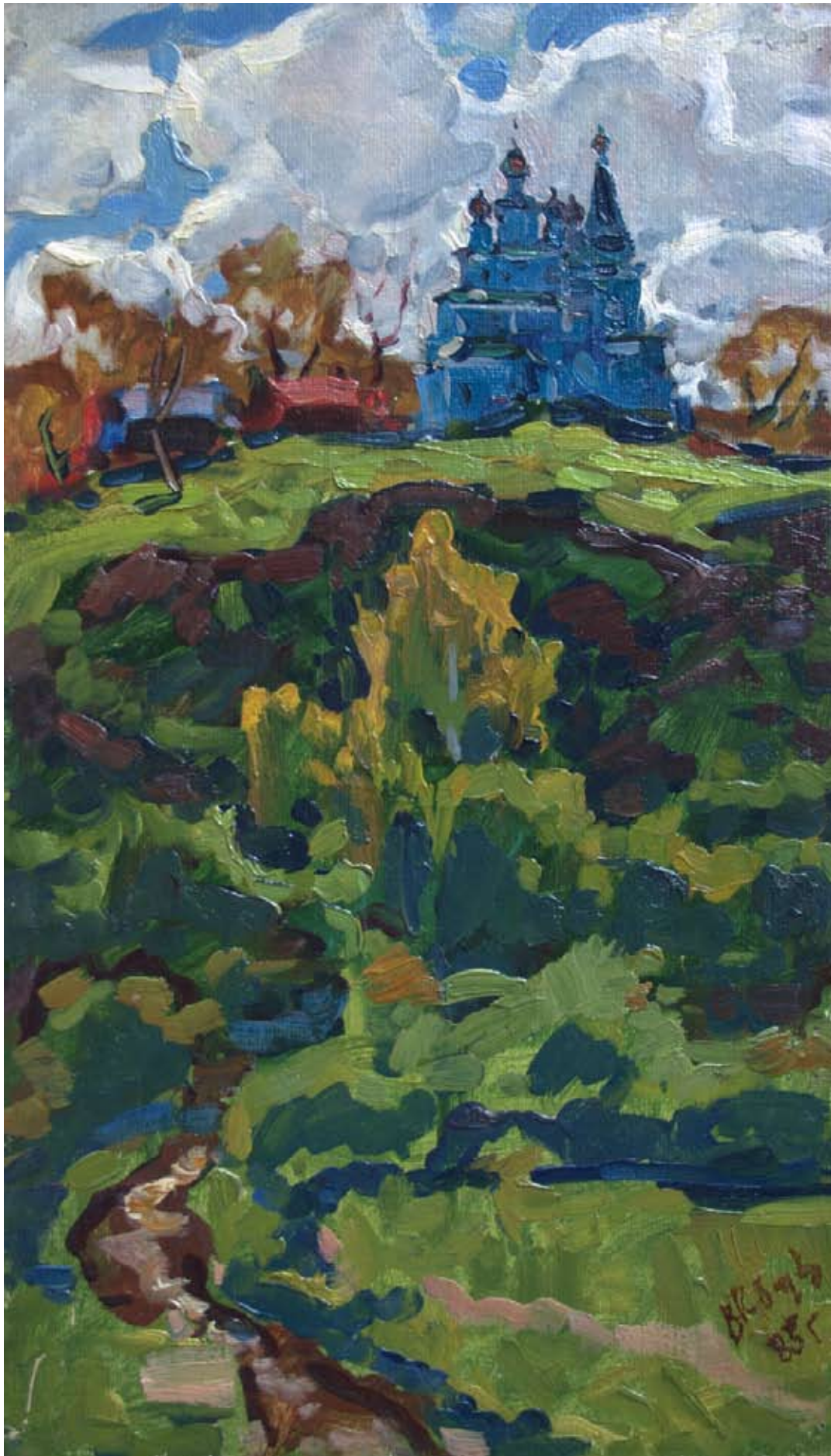
* * *

He knew the spirit of remote Russian places, being born in the village of Kochevo, in Yaransk District of Kirov Region. Vyacheslav Kubarev graduated from Gorki Art School (1957) and finished his art education in Moscow, at the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography. Having arrived in Minsk, he enjoyed many years of fruitful creativity, becoming an integral part of the history of art of Belarus. Besides 'Alpine Ballad' (1965), Vyacheslav Kubarev was art director for such films as 'Appropriate for Non-combatant Service' (1968), 'Time Presses' (1975), and 'I Guarantee Life' (1977), as well as the TV-series 'State Border' (1980-1988), 'Krugljansky Bridge' (1989), 'Eternal Husband' (1990), and 'Silly Woman' (1991).

While working on monumental films, his persona as a painter remained in the shadow of his persona as a director, though his landscape-painting legacy remains, showing strong plot and theme. He created a great many outstanding works, painting always and everywhere, at any free minute. His use of colour and brushwork, with meticulous attention to detail, came in useful for filming, creating storyboards. Meanwhile, his travel with shooting enabled him to see mountains and seas, woods and deserts, and the nature of the north and south. He was inspired by various picturesque places.

Artist Vyacheslav Kubarev's style remains attractive to us today.

By Veniamin **Mikheyev**



Vyacheslav Kubarev.
'Church over the Steep. The 18th century.' 1983