

Project proves to be unique

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Days of Vietnamese Culture in the Republic of Belarus sees National Art Museum host *Beauty of Vietnam* photo exhibition, displaying more than 50 shots **Page 9**



Alexander Lukashenko with participants at the national ball for university graduates

Ticket to the future for determined graduates

Prosperity, stability, and peaceful existence of Belarus are in the hands of our young people, noted President Alexander Lukashenko, speaking at the national ball for university graduates

The Head of State called on young people to seek their future in Belarus. "I say this not only because I am the president but because it is your land. You will always be needed and will always feel at home here. Your knowledge, skills and enterprising spirit will always be in de-

mand. Love your country and work for its benefit. Apart from achieving material wealth, you will earn the respect of your compatriots, which is more important than money,"

The President emphasised that the Belarusian nation may look to the future with confidence if young

people are willing to create opportunities in their own land. He asked them to appreciate the beauty and kindness of the people of their nation, and to remember the importance of respecting traditions passed down from their ancestors as well as making their own contri-

but ion for future generations.

The Head of State reminded those present that this is the Year of Youth in Belarus, he told the graduates, "This is not unimportant. Your role in all spheres of life is increasing. You are the future."

Such choice definitely brings special responsibility

By Vladimir Khromov

Presidential elections in Belarus must be open, fair, peaceful and in strict accordance with Belarusian legislation and international obligations, underlines Alexander Lukashenko at the session discussing topical domestic policy issues

Mr. Lukashenko notes that the Central Election Commission has submitted its request to hold Presidential elections on October 11th, 2015, stating, "I believe that our deputies will support the Central Election Commission's suggestion; most likely, elections will take place on October 11th." Mr. Lukashenko dismisses criticism from the political opposition concerning Presidential elections being held one month earlier than necessary. He says, "What do they mean by earlier? Only Parliament can define the date. As far as I understand, Parliament has never announced a date. The Central Election Commission

has only announced a deadline for carrying out Presidential elections."

The Head of State notes that all election campaigns must represent the will of the people. He emphasises, "A presidential election is the main political event for any country, but especially for ours, where the powers of the President are great. Voting in favour of a candidate, citizens of Belarus choose the destiny of the state: how we will progress and where to, as well as the method of development."

He considers that the forthcoming Presidential elections are a test for all bodies of power, 'before the people, and before those who entrust us with the destiny of Belarus'. He believes that the results will show public opinion and will guide our strategy of further development.

Mr. Lukashenko notes that the Central Election Commission will play the main role in holding the election campaign, as is dictated by our national legislation. "From the announcement of the Presidential elections, only the Central Election

Commission will be engaged in organising and holding the country's election campaign. All the others, including myself, will participate only as is required by the Central Election Commission. Any statements or initiatives should be co-ordinated with the

“We should prepare to hold Presidential elections primarily, openly, and, secondly, fairly. Thirdly, they should be peaceful and, the most important thing is that they strictly adhere to Belarusian legislation and the obligations we’ve undertaken before international organisations.

Chair of the Central Election Commission," the President notes. At the same time, local authorities will help solve economic and organisational issues, as usual.

"We face serious and responsible tasks. We should prepare to hold Presidential elections primarily, openly, and, secondly, fairly. Thirdly, they should be peaceful and, the most important thing is that they strictly adhere to Belarusian legislation and

the obligations we've undertaken before international organisations," Mr. Lukashenko states.

He notes that nobody is forbidden to observe the elections: 'neither internal observers, nor foreign'. "Let them watch and draw correspond-

ing conclusions," the President comments. "At the same time, I want to underline that political stability, peace and consent are basic elements of the consecutive social and economic development of the country. Peace, quiescence and stability are more important than any electoral campaign or any presidential, parliamentary or other elections. They are the destiny of our people and our country."

According to the Head of State,

disturbing events within the international arena, including near the borders of Belarus, inspire us to place security first. He is keen to see the heads of all authorities providing accurate and regular functioning of state apparatus, with strict operational discipline, and full co-ordination within the chain of command and power structures.

Mr. Lukashenko notes that the Central Election Commission and officials are obliged to take all measures to ensure that the elections are organised at the highest and most worthy level, with a detailed study of all aspects: from informing voters, to creating equal conditions for all candidates.

The Head of State has heard reports on volumes of financing for the forthcoming campaign, as well as questions of safeguarding public security and how election commissions are being formed, as well as issues of transparency of voting and counting of votes, and which international observers are being invited.



During the opening of the Trostenets memorial complex

Trostenets. Never again!

Gates of Memory open on evening of June 22nd, in Trostenets, as first stage of memorial complex marking largest death camp to exist in occupied USSR territory

By Alexander Pimenov

Trostenets stands alongside Auschwitz, Majdanek and Treblinka in having destroyed the Jews of Belarus, and of other countries across Europe. Partisans, undergrounders and captive Red Army soldiers were also killed there...

The evening on which the Gates of Memory memorial opened was both crowded and unusually silent (not only during the minute of silence). Eternity spoke to every heart, and mournful music wrung at the souls of those present. Wreaths were laid, with burning icon lamps inside: bouquets of wild flowers twined with dark ribbon. Meanwhile, light-emitting diode photos of prisoners from the camps,

including Trostenets, dissolved in each flame: invisible participants of the ceremony.

The commemorative gathering brought together victims of Nazism, veterans, and former prisoners of concentration camps and ghettos, as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps, and visitors from abroad. In this place, impregnated with blood and suffering, the President of Belarus laid his wreath, stating, "We revere and will always remember the victims of that war. The erection of the memorial in Trostenets is a point of honour for Belarusians."

The memorial is a public project, funded from charitable donations by individuals and organisations. A day of unpaid work (a subbotnik)

also helped in completing the project.

Mr. Lukashenko expressed words of deep gratitude to all who had helped with the work, saying, "Let this monument help unite people for the sake of good and mercy. Let it remind us, our children and our grandchildren, that we should appreciate and preserve peace, and public consent. Let it prevent us from forgetting the monstrous tragedies arising from Nazism ideals: intolerance and an aspiration to forcibly impose will. We should strive to preserve the principles of humanism and mutual respect, as well as our historical memory, so that these always triumph on Earth."

Mr. Lukashenko warned against attempts to rewrite the history of

the Great Patriotic War, commenting that, recently, people have asked why such memorials are relevant, suggesting that we set aside the past. "These seemingly harmless words hide issues of deeper concern; in forgetting, we rewrite war history, ignoring the feats of our people. We must not forget or give this Great Victory to anyone else. It is evidence of the greatness of the Soviet people, whose descendants we are."

At the close of the meeting, Mr. Lukashenko wished those gathered peace, happiness and a good life. He chatted with members of the diplomatic corps and clergy, but spent longer with veterans, saying, "Live, I beg of you. It is a pity that very few veterans remain alive today. Nevertheless, you live!"

Ticket to the future for determined graduates

(Continued from page 1)

Some of the university graduates will build careers in manufacturing businesses, while others will devote themselves to science, business or public administration. "We're interested in your success. The energy and determination of young people is an important resource in the development of the state. Your success is our success," said the President.

He noted that the time of responsibility has come for university graduates, when they have to master their chosen profession in practice, create families and to establish their own independent lives. He reminded the young people that they have had an opportunity to receive the most up to date knowledge and skills available. The state has taken care to provide each of them with a guaranteed job. "However, the diploma is only the first step in the formation of a true specialist. I hope that you'll be able to dedicate yourselves to knowledge, thirst for self-education and respect towards your teachers through your whole life," added Mr. Lukashenko.

The national ball for university graduates was also attended by representatives of the teaching staff. The President congratulated them, "A teacher performs a very important function in the life of society; they form the future of the nation. The successes of your pupils show that you manage to fulfil this difficult task."

The President concluded by reminding the graduates of the advantages of a peaceful Belarusian society, he said that, although he would not criticise those who wished to earn money abroad, this is their homeland and they will find no other place like it as it is the place where they were born.

Much work still lies ahead, with mutual desire to do it properly

Multi-vector character of Belarusian foreign policy confirmed by meeting with foreign diplomats

By Vasily Kharitonov

Belarus is ready to expand mutually beneficial co-operation with various countries, noted the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, on receiving the credentials of foreign ambassadors. The Head of State underlined the imminent celebration of the national holiday: the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus. He noted, "There are fateful dates in the history of every nation, which mark the launch of a new page in history. The liberation of Belarus from Nazi invaders, who condemned our people to annihilation, is such a milestone date for us."

Mr. Lukashenko pointed out the importance of diplomats working at a time of dynamic change for Belarus, as it reaches new heights in integration. According to the President, the development of the Eurasian Economic Union considerably expands the range of trade-economic co-operation with Belarus and enhances its investment attractiveness.

He underlined that Belarus attaches attention to interaction with CIS states. Receiving the credentials from the Ambassador of Turkmenistan, Mr. Lukashenko noted that, over the past five years, our bilateral relations with this country have reached a strategic partnership level.

Meanwhile, mutually beneficial ties with European Union member states are a focus of Belarus' foreign



President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, accepts credentials from 11 foreign ambassadors

policy. The Head of State stressed that Belarus is interested in collaboration with Belgium and seeks to systematise and enhance bilateral ties. Belarus sees promise in co-operation across various fields, including trade with Denmark, to which Mr. Lukashenko sees 'no obstacles'. He believes it's high time that full-format co-operation was restored with Sweden. Addressing the Swedish Ambassador, the President noted, "Welcome back!" Mr. Lukashenko especially noted the importance of collaboration with Sweden, a country with which Belarus has no problems. The Head of State emphasised that Belarus is interested in Swedish experience, which has proven useful across various spheres, particularly social and economic. The Swedish Ambassador agreed with Mr. Lukashenko, noting that our two countries have major prospects.

The President noted that Belarus and Ireland have significant potential for expanding bilateral ties. He asserted, "Active contacts in the humanitarian field and at interpersonal level have emerged, thanks to the sincere support of Ireland in helping mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. The recuperation of children from affected regions has created a fa-

vourable background for interaction in other areas."

Mr. Lukashenko noted the development of co-operation between Belarus and Latin American countries. Accepting credentials from the Ambassador of Argentina to Belarus, with concurrent accreditation, Mr. Lukashenko stressed our long-stand-

ing ties and successful co-operation within international organisations.

According to the President, Brazil could become Belarus' main trade-economic partner on the South-American continent. "We expect that the new Ambassador of Brazil will help considerably intensify economic, political and cultural ties between our countries," said the President of Belarus. Meanwhile, he believes that inter-

"One should not overestimate our role. We are simple people who want to live in peace with their neighbours. When war takes place near our borders, not only in a neighbouring country, but in a fraternal country, we cannot stand aside. This is a simple formula and the crux of our policy. We are not trying to play a geopolitical role; we cannot and should not do so."

action between Belarus and Uruguay requires more attention.

The President noted that political and mutually beneficial trade-economic ties with Middle Eastern and African countries should continue to be a priority for Belarus' foreign policy. Addressing the Ambassador of Kuwait to Belarus (concurrent),

Receiving credentials from the Ambassador of Jordan to Belarus (concurrent), the President said that major untapped potential exists regarding our mutually beneficial relations. Mr. Lukashenko expressed hope that the accreditation of the ambassador would inspire active bilateral ties.

Addressing the diplomats, the President said that business activities, initiatives and a creative approach to the resolution of the most complicated issues should bring tangible results, allowing us to reach new heights in bilateral relations, for the benefit of our nations.

Speaking about security and peace in the region, the Head of State noted, "One should not overestimate our role. We are simple people who want to live in peace with their neighbours. When war takes place near our borders, not only in a neighbouring country, but in a fraternal country, we cannot stand aside. This is a simple formula and the crux of our policy. We are not trying to play a geopolitical role; we cannot and should not do so. We do not want elderly people, children and women, who cannot leave the conflict zone, to die. This is our policy."

Joint, results-oriented work in Paris and Minsk

By Nina Vasilieva

Participants of the negotiations on the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis hold a brainstorming session

Heads of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs under the 'Normandy Format' have gathered in Paris, while a contact group and three working subgroups have assembled in Minsk. Martin Sajdik, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine, has joined the Minsk team of negotiators as a full member for the first time.

Replacing Heidi Tagliavini, Sajdik is a very expe-

rienced diplomat with a wide spectrum of knowledge: from international law to multilateral relations. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross have, for the first time, expressed their intention of participating in the trilateral group's work, which features experienced diplomats and is supported by Red Cross workers. This continues the traditions of the Minsk process; from the very beginning, it has followed objective principles regarding Ukrainian events.

"Worldwide, everyone understands that there is no better platform for a range of perspectives than that in Minsk," notes Kiev representative Leonid Kuchma. He believes that



Martin Sajdik replaced Heidi Tagliavini

the contact group is facing difficulties, noting that 'it stumbles and falls, yet still moves forward'. Of negotiations, he believes that they 'show the clear road to peace'. The 'Normandy Format' stands behind the contact group, offering its

support.

The meeting of ministers in Paris is hopeful that Minsk arrangements made on February 12th will receive practical realisation, since Europe has no other plan. However, time passes, as one participant of

the ministerial meeting pointed out, underlining that 'it's necessary to achieve results more quickly, to bring events to a close'.

On the eve of the Paris meeting, the presidents of Russia and France and the Chancellor of Germany chatted by phone on the 'need to exert pressure on both sides of the conflict'. Certain expectations are connected with the new representative of the OSCE, whose political premiere took place in Minsk.

Sessions of three subgroups have met to discuss settling the situation in the east of Ukraine, concerning political, humanitarian and economic problems. There are many pressing issues to

consider. Some are connected with restoring destroyed infrastructure, reconstructing the banking system, and making grants to Donbass. It is clear that we must work, foremost, on issues vitally important to public welfare, and the efficiency of such work directly depends on political progress: constitutional reform and decentralisation of power in Ukraine, guaranteed by the Minsk arrangements.

The most urgent themes on the agenda are connected with saving lives. The Red Cross is eager to help in seeking out and identifying missing people, and helping control the legal transfer of aid from international humanitarian missions.

Project proves to be unique

The construction of Minsk-Mir multi-functional centre should become a bright example

By Vladimir Vetrov

President Alexander Lukashenko, on meeting Bogoljub Karic — the co-owner of the international Braca Karic company, and a Serbian MP and the Honorary Consul of Belarus in Belgrade — Dragomir Karic, remarked that he understands that the company is a success in Belarus. “There are no major problems: no problems at all. You implement projects and fulfil your promises,” he said. The project to build the Minsk-Mir centre is of special importance. “We cannot fail to implement this project. I hope that it will prove substantial,” the President stressed.

“It would be great if all former Yugoslavian republics are involved in the project. I will welcome it,” Mr. Lukashenko said. The experience of Serbia and other former Yugoslavian states will benefit the project. “Yugoslavia was an advanced state and I believe that it suffered due to the fact that it found it too difficult to compete. It is now ambitious and nationally oriented, since the arrival of Josip Broz Tito,” he added.

The Minsk-Mir project should become an historical landmark. With this in mind, we should not protract its implementation. According to the Head of State, Belarus will do its utmost to lift all obstacles, using additional reserves as necessary. “This project should be a success. Let it be an example of co-operation to the whole Slavonic world,” Mr. Lukashenko concluded.

During the meeting, Bogoljub Karic noted plans to build an international finance centre at Minsk-Mir. The Serbian businessman is confident that the project will benefit from Belarus’ favourable position in relation to the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union.



Minsk-Mir development layout

Minsk-Mir named best property project

By Vasyly Voloshin

Multi-purpose Minsk-Mir complex wins prestigious Global RLI Awards 2015 in Dubai

The 10th jubilee edition of the Global RLI Awards gathered around 600 representatives of the world’s largest real estate development and investment companies. Dana Holdings presented its Minsk-Mir project, under the ‘Best Large-Scale Future Project’ nomination.

Gary Burrows, the Head of the Property and Shopping Malls Di-

vision at Dana Holdings, says that the project aroused much interest among jury members, who were judging 30 nominees for the main prize. Minsk-Mir was named best in Europe and fourth best worldwide, surpassed only by a world-famous company from Qatar and two Chinese real estate developers.

“Belarus enjoyed much attention at the exhibition, with many participants asking about our investment climate,” Mr. Burrows notes. He believes that there is great potential for foreign investment into Belarus’ commercial property, if legislative conflict can

be resolved. In Belarus, a real estate development company can only conclude agreements after a building has been commissioned and given a registered address. Meanwhile, the process begins in Europe at the designing stage, which helps real estate developers take into account the preferences of those planning to lease. “Otherwise, certain risks arise, and investors don’t like risks,” Mr. Burrows explains.

Construction at the Minsk-Mir complex is scheduled to begin in autumn 2015, with preparatory work already underway. Dana Holdings (Switzerland) is an in-

ternational investment and civil engineering group of companies that has been operating in Belarus since 2006. It is one of the country’s largest property developers and is widely recognised across the post-Soviet space. It began construction projects in the 1980s, during Soviet days, and later implemented a number of major projects across such CIS states as Russia, Belarus and Turkmenistan. In Belarus, Dana Holdings is building multifunctional complexes: Mayak Minska (Minsk Lighthouse), Minsk-Mir, Vivaldi, Chaikovskiy, Rakhmaninov and others.

From simple trade to high-tech interaction

Belarusian Embassy to Moscow hosting joint presentation of Japanese and Belarusian innovative potential

By Nikolay Alexeev

Heads of the largest Belarusian enterprises (MAZ, BelAZ, BATE, MTZ, Horizont, Vityaz and Gomselmash) recently joined 30 major Japanese companies for a trade fair. Guests included Japan Tobacco International, Marubeni Corporation, Mitsubishi Corporation, Panasonic Rus and JGC Corporation.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Russia, Tikhito Harada, stressed that Japanese companies in Belarus are growing in number following changes to the international situation and the emergence of the Eurasian Economic Union.

The head of the Belarusian diplomatic mission, Igor Petrishenko, replied that the potential of Belarus-Japan economic investment co-operation is far from being tapped. He notes that, apart from the Eurasian Economic Union, Belarus has access to the European Union.

In 2014, Belarusian-Japanese trade totalled \$244m, while Japan’s share of gross foreign direct investments into Belarus reached about 0.01 percent. The share of small European countries (whose scale is incomparable to that of Japan) was much larger: the Netherlands accounted for 13 percent of the FDI received by Belarus in 2014, the share of Cyprus was 6.2 percent and Austria’s contribution



ROMAN SHCHERBAKOV

During the meeting at the Belarusian Embassy in Russia

was 3.5 percent.

Among traditional Belarusian exports to Japan are potash fertilisers, fibre glass, devices for physical and chemical analysis, liquid crystals and lasers, dosimeter equipment, wire from non-alloy steel and Bellegpom manufactures.

Japanese companies have taken

part in major projects to modernise such Belarusian enterprises as Atlant, and Svetlogorsk’s Khimvolokno Production Association. Marubeni liaises with Mozyr Refinery, while Horizont Holding successfully co-operates with Toshiba.

The Vice President of the Japanese Business Club in Moscow, Yukio Mat-

sumoto, states that his organisation unites 193 companies interested in using the Eurasian Economic Union’s new opportunities, collaborating with enterprises in Russia and Belarus.

After Japan’s Fukushima-1 nuclear disaster, in 2011, our two states’ specialists in the field of nuclear emergency situations have been sharing their experience: co-operation aims to prevent future nuclear catastrophe (based on a new agreement signed between Belarus and Japan).

In addition, since 2004, Japan has allocated free financial aid of over \$2.8m to promote human security. Bilateral political dialogue is in full swing, as Mr. Harada underlines. He tells us, “In mid-July, I plan to visit Minsk, accompanying representatives of the Japanese Business Club. Our embassies in Moscow are now agreeing this visit. I hope that today’s presentation and July’s visit by Japanese to the Republic will bear fruit for our two states’ businessmen, encouraging our relations.”

Wise practical advice

Belarusian entrepreneurs have lacked a professional holiday, at least at state level, so are now choosing June 15th: this being the day, in 1988, when the first co-operative — Tsentr (Centre) — was registered

By Alexander Benkovsky

As representatives of business unions assert, the date is marked rather than celebrated. The Day of Entrepreneurial Revival aims to promote knowledge of the issues faced by small and medium-sized businesses, and the regulations governing them. Journalists recently chatted with business association heads from all over the country, to find out more.

At present, changes and supplements are being introduced to Presidential Directive #4 — 'On Additional Measures to Develop Entrepreneurial Initiative and Promote Business Activity'. The document was adopted in 2010 and, since then, has lost some of its topicality. Accordingly, its text needs correction, with new proposals introduced. Belarus' membership of the Eurasian Economic Union also needs to be addressed by the text.

Businessmen are now advising the Government on how best to update the document. In early spring 2015, 61 public organisations presented the National Business Platform of Belarus-2015, uniting all reasonable proposals on the reform of legislation governing small and medium-sized entrepreneurship.

The Presidium Chairman of the Republican Confederation of Entrepreneurship, Vladimir Karyagin, underlines, "Since our Platform's first existence, in 2006, Belarus has moved from 120th place to 57th in the World Bank's *Doing Business*



Private enterprises account for 70 percent of the production sector in the Buda-Koshelevo District

Rating. This indicates that we've been taking the correct path. We believe that the country's lack of independent energy resources needs to be addressed, alongside the need to attract investors via a favourable business climate. Accordingly, we need to further improve our tax legislation, fighting against red tape and simplifying business conditions."

As Mr. Karyagin explains, businessmen are mostly pleased with the results of the previous directive (#4). Over the past five years, over 190 normative acts have been

adopted, enabling entrepreneurs to overcome the most topical problems. Among the most significant reforms has been the reduction of activities requiring a licence. In addition, individual entrepreneurs are now allowed to employ up to three workers beyond their close relatives. These two measures alone have led to growth in business initiative. Every year, small and medium-sized businesses grow in number by 1-1.5 percent. In 2010, they accounted for around 18 percent of GDP and the figure is now closer to 25 percent.

Mr. Karyagin is convinced that acute issues remain regarding state-business interaction. For example, businesses wish to ease the process of state property privatisation, allowing inefficiently run state companies to be overseen by private firms. Businesses also wish to be able to secure rental of state property for a period of over three years. According to business unions, around 95 percent of firms currently operate in rented premises: an obstacle to attracting investment or bank loans. They are also vulnerable to fluctuations in rental fees.

Future-building investments

By Vladimir Khromov

Belaruskali to inject around \$350m in modernising production facilities in 2015

Funds are being directed towards construction and increasing capacity for granulated manufacturing in addition to some other projects. "We plan to complete the upgrade within the next two years, to increase our output of granulated product to 80 percent," notes Belaruskali's Director General, Ivan Golovaty. At the moment, Belaruskali's granulated production comprises slightly over 50 percent of its total output.

Recent modernisation has reduced capital consumption by almost half, according to Mr. Golovaty: a good level for the mining industry. He tells us, "Resources spent on upgrading bring results. Our refining is enjoying greater production efficiency: up from around 50-60,000 tonnes of ore per month to 100-130,000 tonnes today." The company is constructing a mining and processing factory in Petrikov, with the first stage launching in 2019. "I believe the project will promote the development of the potash sector in particular and the region in general. We expect to create new jobs for around 2,000 people," Mr. Golovaty asserts. He adds, "As for Belaruskali operation in H1, the company's work was stable, with facilities fully busy, producing fine and granulated products."

Belaruskali JSC is one of the largest producers and exporters of potassium fertilisers in the world. According to the International Fertiliser Industry Association, it accounts for one-seventh of the world's output of potassium fertilisers. Belaruskali exports to over 70 countries.

How to buy a business and not be disappointed

By Svetlana Devyatkova

Property prices and those for established businesses fall by 20 percent in Belarus, as sellers become more compliant

It's challenging, and risky, to create a new business from scratch, inspiring many to purchase an established concern. Belarusians are no exception, and a new database is here to help, listing small online shops and, even, large hotel complexes. It features no less than 300 businesses, and is updated daily, detailing cafes, restaurants, shops, hair salons, car-care centres, small-scale manufacturing enterprises and many others for sale.

Supply prevails over demand, leading to a 20 percent price fall of late. In fact, owners tend to overestimate the value of their business, notes Sales Manager Stepan Gusak. He tells us that value estimations can vary widely. "For example, a factory making rotary-cut veneer and plywood, based in the Gomel Region's Vasilevichi, was for sale for a long time

at \$400,000. After two years, a foreign firm bought the enterprise for just \$100,000. The price is always negotiable."

A bar or cafe in the centre of Minsk can be bought for between \$100,000 and \$300,000, depending on its size and location, equipment included, lease contract, and current interest rates. The service sphere has a wealth of attractive propositions.

Experts recommend ignoring sellers' initial price requests and to avoid taking their profit projections at face value. A cafe on sale for \$298,000 might come with a declaration of monthly profits of \$8,000, making it appear that the cafe would pay for itself within three years. However, it's best to examine the accounts carefully, and gain expert guidance, from someone experienced in public catering. Forecasts should take into account not only location but the number of seats available and the stream of customers.

Before concluding a deal, buyers should ask if they might participate in the business for



It's has become much easier to acquire a ready-made business

some time, to see its strengths and weaknesses, suggests Mr. Gusak. "You should also seek guidance from professional lawyers, auditors, bookkeepers and brokers, asking them to make a professional analysis of the business which you would like to buy."

As a rule, enterprises are 'sold' with accompanying personnel, whose expertise is often vital. Resignation of key

figures can lead to the collapse of a business. In fact, many businessmen create businesses purely with the idea of selling them once they reach the stage of making a profit. Mr. Gusak tells us of a client who created and then sold a business dealing in cargo transportation. He later opened an advertising agency and then, a few years later, switched direction again. His secret was in feeling confi-

dent in each sphere.

Most (80 percent) of all enterprises bought by Belarusians cost no more than \$50,000: those more expensive tend to be purchased by foreign investors. Among the major sites currently for sale are: three 'chain' grocery shops in Minsk, priced at \$1 million; an estate on Braslav Lakes, valued at \$2.2 million (including not only a large amount of land

but various wooden buildings and all necessary infrastructure); and an industrial base with hotel complex, priced at \$15 million.

Interesting projects are on offer in the IT sphere, with buyers able to purchase a successful domain name, good digital products and advertising contracts for just \$1,000 to \$3,000; such a business can pay for itself within a year, or even two months.

"The cheapest I recall was an online shop selling flowers, priced at just \$500," notes Mr. Gusak. "Some cost up to \$50,000, but there is one at the moment selling building materials (priced at \$5,000), an online shop selling furniture (\$4,000) and one selling household goods (costing \$1,500)."

Meanwhile, the snackbar at one bus terminal is on offer for \$35,000; the airsoft club is priced at a mere \$8,000.

If you have money and don't want to risk investing in a start-up, why not buy an operational business and develop it further.



Mlynok agro-estate is located in a picturesque spot on the banks of the Lesnaya River, close to Belovezhskaya Pushcha, in the Kamenets District

Agro-eco-estates should be competitive in all weathers

Agro-eco-tourism is on the rise in Belarus, bringing increased revenue and up to 20 percent more visitors, but who are the guests?

Valeria Klitsounova, Chair of Country Escape Public Association, tells us:

About 80 percent of those vacationing worldwide are taking part in agro-tourism within their own country. In Italy, more than half those visiting

are foreigners, having been encouraging tourism export since the 1960s. At the moment, 85 percent of Belarusian agro-tourists are local, about 11 percent are from Russia and the modest remainder comprise visitors from 64 countries. We'd like our country to specialise in agro-eco-tourism but, to do so, we must attain European standards, improve and expand services, and update décor. We should show foreigners our traditions and, of course, learn Eng-

lish, while solving questions of visas and infrastructure.

How are agro-estates developing?

We have 2,037 officially registered agro-estates. In comparison, in 2002, we had none. It's a breakthrough, although just 1,500 are operational. Lithuania and Latvia have less than a thousand. There are four levels of service offered by agro-estates: we give 'cockerels' instead of stars. Meanwhile, big businesses are

taking part in agro-eco-tourism projects, which is a great step forward, bringing a catalyst for rural development. We need to make sure we're offering recreational activities suitable for all weathers, and that we have enough small restaurants and cafes, rental agencies and local museums reflecting the way of life of Belarusians. You can learn traditional dances, and find out about ancient customs. We're also making a culinary map of our country.

Many people complain that agro-estates become booked up for weekends, holidays and the summertime and, when they're free, prices are very high.

New sites are opening and are yet to draw a regular customer base so, if you book in advance, places are available. It tends to cost 15-50 Euros per night for an 'inclusive' stay, with prices reflecting the level of cuisine offered, as well as the degree of luxury and services.

Medal for collider

Large Hadron Collider set to bring new discoveries, while researchers work on new project

By Dmitry Gomelsky

A team of international specialists is now creating the NIKA collider, at Dubna's Joint Institute of Nuclear Research. The innovation is expected to be no less impressive than the LHC, upon which Belarusian specialists worked. Using this nuclear collider, scientists plan to model the first moments of the Universe, revealing its structure and the secrets of dark matter, dark energy, black holes and additional spatial measurements. There will also be practical applications, such as testing electronics for spacecraft, transmutation of radioactive waste, and new approaches to energy generation.

The project is to be launched in 2017 and, unsurprisingly, nuclear energy scientists are keenly anticipating results. Belarusian scientists are responsible for developing the most important section of the electro-magnetic calorimeter: a palm-sized gamma detector, which allows the massive collider to 'see'. The Deputy Director of the BSU's National Scientific-Educational Centre of Particle Physics and High



Mikhail Baturitsky and his detector

Energy, Mikhail Baturitsky, tells us that the device has unique microcircuits developed by the University and produced by Integral JSC's Transistor branch.

The jury of St. Petersburg's 2015 Technical Fair recently praised the gamma detector, to which it awarded a gold medal. Belarusian State University scientists also won 'gold' for their innovative device measuring bacteria vitality, using bio-chips, which detects infectious agents many times more quickly than traditional means and has

wide application at clinics and hospitals treating diverse infectious diseases. It will also help assess the efficiency of antimicrobial drugs and allow rapid diagnosis of flu viruses.

A Belarusian-developed device to study airglow was also awarded. The optical spectrometer, aimed primarily at geophysical research, including earthquake prediction, is already operating on board of the International Space Station and, according to cosmonauts, is proving useful and efficient.

Developers of a unique X-ray microscope also enjoyed success at the Russian fair,

alongside those responsible for pharmaceutical temozolomide and the anti-tumour drugs temobel and temodex (used for chemotherapy treatment of brain tumours) and various nutritional supplements. Overall, BSU scientists won 11 gold medals, and other Belarusian universities participating in the fair saw similar success. The Belarusian National Technical University took the prestigious, special prize for developing innovative metal ceramic covering technologies (although it won fewer gold medals).



Customs officers have to tackle unusual cargo

Checking the unusual cargo

By Tatiana Kondratieva

Grodno customs officers detain resident of Germany trying to transport 28 mammoth tusks and 400kg of bone across Belarusian-Polish border

Workers at the Bruzgi-2 customs checkpoint have discovered illegal goods in a Volkswagen car, following their suspicions being raised over the authenticity of documents for objects of cultural value. The Deputy Head of Grodno Regional Customs, Nikolay Bogaleysha, comments that thorough checks are always made before cargo is released.

"A great variety of documents limit even excavations so when our officers saw almost 30 polished and carved tusks without a certificate specifying that they had no cultural value, we were suspicious."

The German national explains that he has long been collecting such objects for personal pleasure, without commercial intention and notes that the tusks are small in size, being skilfully pasted together from fragments. However, even the smallest parts of ancient animals have value, so Grodno customs officers are now investigating the situation and its legality, as well as the authenticity of documents.

Important to fulfil dreams, even when travelling by motorcycle

Former Moscow resident settles down in Belarusian village and opens free museum of motorcycles

By Yelena Begunova

No other museum of the kind exists in Belarus. Vladimir Myachin has devoted his life to his unusual hobby and is truly altruistic, exchanging Moscow for a village near Vitebsk. He spends his own money buying rarities and has opened his museum using his own savings. He's always ready to travel to the regional centre (15km away) to offer free tours for visitors, however small in number. He sees nothing unusual, saying, "I don't understand why people are so surprised on learning that I was born in Moscow. Really, it's great to make money in Moscow but I prefer to bring up my children in Belarus. Moreover, it's easier for me to indulge my favourite hobby here."

Vladimir used to work at Moscow's Museum of Industrial Culture but, on moving to Yemino, bought a wooden house and was given free access to a former clubhouse. Vladimir brought his collection from Russia and began repairing the abandoned building, fixing doors and preparing a plan of further action. He was then told that the site was being sold and, although the price was modest, his family had little money to spare, especially as his wife was expecting their third baby.

As an alternative, Mr. Myachin began renting premises within a Vitebsk multi-storey car park. Around a month ago, he opened his museum,

without solemn ceremony, although some journalists and guests attended. A few donated exhibits (or sold them for a modest sum); there are always people who have unwanted items in their garage! Now, the museum barely has enough space for its growing collection. Besides motorcycles, there are various Soviet-era artefacts on show: toys, cameras, TV sets, cassette recorders, books and, even, a section of a 'pioneer' railway (one of the most complicated and expensive electro-mechanical toys from the 1950s). The best solution seems to be the renting of premises in Vitebsk, on affordable



Exhibits at the museum

terms, with a 5-10 year guarantee. However, these are plans for the future.

Recently, Vladimir bought the village's former first-aid building to house the museum. Of course, he understands that it's not easy for city residents to reach Yemino, risking the loss of hundreds of potential visitors.



Museum host Vladimir Myachin shows his rare exhibits

Nevertheless, it has been his dream to run his museum from beside his own home. Several years ago, Vladimir's wife presented him a simple drawing for his birthday, featuring a country cottage, a pram with a baby in the garden and tourists hurrying to visit the Museum of Motorcycles (depicted in the other half of the house). Mr. Myachin comments, "We have accommodation and have bought a pram: not long ago, our third child was born and others will follow."

Vladimir explains that he began collecting motorcycles around 7 or 8 years ago, having become interested in the history of Soviet motorcycles while in hospital, recovering from a spinal fracture. It's now his passion, for which he has created his own Internet site, attracting others who share his interest.

A rare MP-044 was his first exhibit, although it lacked an engine. He purchased it in Moscow, answering an advertisement. Later, more exhibits were added. They now number over 30, coming from several differ-

ent cities. His permanent collection is unrivalled in Belarus and Russia and features some extremely rare motorcycles. Some of his exhibits are prototypes, existing in very small numbers. Vladimir is especially proud of his unique ZiD, which was produced especially for an exhibition in Russia's Kovrov; he bought it when the local museum closed. His other pride and joy is a MV-042M Lvovyanka, in addition to the first B-901 Kharkov-made motorcycle and a Riga-2 Gauja vehicle, around 50 years old.

"Many old vehicles can be found in Belarus of course. Not long ago, a Vitebsk resident donated a Riga-12. People often part with their old belongings with pleasure. Look at this teddy bear. It's heavy and filled with sawdust but children played with it around five decades ago. I call it Aristarkh and it now protects my house," says Vladimir.

We wish Mr. Myachin every success with his private museum, hoping that it will attract worthy attention and support.

Impossible to mix cards

By Victor Andreev

New textbooks for teaching Great Patriotic War history in Belarusian schools

The first specialised school atlas, entitled — *The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People (in WWII context)* — has been published in Belarus, to honour the 70th anniversary of the Great Victory. Collated by Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor Alexander Kovalenya, its historical facts have been confirmed by archive documents of recent years. He explains, "This is the first edition of its kind, with dates, names and events described visually, to better allow remembrance. The 21 maps describe the activity of Red Army troops, partisans and undergrounders within Belarusian territory, while disclosing reasons for WWII and its events, in our country and worldwide, until 1945. Almost every page is illustrated." Belarusian schools will launch the book's use from September 1st.

As the Acting Editor-in-Chief of Belkartografia, Galina Lyakhova, stresses, the new maps have been compiled under the slogan: 'Nobody and Nothing is Forgotten'. She explains, "We've printed a map of commemorative places — entitled *70 Years of Great Victory* — in Russian and English. It indicates the location of war memorials and those settlements awarded 'For Bravery and Endurance during the Great Patriotic War', at a scale of 1:1100000. It



also shows the locations and names of major concentration camps, places where people were mass murdered, and places where children were forcibly kept as blood donors for German soldiers. We need to know the truth about that war — using accessible textbooks. Maps are one of the best resources."

Archeologists open historical mysteries

By Victor Korbut

Scientific expedition makes number of discoveries in ancient Polotsk

The oldest church in Belarus, which still stands today, is Polotsk's Transfiguration Church, dating from the 12th century. Its frescoes are the originals painted when the walls were first erected. They are the only such fully preserved works in full. It is unique even in Eastern Europe. Recent excavations have shown how it was once larger than it appears today, completely altering our understanding.

It was believed that the church received little alteration until the

early 19th century, when its façade, in classical style, was simplified. However, exploration of the foundations tells another story, explains Denis Duk, who has been heading the dig. The Pro-rector of Polotsk State University for Educational Work, tells us, "The foundations of the church have been studied by teachers and students at our university, headed by Alexey Kots, working with experts from St. Petersburg's Hermitage: Yevgeny Torshin and Piotr Zykov. It turns out that the building had galleries along its sides, and there was an extension in front of the main facade; these significantly increased the vol-



The seal of Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya

ume of the building. Under the galleries was a crypt for burial, which was concealed by the col-

lapse of the galleries." To date, reconstructions have been false, and the church should be restored in light of new discoveries.

During excavations, scientists have been lucky more than once. In the crypt to the right of the main entrance, they have found the seal of St. Yevfrosiniya: the founder of the church and the nearby monastery. Inscribed on the seal, it reads: "Good Heavens, Help Your Servant Yevfrosiniya." How did the seal of the Holy Belarusian saint find its way here? Mr. Duk implies that it came from some other place, from which soil was brought to fill the crypt.

Another historical mystery has been revealed during excavations: the remains of terracotta floor tiles, showing evidence of fire damage. These may date from the earlier days of the church, although we cannot yet determine whether the predecessor was of stone or wood. Fragments of frescoes have also been unearthed, showing that the 12th century church was painted inside and out.

The dig continues, and the decision on whether to reconstruct the church will be guided according to findings. The main question is whether reconstruction is as close as possible to the 12th century original.

Showdown over Uber: taxi drivers shut down roads around Paris

Roads around Paris became car parks as French taxi drivers blockaded routes to the airport and the main ring road around the city in a protest against Uber

Riot police intervened as the protest turned violent, with reports cab drivers were seeking out and harassing chauffeurs of the ride-sharing service.

France's Interior Minister called for a nationwide clamp-down on the UberPOP service, siding with taxi drivers who argue the service represented unfair competition.

The protests forced those arriving at Orly and Charles De Gaulle airports to walk between terminals to avoid the travel chaos, though some had little sympathy for the strike.

The standoff centres on a new French law which requires all chauffeurs to carry special licenses



Taxi drivers, who are on strike, block the access of Nice International Airport

es and insurance. Uber is awaiting a ruling on from the constitutional court on the legality of its services.

Pascal Wilder, Secretary-General of the National Federation of

Independent Taxis explained that, 'Uber provides employment to non-registered workers who take taxi driver's work. So we want it to stop and unfortunately we had to demonstrate because all of the

negotiations we have had with the government were unsuccessful'.

Though the ride-sharing service has been illegal in France since January, drivers face up to 2 years in jail and a hefty fine.

Finland posts worst unemployment figures in 13 years

Finland posted its worst unemployment figures in 13 years in May, up 1.5 percent compared to March and April to reach 11.8 percent

That's a 1.1 percent increase year-on-year, and worse than forecast. Youth unemployment soared to 36.3 percent, up from 28.6 percent in April.

Recently, Finland revised its 2015 GDP growth figures down to 0.3 percent as the Finance Ministry noted that exports were struggling to return to healthy levels, and that the continued high unemployment was dragging the economy back. Slightly better figures are expected for 2016 and 2017, when growth is forecast to hit 1.4 percent.

Stimulus package to boost MERS-hit South Korean economy

South Korea has announced a stimulus package to boost its sluggish economy which has been hit by an outbreak of the MERS virus

Twelve billion Euros (\$13.5 billion) is to be injected to offset reduced growth forecasts. The Finance Ministry said it expected growth to be 3.1 percent in 2015, down from a projection of 3.8 percent last December.

The latest outbreak of the viral disease has hit consumer spending and the leisure and tourism industries. More than 120,000 foreign tourists have cancelled trips to South Korea over the past month. News of the stimulus package comes as the country's Health Ministry announced two more deaths from MERS — bringing the total to 29 in the latest outbreak — and one more confirmed case. "As of June 25th, among the 180 confirmed MERS patients, 74 have been cured and discharged from hospital. On that basis, the rate of patients discharged is a little over 40 percent," said South Korean Health and Welfare Assistant Minister.

Alfa Romeo revival likely to burn cash not rubber, warn analysts

Alfa Romeo is about to launch its new medium-sized car as it takes on the BMW 3 series and other rivals, but industry analysts warn the iconic Italian company's projected sales figures are way above average predictions

The Guilia has petrolheads panting, and eight more new models are expected by 2018 for a minimum five billion Euro investment as owner Fiat Chrysler rolls out its long-awaited revival of the brand. However analysts say the revival will burn capital and has no chance of making a profit through the first product cycle, especially as Alfa has little market presence outside Europe.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Migrants disembark from the Norwegian vessel

Migration: divisions emerge over EU deal

Details are emerging of strong differences of opinion between Europe's leaders as they try to address the problems caused by soaring numbers of migrants

For seven hours in Brussels, they debated the relocation of 40,000 Syrian and Eritrean refugees currently in Italy and Greece, along with another 20,000 waiting outside EU borders. A voluntary scheme with no mandatory quotas has finally been agreed.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi is not afraid to let his anger show. "If there had been no solidarity over a small number like 40,000," he said, "this would have been an insult from Europe."

Migration is an acute issue for Hungary, where thousands enter by land from the east. The country, along with Bulgaria, has been granted an exemption from the new deal. The UK has opted out completely.

Austrian Chancellor Werner Faymann says seven countries could not accept the strict formulation as proposed. "It was a very emotional debate," he told reporters, "which proves the time has come for the heads of government to have this discussion."

Latest figures from the EU show that 153,000 migrants have been counted on Europe's borders so far this year. That is a 149 percent increase from 2014.

Tiny gecko could hold secret to new water repellent materials

It is a humble Australian reptile boasting a special talent. Biologists have discovered that the skin of the box-patterned gecko, which hails from Western Queensland, can repel water.

They think there is a lot of potential, if the structure can be replicated. The skin is also self-cleaning, resists dirt and bacteria — and is compatible with human cells.

"Because it can grow, can accept human skin cells or cells in general, you can sort of envisage them as really, really, great coatings on implants," explained Jolanta Watson, from the University of the Sunshine Coast. "It's like having soda water in your glass and the bubbles effervescing, essentially. I thought, wow, that's very cool, it's a gecko, 'geckovesence.'"

Tiny bumps covered in minuscule hairs on the gecko's skin collect water and push it away. It is this process that makes it hard for bacteria to survive. Researchers are excited about possible industrial, scientific

and medical uses.

"It's probably also very useful for us if we could harness that kind of surface, because we could use it on operating tables, and bandages," said Professor Lin Schwarzkopf, from James Cook University.

Researchers are working on a product with the same ability as gecko skin — a material that can repel water, coffee and even red wine. There could be implications for durable water repellent coatings and textiles. With more funding, it is hoped gecko-inspired products will make it onto the market soon.



Bright features of Vietnamese exotics and Vietnamese character

Days of Vietnamese Culture in the Republic of Belarus sees National Art Museum host *Beauty of Vietnam* photo exhibition, displaying more than 50 shots

By Veniamin Mikheev

Remote Vietnam is located thousands of kilometres from Belarus, in South East Asia, yet is becoming ever closer in many ways. Those who visit the *Beauty of Vietnam* photo exhibition at the National Art Museum are sure to feel greater personal connection as a result, viewing sites, traditions, culture and everyday life across this multi-faceted country.

Vietnam's population is almost 10 times greater than that of Belarus, at 90 million people, and the exhibition shows us that their ethos is to be hard-working and hospitable.

The *Beauty of Vietnam* photo exhibition in Minsk is almost an invitation to visit Vietnam, with its rich cultural heritage, formed over millennia, noted Vietnam's Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, Huynh Vinh Ai, speaking at the event launch.

Undoubtedly, Vietnam is rich in natural landscapes and man-made monuments, many of which are listed by UNESCO for their value within world cultural and natural heritage. Among the best known is Ha Long Bay; drowning in sunbeams and open to the winds, its beauty is breath-taking. Chang'an natural and historical site is another major tourist draw, as are the old streets of the once bustling seaport of Hội An. There are photos of the

world's biggest cave, ancient feudal cities and picturesque bays.

Meanwhile, to see this beauty with their own eyes, Belarusians may decide to fly to Vietnam. Their stay will be visa-free for up to 15 days (as adopted by the Vietnamese Government from July 1st).

Belarus' Deputy Culture Minister, Vasily Chernik, notes that the photos reveal the wonderful atmosphere of this country, with its rich history, and unique natural, architectural and cultural monuments. They also show how Vietnam is developing, drawing attention from countries worldwide. The exhibition in Minsk underlines the traditionally friendly relations and collaboration between Vietnamese and Belarusian peoples.

Mr. Chernik is confident that the *Beauty of Vietnam* exhibition, in particular, and the Days of Vietnamese Culture in Belarus, as a whole, will drive forward interaction between our two



At the *Beauty of Vietnam* exhibition at the National Art Museum of Belarus



WORD TO WORD

Vasily Chernik,
Belarus' Deputy
Culture Minister:

The Days of Vietnamese Culture in Belarus began with a most beautiful photo exhibition, entitled 'Beauty of Vietnam'. Those who have already seen it have witnessed first hand the true beauty of this country, which boasts rich history, unique culture and hardworking people.

Do Van Mai,
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic
of Vietnam to the Republic of Belarus:

This exhibition has major importance for Belarusian audiences, allowing them to see how wonderful the country is and learn more about it. Friendship between Vietnam and Belarus began during Soviet times and continues today. In future, it will only strengthen, and not only in the political and economic spheres.

Symbol of courage and grief, symbol of commemoration

By Vladimir Velikhov

Brest Fortress Chronicle in Pictures exhibition opens in Moscow

Alongside photographs, the exhibition includes unique artefacts from the defence of Brest Fortress and family archive materials, revealing the lives of those who stood bravely.

"Today, Brest Fortress is recognised as an historic monument,"

notes the Deputy Director for Scientific Work at the Brest Hero-Fortress Memorial, Larisa Bibik. Speaking at the opening ceremony, she announced that the site is not only a 'symbol of courage and grief' but of 'commemoration'. "This must be preserved, and the exhibition will help us to do so," she emphasised.

The exhibition has already toured the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland and Kazakhstan and is now

on display for the Russian people. Piotr Kotelnikov, a veteran of the defence of Brest Fortress, stressed his satisfaction at attending the exhibition launch, while noting that it brings back memories of those 'horrible first days of the war'.

The Brest Fortress Chronicle in Pictures exhibition is being held as part of actions to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Great Patriotic War Victory.

Returning with honorary diplomas

By Olga Naumenkova

Belarusfilm National Film Studio awarded at 20th Cinema — For Children International Festival in Samara

Incredible Move, directed by Alexander Anisimov, has won a diploma from the children's collective jury 'For Original Plot, Humour and Sincerity'. Meanwhile, the Belarusian Video Centre Studio of Special Projects' doc-

umentary, entitled *Keepers of Heritage*, directed by Gennady Ryabtsev, has been given a diploma 'For Participating in the International Programme'. The Belarusian Video Centre Studio of Special Projects also won a diploma for its documentary entitled *Smersh: Friends' Radio Game*, directed by Yevgeny Setko, 'For Participating in the 'Glory of the Motherland' Festival Programme Dedicated to the 70th Anniversary of the Great Victory'.

Most spiritual music

18th *Dulcimers and Harmonica Playing International Folk Festival* brings together Belarusian players of the harmonica, cembalo and pipes, Lithuanian kankles and Estonian kannels, as well as the Russian balalaika and hand-rattlers

By Yuliana Leonovich

A hundred guests from Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia joined a dozen Belarusian groups for the wonderful celebration of folk music, hosted by the Postavy District. In fact, the town of Postavy has been gathering musicians for 25 years, reviving forgotten traditions, developing authentic art and preserving our musical cultural heritage. Even Vitebsk's *Slavianski Bazaar* has only been organised for 24 years. Despite borders and distances, all speak a common language: that of folk music.

The folk festival originally began in Vitebsk, later moving to Mogilev, and then to Postavy in 1992, notes the Chairman of the Postavy District Executive Committee, Victor Guto-

rov. He underlines, "Our district is perhaps the only place in the country where the diatonic cembalo continues to be played. We have a foundation team teaching the instrument, to preserve the rich musical traditions of the past. The Postavy District is home to such unique groups as *Gruzdauskiya Muzyki* and *Paazerie*, which enrich our land's cultural life."

Tatiana Syrovezhkina, who heads *ArtGame-Quintet*, at the Gomel District's Uritskoe children's school of arts, began learning the cembalo at the age of 7, and has been dedicated ever since. She tells us, "Since childhood, I've been enchanted by the sound of the cembalo, which helps me to relax when I'm not at work. We established *ArtGame-Quintet* in 2010, and immediately decided to arrange classical and



Festival in Postavy attracts increasing numbers of new bands each year

modern compositions for folk instruments, bringing together international and national art."

Alexey Androsik, who heads Nesvizh District's

Anoshkayskiya Muzyki band (having first joined as a member), plays the accordion. However, for the festival, he took up the Belarusian harmonica. He

comments, "After graduating from Minsk's College of Arts, I returned to my native school, where we have a harmonica group. I began learning and can now play

every instrument within our group: the pipe, sopilka, zhaleika and basetya. I'm gradually sharing my knowledge with the younger generation."

Among Mr. Androsik's pupils is musical genius Artem Derevyago, aged 15. At the age of 6, he joined the children's school of Arts. He failed to fall in love with the first instrument presented to him, the button accordion, but found his soul-mate in the harmonica. He mastered it quickly, then joined *Anoshkayskiya Muzyki* band. Artem is keen to continue on a musical path, wanting to study at Baranovichi's Musical College and then become a teacher. "If all goes well, I'll become an artiste," he muses.

Postavy residents adore their festival and love to welcome guests, being proud of their wonderful concert forum. People's Artist Mikhail Kosinets, who heads the jury, notes that it's no easy task gathering several thousand people, and more come each year. He explains, "Folk music will remain alive as long as our human soul exists. Looking back 25 years ago, we were planning our revival of forgotten traditions. We no longer need to worry that our traditions will be lost, having welcomed performances from over 1,500 masters of folk music and poetry. I'm convinced that all is well while such bands exist as Minsk's *Dudaryki*, which won the 2015 Grand Prix. Our talented younger won't allow these traditions to remain in the past."

Pipers rock the old Bright performance at prestigious contest

By Irina Osokina

Dudarski Fest, held in Dudutki Museum Complex of Ancient Folk Crafts and Technologies, promotes the rare and extraordinary

The festival has existed since 1992, when Belarusian musicians began to revive the playing of rare folk music and folk instruments. The initiator producer of the festival is the founder and leader of *Stary Olsa* band, Zmiter Sosnovski. He first brought together performers from Scotland, Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, with only two pipers among them. Now, after two decades, the performance level of our musicians continues to impress foreign visitors, and is a living legacy of our ancestors' cultural heritage. It's a monstrous injustice that, while the Scottish bagpipes are known worldwide, those from Belarus are known only to a handful of folk dancing music enthusiasts. Mr. Sosnovski is convinced that our native bagpipe produces a better tone than its Scottish brother. He notes, "Belarusian and Scottish bagpipes differ in structure and in tone. The Scottish is rather squeaky and shrill, being designed to



Dudutki 'plunged' into ethno-culture

carry sounds to maximum range. The Belarusian pipes are sweeter to the ear, so you can listen all day."

The folk museum of Dudutki is a thriving celebration of European antiquity and historical reconstruction, surprising visitors with its professionalism. It is an example of Belarus being worthy of being known for more than the European media's criticism.

Nadezhda Kucher graduated from the Music Studies Department of Minsk State Musical College (named after Mikhail Glinka). She continued her studies at St. Petersburg's State Conservatoire, graduating from the Solo Singing Department in 2011. Nadezhda has claimed victory from among 20 of the world's most promising opera singers. The 2015 competition saw 350 candidates from all over the world apply, with finals hosted by Cardiff's St. David's Hall. Her triumph brings her a prize of £15,000, as well as the opportunity to perform music by Scottish composer John Lunn, at the BBC Proms Festival, in 2016. Nadezhda was born in Minsk and

Bright performance at prestigious contest

By Anastasia Shoplya

Nadezhda Kucher of Belarus wins BBC Cardiff Singer of the World international competition for opera singers

Nadezhda has claimed victory from among 20 of the world's most promising opera singers. The 2015 competition saw 350 candidates from all over the world apply, with finals hosted by Cardiff's St. David's Hall. Her triumph brings her a prize of £15,000, as well as the opportunity to perform music by Scottish composer John Lunn, at the BBC Proms Festival, in 2016. Nadezhda was born in Minsk and

graduated from the Music Studies Department of Minsk State Musical College (named after Mikhail Glinka). She continued her studies at St. Petersburg's State Conservatoire, graduating from the Solo Singing Department in 2011.

Nadezhda has won prizes at the *Magutny Bozha* (Mighty God) International Festival of Sacred Music (Belarus), as well as at the Bibigul Tulegenova contest (Kazakhstan), at the Irina Bogacheva contest and at the *Golden Mask* competition (Russia). Moreover, she took the Grand Prix and the People's Choice Award at an international contest of vocalists in the Netherlands.

Nadezhda first appeared on the operatic stage in 2007, playing Marfa in Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Tsar Bride*, at St. Petersburg's State Conservatoire. In 2009, she performed at the Mikhailovsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, and gave her first solo concert in 2010, at the Beijing Concert Hall.

Ms. Kucher is a soloist with the Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre and represented her native Belarus at the prestigious BBC contest of opera singers.



Nadezhda Kucher

Good place in medal standings

First European Games close with a glittering ceremony at Baku's Olympic Stadium

By Yegor Glebov

The closing event gathered high-ranking foreign guests, famous figures from the world of Azerbaijani culture and arts, and volunteers who'd helped the games to take place. A special area was allocated to sporting delegations from the major European countries. The organisers decided not to hold a traditional parade of teams; instead, athletes marched along the Olympic Stadium's line together. Nikita Tsmiy, a silver medal holder at the Baku event, took the Belarusian flag to the stadium.

The Head of the European Games' Organisational Committee and the Azerbaijani President's wife, Mehriban Aliyeva, expressed their thanks to sportsmen, volunteers and fans. "We are proud to host the 1st European Games. During the years of its independence, our country has achieved a high level of sporting develop-



European Games silver medallist Nikita Tsmiy

ment and I wish to thank athletes, fans and especially volunteers; without the latter's help, it would have been impossible to hold the European Games at such a high level," she said.

The President of the European Olympic Committees, Patrick Hickey, announced the Baku Games closed, noting that the continental sports arena in Azerbaijan would become a home for further multi-sport events.

At these 1st European Games, the Belarusian team

gained 43 medals (10 gold, 11 silver and 22 bronze), occupying seventh place in the medal table. The greatest number of medals were won in wrestling (free and Greco-Roman) which netted a total of 8. Seven medals were achieved in sambo, 6 in callisthenics and 5 medals in kayaking and canoeing. Our cyclists also showed their skill, winning two gold medals in two events. Belarus shared her seventh place with France (regarding the total number of medals). For



During the closing ceremony of the first European Games



European Games silver medallist Olga Namazova

silver medals alone, we shared eighth place with Spain and came fourth in the table for the number of bronze medals. Melitina Stanyuta (calisthenics) won the greatest number: one silver and three bronze. Meanwhile, Stepan Popov triumphed in the under 74kg sambo category. The Belarusian confidently defeated his

Azerbaijani rival.

At the Games, Belarus was represented by 149 sportsmen who performed in acrobatics, boxing, free and Greco-Roman wrestling, cycling (track), beach volleyball, gymnastics, calisthenics, canoeing and kayaking, judo, swimming, synchronised swimming, diving, trampoline, archery, table tennis, rifle and pistol shooting, fencing, badminton, karate, sambo, taekwondo and triathlon. Among the athletes coming from Belarus were many winners and prize holders of the Olympic Games and the World and European championships.

According to the event's organisational committee data, around 3,000 reporters (including 900 foreign) covered the Games, while 50 TV companies from all over the world were responsible for broadcasting.



Stepan Popov helps his rival leave the mat

Fans stand up to applaud Belarusian sambo wrestler

By Kirill Pirogov

Belarusian Stepan Popov wins under 74kg sambo gold at 1st European Games in Baku, after demonstrating 'fair play'

In the final struggle against Azerbaijan's Amil Gasimov, the Belarusian realised a strong hold while enduring a painful leg hold from his rival. The wrestler's faces demonstrated great discomfort, but Stepan's hold proved stronger. The Azerbaijani finally conceded and was found not to be able to walk properly, which placed Stepan in a difficult position. However, the audience was soon chant-

ing: 'Belarus! Belarus! Belarus!'

Stepan carried his opponent out of the hall to the training zone and, later, helped Gasimov walk to the awards ceremony: a sight that conquered audiences' hearts. Stepan notes that injuries are common from such holds, and all sportsmen are ready to help each other, being 'brothers in the world of sambo'. "I suffered similarly during the World Championship," he explains.

Stepan Popov captured gold in the under 74kg category, while Amil Gasimov claimed silver. Interestingly, Amil is the current world champion and Stepan is a European champion.

Hopes for games in pre-Olympic qualification

By Igor Grishin

The Belarusian women's national basketball squad left without medals at EuroBasket-2015, with Anatoly Buyalsky's squad being defeated by Spain — 58:74

The two rival teams met previously in a bronze medal match at the European Championships. In 2009, the Belarusians lost with a gap of 7 points. Six years later, the teams faced each other again; Spaniards were considered to be the favourites, showing good form over recent matches.

Our girls looked as if they were performing well in the first half, managing to win the first ten-minute section with score of 18:12. In the next ten minutes the Spanish head coach, Lucas Mondelo, evoked a response from his team, resulting in the Spaniards' making four perfect shots in a row. In the middle of the game we had lost 4 points to the opponents who took advantage of the goal difference to lead by 16 points at the end of the match.

At the current championship, the Belarus national team did extremely well during the first group round, winning against Italy 85:76, Poland 65:49, Turkey 67:52 and Greece 82:57.



During the bronze medal match

However, it suffered defeats during the second round from the Czech Republic (70:73), Montenegro (72:77) and France (58:64). In the quarterfinals the Belarusians claimed victory over the Lithuanians in a tough struggle 68:66, but lost to the Serbians in the final qualification match 72:74. According to head coach Anatoly Buyalsky, though his squad failed to claim a medal, they achieved their main goal, the right to play in the pre-Olympic qualification matches next summer.

Eight new sports may join Olympic agenda

By Igor Grishin

Organising Committee of 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo offered 8 new sports for programme

Bowling, softball and baseball, karate, squash, alpinism, board surfing, inline skating and wushu will be submitted to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as possible new sports for the Games. until September 30th.

In all, 26 federations have made official applications to have their sports included on the 2020 Summer Olympics programme, in Tokyo. Board surfing, wushu, American football, squash, baseball and softball (which is very popular in Japan) are likely to be popular choices. Their inclusion was last discussed at the 127th IOC session, in December 2014. Inclusion is only possible with agreement from the IOC.



"The decision on short-listing these disciplines was adopted unanimously," notes the Chairman of the Council for Inclusion of New Sports for the 2020 Games Programme, Fujio Mitarai. "In selecting, we were guided by these sports promoting the Olympic movement to youngsters." The final choice will be made by the IOC by August 2016.

Perfect venue

By Yegor Glebov

Minsk's 3,600m square covered 'mobile seasonal ice rink', at the Palace of Sports, is perfect venue for 3x3 basketball

Palova Arena, as the mobile rink is being called, is to host the 3x3 Basketball National League, with 113 squads competing in the first phase (500 participants). The 'street style' game is well-suited to the domed arena, which allows matches to be played in all weathers. The next stage of the League is scheduled for July 18th and 19th and Palova Arena is open to visitors from 10am to 11pm.

The mascot of the event is called Shagal: a comical turtle. Moreover, the opening event included real turtle races.

Performance of the week



The city day celebrated in Vitebsk with theatrical parade along the streets of the regional centre

Exhibitions

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

20 Lenin Street
 Until 13th July. *Summer Holidays:* exhibition by Vasily Peshkun
 Until 13th July. *Touch of Britain. 18th-19th Centuries British Art*
 Until 27th July. *Pastels and Watercolours of Russian Painters of the Second Half of the 19th Century*
 Until 31st July. *Art at Finger Tips*
 Until 6th September. *Dedicated to 70th Anniversary of Great Victory*
 Until 2nd November. *Great Patriotic War in Art*
 Until 30th December. *Celebrating Victory Day in Museum*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street
 Until 5th July. *Magic of Eastern Brush*

NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street
 Until 28th August. *Boletus: Beauty is their Family Peculiarity* photo exhibition
 Until 30th August. *The World of Big Parrots and Singing Birds*

WANKOWICZ HOUSE-MUSEUM

33A Internatsionalnaya Street
 Until 25th December. *A Prophet of his Time. Adam Mickiewicz. Illustrations and Medals*

NATIONAL LIBRARY

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
 Until 27th August. *Spirit of Religious Tradition and Printed Icon*
 Until 31st August. *Feeling of the Colour*

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

121 Kalinovsky Street
 Until 30th August. International festival of sand sculptures

BELTA

Theatres

NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
 06.0.7 Blue Cameo 07.07. Once in Chicago
 08.07. Sofia Golshanskaya
 09.07. One Thousand and One Nights

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
 05.07. Pan Tadeusz 06.07. Office
 07.07. The Seagull 08.07. Local Cabaret
 09.07. People of the Marsh

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
 04.07. Tricks of Khanuma 05.07. Viva Commedia!
 07.07. Private Lives 08.07. Pygmalion
 09.07. Love Circle

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
 04.07. #13
 05.07. The Makropoulos Case
 07.07. A Very Simple Story
 08 and 09.07. ...Forgetting Herostratos!

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
 06.07. Celebrating Kupalle together with Kupala: The Eternal Song
 07.07. The Contract
 08.07. Silent Love
 09.07. Adam's Jokes

Concerts

MAZ HOUSE OF CULTURE

117A Partizansky Avenue
 08.09. Dmitry Korsak in concert-presentation

BOROVAYA AERODROME

Borovaya village
 03.07. GreenFest. Papa Roach

RE:PUBLIC

62 Pritytsky Street
 06.07. Deez Nuts / Nasty / Siberian Meat Grinder
 07.07. Night Snipers

Kaleidoscope of history unveiled

July of decades and centuries past comes to life

July 3rd. In 1920, USSR Hero Ivan Leonovich was born in the Dzerzhinsk District's village of Slobodka. He conducted 340 military flights, taking part in 51 air fights and causing 28 enemy planes to crash.

July 5th. In 1901, Vladimir Varaksin was born — a Belarusian architect and teacher who designed the Republican Palace of Pioneers and Children and the Folk Economy Institute (among other sites).

July 6th. In 1905, Belarusian poet Petro (Piotr) Glebka was born in the village of Velikaya Usa, in the Minsk District. From 1957-1969, he headed the Institute of Art Studies, Ethnography and Folklore. He became an academician of the BSSR Academy.

July 7th. In 1882, Yanka Kupala was born — a poet and a globally renowned master of the written word.

July 7th. In 1887, Marc Chagall was born. Although he spent most of his life in France, he continued to be inspired by his native Vitebsk, honouring Belarus in his works.

July 8th. In 1925, linguist Mikhail Klyshko was born in the village of Daneiki, in the

Baranovichi District. He created the first Belarusian synonym list.

July 9th. In 1948, mathematician Prof. Vyacheslav Yanchevsky was born in Minsk; he was a Doctor of Physico-Mathematical Sciences, and a corresponding member of Be-



larus' National Academy of Sciences.

July 3rd. In 1875, the Nesvizh Teachers' Seminary was founded, to train elementary school teachers. Belarusian writers Yakub Kolas and Kuzma Chorny and ethnographer and folklorist A. Bogdanovich studied there.

July 3rd. In 1944, troops from the 3rd and 1st Belarusian

fronts liberated the capital of Belarus: Minsk.

July 3rd. In 1955, a monument to Konstantin Zaslonov was unveiled at Orsha's station.

July 3rd is a state holiday: the Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus (the Day of the Republic).

July 6th-7th. This night is known as Kupalle — an ancient pagan holiday, which is truly beautiful.

July 4th. In 1954, the Victory Monument was erected in Minsk's Pobedy Square — honouring the Victory over fascist Germany and the memory of Soviet Army soldiers and partisans who died during the Great Patriotic War.

July 5th. In 1947, Belarus joined the Universal Postal Union.

July 5th. In 1969, the Mount of Glory of the Soviet Army — the Liberator of Belarus — was launched as a public memorial site.

5th July. In 1969, Khatyn Memorial Architectural and Sculptural Complex opened.

July 5th. In 1969, Vitebsk's Regional Memorial Museum dedicated to USSR Hero M. Shmyrev opened its doors.

July 6th. In 2006, the Olympic Glory Museum welcomed its first visitors.

July 7th. In 1931, the Institute of Soviet Construction and Right was established in Minsk — known as the Minsk Law Institute since 1932 and the Belarusian State University's Law Department since 1954.

July 7th. In 1972, a monument was erected to People's Poet of Belarus Yanka Kupala (to mark his 90th birthday).

July 8th. In 1959, Minsk's Regional Local History Museum was established in Molodechno.

July 8th. In 1960, a memorial plaque was unveiled at the 3rd clinical hospital, to honour Prof. Klumov.