



Truth is often born in sincere dialogue

Minsk has recently been once again in the big policy spotlight, bringing together heads and experts of the world's leading 'think-tanks', as well as politicians, diplomats and parliamentarians from the USA, China, Russia, the UK, Germany, France, Ukraine and a range of other states of Eastern and Western Europe, in addition to representatives of OSCE, NATO and CSTO. The international forum, uniting more than 500 leading experts, politicians and diplomats from 50 countries, discussed the most important issues of international security.

By Vasily Kharitonov

Figuratively speaking, Minsk has become a capital of international security, bringing together politicians, diplomats and parliamentarians for the expert *Eastern Europe: Searching for Security for All* conference. The participants of the discussion tackled ways to solve pan-European problems and build a new architecture of regional security. The holding of such a large-scale forum in Minsk confirms the fact that the country is perceived by the world community as a stronghold of stability in the region, as a

useful, convenient and efficient peace-keeping venue, where it's possible through joint efforts, to find approaches to settle problems of regional security at least. How can this be done and what is required? The President of Belarus shared his views on how to settle global issues.

The world needs guarantees of security

Alexander Lukashenko expressed the opinion that since the end of the Cold War, the European and world architecture of security has never experienced such a deep systematic crisis.

"The great powers that were expected to

be reliable guarantors of stability are unable to agree on any major issue today. On the one hand, they talk about the importance of preserving the architecture of modern security. On the other, they do not abandon attempts to circumvent the veto in the UN Security Council," asserted the President. Mr. Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that sanctions, information confrontation and trade wars between the West and Russia are growing worse. Even elite sport, including the Olympic Games, once a symbol of reconciliation, is becoming a bargaining chip in political games. Tensions are fuelled between the US, the

EU and Russia, with attempts to involve China. The arms race is gathering pace. Moreover, any guarantees of non-admission of a large-scale armed conflict are absent.

"Just think: one third of the states on our planet are involved in armed hostilities in one way or another. Generally speaking, this enhances the number of participating countries in the Second World War. However, we can't apathetically wait until the horrors of a third war hit us. It would be inexcusable carelessness and Belarusians understand its consequences."



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The President reminded the audience that Belarus came forward with the initiative to launch a new large-scale international dialogue on security that should strive to overcome existing disagreements between the states in the Euro-Atlantic Region and in Eurasia. “It does not matter what you call it — the New Helsinki Process, Helsinki-2 or any other name. It does not matter, either, where it will take place. And it does not matter at all who initiates this process. We all should initiate it, because peace is what matters most. It is important to make sure that such a dialogue gets underway and results in a real improvement of international security.”

Dialogue is always appropriate

According to the President, if the great powers cannot come to an agreement today, this does not mean all other countries should sit and wait for their instructions. I am convinced that Europe can and should take the lead in resolving issues between East and West and become a place to regulate pressing problems, first of all, such as the Ukrainian crisis. Belarus has already accepted more than 150,000 Ukrainian refugees and their families, while helping them with employment, medical services, social and psychological adaptation and rendering hu-

manitarian assistance to people on both sides of the ‘dividing line’ in Donbass.

“We’ve heard accusations lately that we allegedly aspire to become peacemakers. We don’t. We have our own fair share of problems to deal with. But I’ve already mentioned our interest in tranquillity in Ukraine. If there is no peace in Ukraine, not only we, but all of you will feel the heat. This conflict must be finished as soon as possible. You can count on us in this matter. We will do everything the conflicting sides will agree on,” asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

The President believes that the only way to settle any international disputes is to refrain from emotion, accumulated sorrows, prejudices, preconceptions, mutual accusations and to return to the dialogue.

“Belarus is a sovereign state and is clearly aware of its position in the international axis system. We are not with Russia against Europe. Nor are we with Europe against Russia and the entire East. For us the question of who we are allied with is unacceptable in principle. Our position gives the answer to this question. The Belarusian people have not chosen this place to live. Hence our foreign policy, and our position in general,” he noted. The President pointed out that Belarus’ allied relations with Russia, its orientation toward integration

within the Eurasian Economic Union does not affect the interests of the European countries. Development of relations with the EU, the United States and the West does not contradict the close co-operation in the East but serves as a basis for creating a zone of confidence.

To listen and to hear each other

Mr. Lukashenko believes that many countries underestimate the role of multi-level integration projects while trying to achieve peaceful and sustainable development in the region against the backdrop of an increasing geopolitical confrontation.

“Located at the junction of the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union, Belarus wants the two to come closer. It is necessary to move from abstract talks to specific joint action. There is a tremendous amount of areas of common interest, such as economy, power engineering, environment, humanitarian co-operation, transport, logistics and the war on illegal migration, transnational crime, drug abuse, human trafficking, just to name a few. They can serve as a springboard for gradual rapprochement of the two biggest integration associations and for boosting mutual trust. We believe that this will greatly benefit the entire continent — from the Atlantic to the Pacific,” he stressed.

The President underlined that nations need to learn again to listen to and hear each other, and to be ready for reasonable compromises. Moreover, small states shouldn’t play the role of crowds in global policy. They receive a unique opportunity to initiate proposals for dialogue and confidence-building measures. In this respect, Mr. Lukashenko thinks it’s necessary to gradually expand the format of dialogue within the OSCE, attracting such players as India, Japan and, of course, China, which thanks to its *Belt and Road* initiative is gradually becoming a factor in European politics.

One of the most effective platforms for dialogue is the OSCE, which we need to support together. We understand that this will be a difficult and long process to revive and will require consolidation of our efforts. However, we can and must build on the positive experience of the Helsinki Process which contributed to the resolution of many international issues. We must dispel any illusions we might have and avoid mistakes, while developing this process in our region.

Logic of a peace-keeping mission

Evidently, the Minsk Dialogue is not a prologue for a potential Helsinki-2. However, it can definitely become a pro-

totype for large-scale discussion about the fates of the world, if not in the format of discussion and level of representation, then at least in its content. It doesn’t matter that sometimes there were opposite opinions in the dispute. Sometimes contradictions were voiced which seemed uncompromising at first sight. However, if they are voiced openly this is positive, because from a clear presentation of positions and their substantiation, the discussion begins to meet each other halfway. The interrelation of remote conflicts and European problems to the terrorism threat is more and more evident. We can’t but be worried about the situation in the neighbouring Ukraine, because, as the President noted, no points of the Minsk Agreements have been completely fulfilled yet. Minsk is ready to support any format of negotiations aimed at complete settlement of the conflict and doesn’t lay claim to any status or praise as a peacekeeper. Even if Minsk bears a peace-keeping mission in a wider sense, this is only because it doesn’t try to stand on either side of the global confrontation. Moreover, it constantly speaks about the undesirability of dividing the world into ‘us’ and ‘them’. From this position, the logic of Belarusian foreign political initiatives is apparent, and is seen in the brief formula: ‘integration of integrations’.

PARTICIPANTS OF THE FORUM



Tony van der Togt, Senior Researcher at the Netherlands Institute of International Affairs Clingendael:

The present Minsk forum is a very important platform for discussing various problems. The main one is security in Europe. I am glad to have an opportunity to express my point of view and to hear many other experts. It is important to participate in the common dialogue of the President of Belarus. We are all working out ways to solve the large number of most pressing problems.



Samuel Charap, Senior Fellow for Russia and Eurasia at the International Institute for Strategic Studies:

I believe that the Minsk Dialogue is an important and significant event. Experts from 50 countries of the world are represented here and their coming together is a great success. In general, today we are in a situation of a geopolitical impasse and — without an open exchange of views — the confrontation will intensify. Issues of regional security have also come to the forefront today and it’s primarily important to not only discuss them but to look for ways to resolve the existing differences.



Thomas Buchsbaum, Special Envoy for Eastern Partnership of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs:

Today we can talk about a new significant negotiating platform. The Minsk forum is becoming a place where many experts are able to discuss a variety of problems. The geopolitical situation has changed considerably, so we all need to think about updating existing international institutions. We also need to pay more attention to the development of a certain concept of security in the region. In the EU, we now have an interest in Belarus and the initiatives you propose.

Listen and hear each other

The discussion, emerging at the forum after the President's speech, was truly revealing: regarding its content and meaning. It perfectly reflected the systemic and even civilisational contradictions that underlie the current difficult situation in Eastern Europe. At the same time, this discussion demonstrated that all problems could be settled if the parties listen to each other.

By Mikhail Osipov

Almost all analysts today agree that the main problem of modern Europe is the geopolitical and economic confrontation between Russia and Western countries. Not surprisingly, the forum participants paid special attention to this geopolitical issue.

The position of one of the parties was voiced by Nikolay Bordyuzha; from 2003-2017, he held the post of Secretary General of the CSTO. He suggested to initially investigate the reason for the crisis in the European region, "It is important to clearly understand that the events of 2008 in South Ossetia, the internal Ukrainian crisis and Russia's subsequent accusations of aggressive politics and the demolition of democratic principles are not the starting point of today's state of affairs. On the contrary, they represent a nervous and painful symptom of a severe and prolonged illness that has long struck the very tissue of global and European security. The first reason for this is the psychology of triumphs firmly established in the minds of many Western and primarily overseas politicians, manifested in the sense of one's own exclusivity and permissiveness. After the Cold War, many partners developed the harmful habit of not reckoning with their actions either with Russia, Belarus, or with other participants in international relations."

Mr. Bordyuzha mentioned many disagreements: NATO expansion to the east and a new round of political expansion of this bloc in the Balkans; the build-up of military groups in the 'frontline' (from the point of view of NATO) areas; a significant increase in the military budgets of the United States and other countries of the alliance, whose aggregated volume has almost reached \$1 trillion; and information and sanctioning wars. Moreover, according to the official, none of the post-Soviet states seek confrontation with the United States or European countries.

The position of the second party — that of the North Atlantic Alliance — was voiced in Minsk by the Deputy Assistant Secretary General of NATO for Political Affairs and Security Policy — James Appathurai, "The Minsk agreements were signed literally across the road from here [in the Palace of Independence, located next to the venue of the forum]. How-



Famous European officials — participants of Minsk forum

ever, NATO does not see that Russia is taking action to implement them. This is the main source of friction and tension in Europe. NATO really insists on respecting the territorial inviolability of states. When we return to stabilisation, we create a more productive climate for dialogue." Meanwhile, NATO is still confident that virtually all military manoeuvres conducted by Russia or with

emotions it arouses, the OSCE Secretary General — Thomas Greminger — noted, "Belarus is very active and has become a centre of regional diplomacy. I am very grateful to you for this. Within the OSCE, Minsk is often associated with dialogue. I would like to thank President Lukashenko for holding such meetings in your country. A dialogue is an important step towards establishing relations.

we know are unlikely to be agreed upon immediately, then we should put them aside and move forward gradually. We must speak consistently, so that we do not quarrel even more. We should not set unrealistic goals. I was here when Minsk offered itself as a platform for negotiations on this complex and critical issue. It showed itself brilliantly. I think this should be maintained and continued," she said.

It's yet unclear what direction to choose. We must believe that the Minsk forum has enabled us to find a clear answer to this question. Some solutions have been proposed by Christine Muttonen who, from 2016-2017, headed the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, "Today, many politicians think about creating what is called a neutral belt in Europe. I

Thomas Greminger, OSCE Secretary General:
Within the OSCE, Minsk is often associated with dialogue. I would like to thank President Lukashenko for holding such meetings in your country. A dialogue is an important step towards establishing relations. It is very important to build relationships that are based on mutual trust.

its participation are aimed at the alliance countries. "Large-scale training is held on our borders focusing on working out attack scenarios. We see Russia's desire for unpredictability, ambiguity in the conduct of military exercises. We need to promote transparency in every way when it comes to conducting military exercises. Belarus fully corresponds to all legal regulations in this sphere." Mr. Appathurai also noted warmly, "This is my first visit to Minsk. I'm a Canadian by birth but I feel at home here since you have the same trees, climate and hockey."

In turn, speaking of Belarus and the

It is very important to build relationships that are based on mutual trust." He also expressed the hope that the Minsk forum would transform into a major event, "We must once again show our commitment to the liabilities and principles that were worked out during the Helsinki Process. If this is the process that will help us in this, it will be very good. A key to security is the promotion of dialogue."

This dialogue must start with real topics on which a compromise is possible, as the Director General of the Council of the Baltic Sea States — Maira Mora — believes. "If there are issues when

know that there are a lot of restrictions on this path. However, it would be worth thinking about the implementation of this. In addition, it is important to think about how to improve the interaction of the EU countries with the Eastern European states, how to deepen many-sided co-operation with them. A significant role in this can be played by liberalisation of the visa regime; this is a very important step in order to get to know each other. We must be as creative as possible. We'll find then a way to overcome the present stalemate. Therefore, such meetings, as in Minsk, are very important.

SHARE THEIR OPINIONS



Andrea Wiktorin, Head of the EU Delegation in Belarus:

It is constructive that Belarus and the EU co-operate in different areas. Together we can achieve a lot. It is worth remembering that

your country is a member of the *Eastern Partnership* and this opens new opportunities for Belarus. You also played a significant role in the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. The European Union recognises and welcomes this. Speaking of the Minsk Dialogue Forum, this is a great place to come to the necessary decisions on many difficult issues through discussion.



Volodymyr Khandogiy, President of the Ukrainian Foreign Policy Association:

It seems to me that we need to make greater use of the potential of the security system that exists. In my

opinion, it was not fully disclosed today. There are many mechanisms that are not involved in problematic security issues, both global and regional. This is a high-level forum. Equally important is the balanced composition of the participants. All the breadth of experts allows us to determine in the course of the discussion the approaches to solving the main problems, and unfortunately today, there are a lot of them.



Yuri Shevtsov, Director of the Centre for European Integration, Belarus:

It seems to me that the Minsk Dialogue is an unprecedented forum for our country. There are

a lot of bright and intellectual people here. The President is also among the participants and — through his status — he supports this format and those experts who have gathered here. In general, this conference expands the possibilities of Belarusian politics in the West, without questioning other priorities.



Control board of energy unit at Belarusian nuclear power station

Atom under protection

Construction and exploitation of nuclear power station in Ostrovets will provide prospects for employment for more than 10,000 people

By Maxim Osipov

The decline of nuclear power was forecast by many experts yet didn't happen. Our country, as well as Argentina, Brazil, India, China, Russia, the USA, Finland, France and Japan, amongst other states, are constructing new energy plants. By 2030, the demand for electrical energy may double. There are also huge economic benefits to nuclear power. Over its life cycle, one nuclear power station increases the country's GDP by \$40-60bn.

The International Energy Agency is sounding the alarm. Electrical energy is now the cause of 42 percent of man-made emissions of greenhouse gases. This leads to a worsening of the ecological situation, which has an impact on quality of life and the level of expenditure on healthcare and social provision.

Nuclear power is a universal key to the simultaneous solution of these problems. Nuclear power stations constructed using the Russian design (as will be built in our country) are calculated to have reduced the volume of CO₂ emissions by 2.4 billion tonnes annually by 2030. This is 80 percent of the annual emissions of the world's automobiles. The anti-nuclear lobby has little to campaign against, apart from their vision of the planet without a peaceful atom. Germany's intention to remove its all nuclear power stations from the country's energy sector by 2022 is explained by the President of the Policy Institute at King's College London, Nick Butler, in an interview to *The Financial Times*, by exclusively commercial interests and the political environment of the governmental coalition that rules in the Federal Republic of Germany. "Coal is strongly fixed in the system of German industry and its extraction is concentrated in politically important regions. Even in modern Great Britain with its small coal industry — which has no political weight — the process of removing energy from the coal industry has been ongoing for more than a decade," he explained.

It's no surprise that the 'anti-atom' aspirations of Germany lack understanding even from its partner France, the second 'engine' of the EU. The French journal *Atlantico* writes: "The refusal of Germany to use nuclear power engineering without consideration of the potential conse-

quences for its neighbours remains a very serious and difficult issue. The best solution to provide reliability of supplies and preserve an acceptable level of prices is in prolonging the term of use of the nuclear power station for up to 50-60 years, as in the USA. If we're struggling for climate control, we need nuclear power stations'.

This is understood even in post-Fukushima Japan. The opinion of the Director

“ Mikhail Kovalev, economist:

It should be taken into account that the consumption of electric energy is growing all over the world due to the shift from internal combustion engines to electric motors. Belarus has also started to produce its first electric buses and it's likely that in the near future, the manufacture of the Geely with an electric motor will be established.

of the Research Centre for Nuclear Weapons Abolition at the Nagasaki University, Tatsujiro Suzuki, leaves us in no doubt, "The Japanese Government expects that nuclear power engineering should provide 20-22 percent of the total consumption of energy by 2030 (before the accident at the Fukushima this share was around 30 percent). To achieve the goals in struggling against climate change, Japan needs more than 15 nuclear power stations by 2030."

The struggle against global warming is not the only reason for this. The development of nuclear technology is a serious

stimulus for long-term development of national innovation and economic systems. High-tech industries such as nuclear power, are characterised by a high pay-off period of investments. Moreover, the construction and exploitation of nuclear power stations with two energy units provides in the long-term, prospects for employment for more than 10,000 people. It has been calculated that within its 60-year cycle,

one nuclear power station with two energy units (of the VVER-1200 type) increases the country's GDP by approximately \$40-60bn.

Political analyst Piotr Petrovsky shares this opinion, moreover, he sees the synergistic effect of the peaceful atom as extremely useful for both our own country and Lithuania.

"The construction of the energy cluster is making a socio-economic revolution both in Ostrovets and the surrounding districts of the country, as well as in the neighbouring areas of the Lithuanian

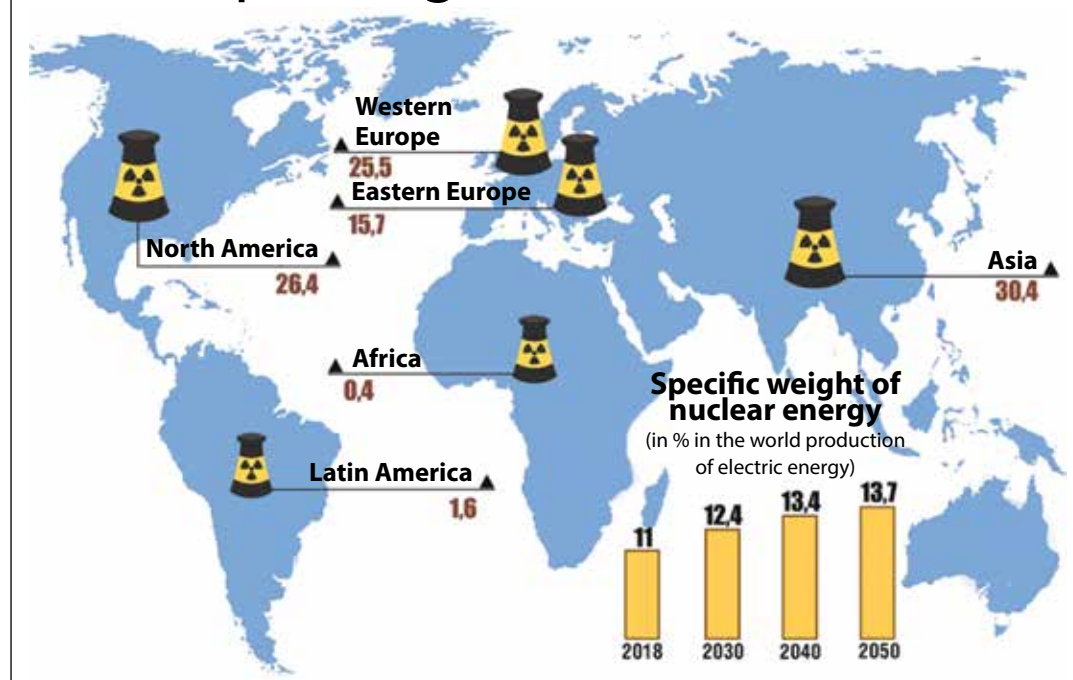
Republic. The Ostrovets area is the most remote district in the Grodno Region. With no large production industry, it has been a far from successful area until recently. The choice of Ostrovets as a place for the construction of the Belarusian nuclear power station is logical from the point of view of security, as well as having the benefit of creating a large modern industrial centre in the north-west of the country."

The creation of a powerful energy hub in Ostrovets is already attracting citizens from neighbouring Lithuania, not only former employees of the Ignalina nuclear power station. Residents of the Vilnius, Šalčininkai and Švenčionys districts of Lithuania (according to Mr. Petrovsky, these areas are rather depressed according to socio-economic figures) can also find jobs in the service sector, social provision and education.

"For Belarus and Lithuania, this gives a qualitative opportunity to develop variants of the visa-free zone around two centres and to create a common tourist cluster with corresponding infrastructure. These measures are able to create more comfortable and healthy conditions for residents on both sides of the border."

Alongside the diverse usefulness of the planned station, its major quality is absolute security. Attention is being constantly drawn to this aspect. From March 12th-16th, as part of the partner verification of the results of the Belarusian nuclear power station stress tests, seventeen experts from fifteen countries, headed by the representative of the UK's Office for Nuclear Regulation, Mark Foy, worked in our country. The final version of their report will be published in July 2018. However, Mr. Foy noted that the Belarusian side had demonstrated openness and transparency during interaction with groups of experts during the visit. The Head of Gosatomnazor (Department for Nuclear and Radiation Safety) at the Emergency Ministry of Belarus, Olga Lugovskaya, views this assessment logically. "All our guests note that we are showing complete openness and hospitality. International experts could see and assess many times how our specialists conduct inspections at nuclear and radiation sites and which regulations to make. Experts give a high assessment of our orientation towards security issues. For us, security is an absolute priority."

Operating nuclear reactors



Blockchain progress

Bonded futures and compound interest might make us recall Wall Street transactions. Even experienced exchange traders wouldn't have been familiar with such phrases as 'a miner should use arbitrage strategy' or 'Bitcoin futures' a few years ago.

By Anton Kostyukovich

Already, the Belarusian National Technical University's Institute of Qualification Improvement and Retraining has launched a new specialisation, entitled 'Cryptocurrency and Derivatives'. Graduates receive a higher education diploma, of state standard. Students are fully convinced that brilliant horizons are opening. With this in mind, they're reluctant to be photographed, foreseeing future wealth: cryptocurrency millionaires don't want to be too easily identifiable.

Running since last December, it's seen huge interest, obliging the department to almost double the number of places offered. Symbolically, its first examination session coincided with the decree 'On the Development of the Digital Economy' coming into force, regulating the use of cryptocurrencies and blockchain technology.

Twenty-five students were planned for the first group, with fifty eventually enrolled. Another group of sixty were added in April, with a further two hundred will begin studies in autumn. Interestingly, many vacancies now require 'deep knowledge of blockchain technology' or 'development of ICO strategies'. Western HR agencies predict growing demand for such specialists, with the trend being observed in Belarus as well.

Stock exchange operations were the topic of the first session. Students have already been ex-

perimenting with cryptocurrency trading, though risking only small amounts. The Head of the Department for Organisation and Analysis of Business Processes at the Belarusian National Technical University's Institute of Qualification Improvement and Retraining, Leonid Zheltonoga, lectures in trading and believes it's impossible to learn about the market without real experience.

"Young people who've joined us are mainly engaged in mining: they understand the software and technology. We teach them to be effective on the market, explaining the specifics, which have recently changed greatly, following December's launch of trading in Bitcoin futures on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. These are seriously impacting the rate of this cryptocurrency. With this in mind, we need well-trained operators of crypto-platforms. Moreover, the ICO is impossible without accurate forecasts, and detailed calculations regarding entering the market. We'll explain how to do this and which instruments are needed. Our training involves much discussion, with students asking clarifying questions during lectures and sharing their views. Besides our teachers, we include students who've previously completed our courses,

and who have real experience of working with cryptocurrencies. Among those attending our courses are many graduates of economic and technical specialities: programmers and specialists in humanitarian sciences. Motivation was the decisive factor during interview, for gaining a place on the course," Mr. Zheltonoga explains.

Over four semesters, students virtually 'plunge' into blockchain architecture, mining fundamentals and ICO nuances (attracting investments by issuing tokens — roughly speaking, an analogue of cryptocurrencies). They're also taught how to trade on the stock exchange. The 20-month programme is conducted via remote learning but features some elements which require attendance, such as marketing. The programme is unique within the CIS, being the first successful experiment to create a curriculum for cryptocurrency.

Some might wonder whether

students are confused by a classical approach to learning but this is viewed as an advantage, in comparison to numerous online courses and webinars on cryptocurrency (where information is limited). Student Kirill plans to continue focusing on cryptocurrency, telling us, "Our lecturers carefully prepare their materials and presentations, providing fairly extensive information on trading and analysis of the cryptocurrency market. In addition, we focus on global markets and their mechanisms. Experts invited from various organisations, including from the High-Tech Park, tell us about blockchain technology in detail, with practical examples." He adds, "As an engineer, these lectures are particularly interesting to me. There's a lot of in-

formation online, including some which is false. It's a challenge for a newcomer to distinguish what's correct and what isn't. I graduated from the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio-Electronics but have been working in sales of medical devices for the past decade. My passion for IT and new technologies is my hobby. Probably, I'll try cryptocurrency trading on the stock exchange, having learnt so much from our teachers."

The Bitcoin training course was originally organised during the best time for Bitcoin when the latter cost \$20,000 (against \$8,000 today). However, the number of those wishing to sign-up has always been high, leading us to believe that cryptocurrencies have a great future.

Private business — common concern

By Yevgeny Kononov

The contribution of small and medium business to the country's economy in 2020 is expected to increase to 40 percent. This envisages new productions and new jobs, as well as an increase in tax payments to the budget. This is the goal of the Decree 'On the Development of Entrepreneurship'. Practical aspects of its implementation were discussed during a round table discussion in Parliament, involving representatives of ministries and the business community.

Legislators have no easy task. In his Address to Parliament and the Belarusian People, the President clearly outlined the course for further liberalisation of the economy and removal of excessive barriers to develop business. To achieve this, it's necessary to bring 6 codes, 21



At Adani private enterprise

laws, 13 ordinances and 34 regulations in conformity with the decree. The President warned the developers, "Don't meddle with either the spirit or the language of the adopted decisions. If you have doubts, it's better to consult with representatives of the business community. The principle of economic efficiency should dominate."

The Deputy Chairman of the House of Representatives, Bole-

slav Pirshchuk, believes that a new impetus for the development of the economy is being born with the adoption of decrees on the development of entrepreneurship and digitisation, "The Address of the President clearly stated that by the end of the next five-year-period, GDP should total \$100bn. Even the growth rates of the last two years are not enough to reach the set parameters and we should speed up considerably."

In this respect, the focus will be on the speedy development of small and medium businesses. Belarus' Deputy Economy Minister Dmitry Matushevich reminded us that the decree introduced a notification procedure of opening one's own business. "It covers 19 types of activity — key for small and medium businesses. The mechanism is already working. As of April 1st, more than 800 enterprises have been registered with local authorities using the notification procedure, with passenger transportations and retail trade taking the lead," he said.

Of course, the Economy Ministry would like to see more subjects of industrial and manufacturing entrepreneurship, so the major task today for local authorities is to provide all-round assistance to businesses in establishing new enterprises which would provide positive dynamics for the development of each region. The single electronic register of administrative procedures is also

to help the business community. According to Mr. Matushevich's information, a draft of the corresponding decree was submitted to the Government. It's planned that in 2019 this register will be launched and everyone who wishes will be able to receive answers to their questions in remote access mode.

"Decree No.7 is the foundation on which businesses should develop, find new niches and new types of produce," emphasised the Chairman of the House of Representatives' Standing Commission on Economic Policy, Vladislav Shchepov. "The market is changing very quickly, and Belarusian enterprises have more and more rivals from our neighbouring states, for example, in the sphere of light industry. Our businessmen should not see danger in this, but a chance for development and an opportunity to enhance the quality of produce, reduce prices and expand their ranges."



By Alexander Pimenov

During the meeting, HTP's Director Vsevolod Yanchevsky and Director of Operations with GE Global Research, Janeen Uzzell, discussed the possibility of introducing the 'Internet of Things' technologies and machine learning in various branches of the Belarusian economy. In particular, Janeen Uzzell shared her experience of introducing technology programmes in healthcare, aviation and power engineering. "The High-Tech Park is a fantastic place," said Janeen Uzzell. "Coming here, I felt like I was in Silicon Valley right away, there are lots of energetic and creative people and very interesting projects implemented here. I will definitely share information about the park with my colleagues in the USA. Today I've been shown the Belarusian mobile phone app Viber. I've already installed it on my phone to communicate in Minsk," noted Ms. Uzzell as she visited the HTP's business incubator.

Representatives of the American corporation were also interested in the High-Tech Park in the light of the recent adoption of the Decree 'On the Development of Digital Economy'. At present, the HTP companies are developing internationally recognised products in the sphere

Co-operation has good prospects

High-Tech Park and General Electric plan to launch innovative solutions into the Belarusian economy



Janeen Uzzell, Global Director of Operations with GE Global Research

of artificial intelligence and machine learning and creating innovative platforms for processing large amounts of data. General Electric is a customer of the HTP companies.

The HTP has recently embraced the policy of vigorous co-operation with the world's largest corporations. HTP Director Vsevolod Yanchevsky noted that the global high-tech industry

pays attention to Belarus more and more often. "The two largest IT giants, symbols of American Silicon Valley — Google and Facebook — have both acquired Belarusian companies. The Gen-

eral Electric Company has shown a symbolic interest in the HTP as real-sector companies — power engineering, production sector, automobile engineering ones — embrace digital technologies. It is a global trend. In our country it is also very important for our companies to move quickly in this direction," said the Director.

General Electric is the world's largest power engineering company, which makes a broad range of high-tech products ranging from nuclear reactors and aviation engines to locomotives and medical equipment. General Electric specialists are now busy developing smart systems for healthcare, using 3D printers to make aviation products, and develop their own software to make the equipment more effective. The company has invested heavily in information technologies recently. General Electric is one of the oldest power engineering concerns in the world. Today it vigorously assimilates technologies in various branches of the economy. After buying the software development company ServiceMax, the General Electric Company became a direct competitor to corporations like Microsoft and Oracle. General Electric intends to become a world top-10 software development company by 2020.



Investment climate of the country presented



By Alexey Fedosov

Tokyo hosts Belarusian-Japanese Economic Forum

The event was aimed at enhancing investment and regional co-operation with Japan. During the forum, Belarus presented its investment opportunities, the Great Stone Industrial Park, the Belarusian pharmaceutical industry, the Mogilev free economic zone, the Japanese-Belarusian industrial zone and other investment projects in mechanical engineering, electric car manufacturing and high-tech medical equipment. Among the key speakers were Belarus' Health Minister, Valery Malashko and JETRO President Yasushi Akahoshi.

The forum participants learned of prospects for interaction with Japanese companies in the fields of information and telecommunication technologies, automation and robotics, the production of electric vehicles and components and investment co-operation. Examples of successful

business co-operation between Belarus and Japan were presented by Toshihiko Tanaka — the President & Managing Director of Socionext Europe GmbH, the President of Toshin Kogyo — Shiro Suzuki, the Head of Takeda Pharmaceuticals Belarus — Koki Sato. Business meetings were held with representatives of Japanese companies and business associations. The organisers and participants of the forum also met with members of the Japan-Belarus inter-parliamentary friendship group.

The Belarusian-Japanese economic forum continued in Osaka. Its participants visited the Kansai Electric Power Company and saw the preparations for EXPO-2025. The programme also included the Mogilev Region — Osaka Prefecture meeting, a business matchmaking event, B2B meetings. Representatives of the Belarusian pharmaceutical industry studied prospects of establishing joint or foreign drug-manufacturing ventures with Japanese investment capital.

Growing start-ups

By Olga Zdanovich

We've entered a new economy where countries compete not for oil or gas but for intellect. As a result, the problem of 'brain drain' is getting even more dangerous for the future of an individual state, when innovators and talented entrepreneurs go abroad.

It's now important not to simply keep talent in the country, but also to become a centre of attraction for the best specialists in the world. In his State of the Nation Address, Alexander Lukashenko tackled this issue, saying that the Belarusian Government 'needs to anticipate the situation, ensuring a transfer of ideas and brains to the country', so that Belarus 'will attract the best and smartest people like a magnet'.

Each state solves this problem differently, but it's evident that the most effective way is the development of their own economy and the support of innovators. In this regard, Belarus has made a major step forward — by adopting the Decree 'On the Development of Digital Economy'. Moreover, the Belarusian experience has aroused interest among other countries, including neighbouring Poland. The Director of the Innovation Development Department at the Polish Development Fund (PFR) — Eliza Kruc-

zkowska — recently visited Minsk. She learned about the work of the HTP and talked with Belarusian students at the *Bi-zTech* conference organised by BSU. It is important to understand that these are not mere talks: this lady represents a fund with billion Dollar investments and it's good to move closer to it.

The Polish Development Fund is a financial tool for investing in start-ups. It consolidates state and private capital. PFR is the largest such fund in Central and Eastern Europe. "We know more about Skolkovo. We've studied everything connected with this project," Eliza said. "Here, in Belarus, I saw that the High-Tech Park is a Skolkovo — being even more effective. If there are so many talented specialists in the technical field in

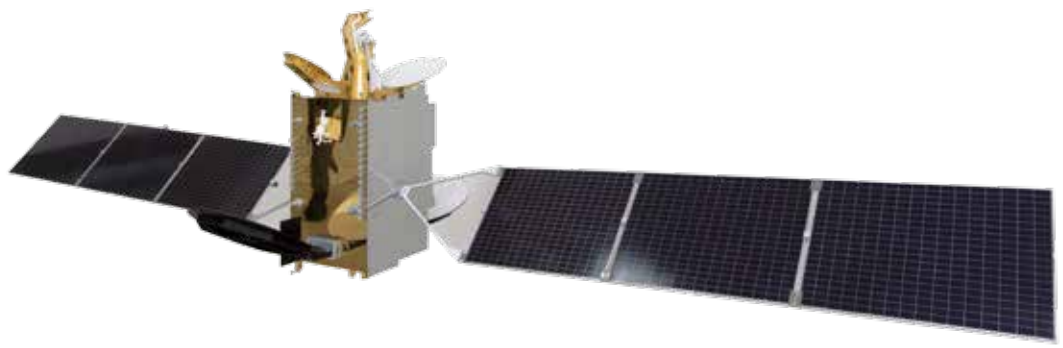


Eliza Kruczkowska

Belarus, then there is huge potential for the country's development."

In Belarus, PFR's representatives discussed co-operation between Belarusian and Polish universities. In 2016, the two countries' governments signed a co-operative agreement in education, aiming to facilitate student exchanges and other joint projects. Importantly, talented young people will be able to work jointly in their own countries. As Eliza believes, these are universities which create the basis of human capital for technological industries.

Orbit for Belarusian satellite



Flight Control Centre in Stankovo

By Oleg Bogomazov

Belarusian received the right to call itself a 'space nation' in July 2012, when the first domestic satellite for remote Earth sensing was launched. We confirmed our technical presence in space in January 2016, when our geostationary communications satellite BELINTERSAT-1 launched into orbit, becoming a pioneer of the National System of Satellite Communication and Broadcasting.

The ground control complex of the BELINTERSAT-1 satellite, in the village of Stankovo, not far from Minsk, is already listed as a landmark, with six huge antennas located within fenced territory. The Flight Control Centre and the ground



control complex run 24/7, with three staff monitoring space apparatus in the Flight Control Centre all day and night.

The head of the complex, Dmitry Zakalyukin, tells us, "International requirements are imposed on geostationary satellites, which should be located within an imaginary 150km cube in space. We monitor the apparatus constantly, via the control point, correcting its

path every ten days by switching on its engine. We also monitor its functions, sending data via its antennas, which are directed towards Earth. Finally, we control the working load, in the interests of clients."

Information is displayed on large screens, vividly showing the 'well-being' of the space apparatus, with all details also seen on computer moni-

tors. Valentina Petukhova, an engineer with the Analysis and Control Department, checks the satellite's vital parameters every three hours, while the head of the duty shift, Mikhail Mikulich, is responsible for the complex' readiness to work with the satellite.

Initially, the satellite was launched for commercial purposes, providing visual

data on Belarus and a considerable part of the planet's Eastern hemisphere. Andrey Abramov, who heads the project, comments, "The Belintersat project is export-oriented; therefore, we work with customers all over the world. Our major clients come from countries in Africa and the Asian-Pacific region. One of the largest customers is China, whose Great Wall Industry Corporation bought resources even before the satellite launched. We also have customers in Europe. It's a project dealing with television broadcasting; 5 percent of resources are allocated to Belarus, used by services that respond to technogenic, abnormal and emergency situations, while ensuring border protection and public order. Our goal is to achieve a return on investments injected into the satellite, which is designed to be operational for fifteen years. We're doing everything to achieve this."



Traffic rules should apply to electric scooters, segways and gyroscooters

By Nadezhda Dekola

Pedestrians and cyclists will all now have to make room. As soon as the snow melted, those keen on all possible on-trend means of transport rushed onto the streets. Gyroscooters, electric segways, electric scooters and even unicycles are now active on the pavements and cycle tracks. In the future, some might rival ordinary bicycles, who number around 800,000 in Minsk (the same as the number of cars). This means that issues around their participation in the flow of traffic will arise.

"Undoubtedly, this is good for the city's development, as people begin to actively use more ecological means of transport, compared to public transport, let alone cars. Moreover, sometimes they are more convenient," notes Pavel Gorbunov, co-ordinator of projects at the Minsk cycling society. "For example, a light and compact electric scooter is perfectly suited for the metro. One can easily go down into the metro with it and cover part of the distance by train."



Traffic rules also apply to cyclists

Where can a place for these 'technological wonders' be found in the city? How will they fit into the current road network and ensure safe traffic for all participants? In addition, some models can travel at fast speeds. "We could go down the road of the European states who introduced classification depending on the

speed of such vehicles. Those that travel at less than 5kmh can join pedestrians, while those that can accelerate to a speed of up to 20kmh must travel with the bicycles," notes Yuri Vazhnik, the Chairman of the Board of Belarusian Association of Experts and Surveyors in Transport. "Of course, no one will be there to measure

the speed and the issue is to find a safe traffic scheme for all vehicles."

Some states however, have restrictions on the types of vehicles that can be used on public roads. In the UK, for example, gyroscooters are only allowed to be used on private land, with the permission of their owners. This ambiguous attitude is also seen towards segways. In Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Japan they belong to the category of motor bikes, so it's only possible to use them from a particular age if you have a driving license and insurance. At the same time, there are cities where this means of transport is used, for example, by patrol police officers and postal workers. The use of segways in tourism is also very popular and they can move along pedestrian footpaths or pavements in particular places, while their speed is constructively limited to up to 10kmh.

At present, there's no consensus among the experts regarding new means of transport. Their fate will most likely be tackled in the next edition of traffic legislation. At present, those who use them are treated as pedestrians...



Thousands descend onto Berlin streets

The Alternative for Germany (AFD) far-right party held a mass protest in Berlin, while counter-protesters gathered to try and drown them out

Titled 'the future of Germany' the far-right party and its allies were calling for an end to migration.

"You get the impression that Germany is overwhelmed by integration," said one protestor.

While it is unusual for a German political party to host a rally like this, the AFD prides itself on breaking the mould. The party is in the national

parliament now, but they demonstrated the fact they can still mobilise support on the streets and this demonstration has attracted support from other far right groups, who share the same views.

However, the AFD were also reminded that they remain a minority in German society, as the 5,000 thousand AFD protesters marched into the city centre they were met along the

way by around 25,000 counter-protestors who tried to block their route.

Over a dozen groups from left-wing organisations to LGBT groups and nightclub organisers set up anti-AFD events across the city

"We can't tolerate exclusion in Germany and with our history we can't tolerate these people being in the Bundestag and spreading hate," said one

anti-AFD demonstrator.

The AFD entered the parliament for the first time in September 2017 with a strong anti-migrant, anti-Islam message which was widely heard from them again today. Their detractors say they represent an outdated fascist ideology and the breadth of the counter-protests seen today in Berlin show just how contentious the AFD remains.



Hawaii helicopter evacuation ready amid new lava stream

A third lava flow from Hawaii's erupting Kilauea volcano streamed into the ocean as US Marine Corps helicopters stood by to evacuate a Big Island community should molten rock or huge cracks block its final escape route

Six huge fissures sent rivers of molten rock through a blackened, volcanic wilderness that was once jungle, farmland and rural homes.

Kilauea, one of the world's most active volcanoes, entered

the fourth week of what may be an unprecedented, simultaneous eruption at its summit crater and along a 9.7-km string of fissures 40km down its east flank.

At least 50 rural homes and other structures have been destroyed by lava from fissures in a small area of the Big Island. Some 2,000 people have faced mandatory evacuations and another 2,000 in coastal communities may be forced to leave their homes if State Highway 130, their last exit, becomes blocked.

15 injured after two men set off bomb in Canadian restaurant

Two unidentified men walked into a restaurant in the Canadian city of Mississauga and set off a bomb, wounding more than a dozen people, and then fleeing, local police said

The blast went off in the Bombay Bhel restaurant at about 10:30pm local time. Fifteen people were taken to hospital, three of them with critical injuries, the Peel Regional Paramedic Service said in a Tweet.

The two male suspects fled after detonating their improvised explosive device, Peel Regional Police said in a Tweet. No one has claimed responsibility, and the motive for the attack was not known.

Police posted a photograph on Twitter showing two people with dark zip-up hoodies walking into an establishment. One appeared to be carrying an ob-



ject. Peel Police said one suspect was in his mid-20s, stocky, and wore dark blue jeans and a dark zip-up hoodie pulled over his head, with black cloth covering his face. The second was thin, and wore faded blue jeans, a grey t-shirt and a dark zip-up hoodie over his head, also with his face covered.

Médecins Sans frontières working to stop Ebola spread

27 people have died in the latest outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of Congo, raising fears of a repeat of a previous epidemic which killed 11,000

Health workers from Médecins Sans Frontières are working to stop the spread — contamination can come through contact with bodily fluids including vomit and sweat.

Coordinator of the emergency operation Jean-Clement Cabrol said, "There's a local risk around Mbandaka but I think we should avoid talking immediately about a global emergency. For now, there is urgency in Congo. The Health Ministry, Médecins Sans Frontiers and others are doing their best to treat patients first. Beyond that, we can't predict the future."

EU privacy law heralds new era in online data protection

New European privacy regulations that went into effect last Friday will force companies to be more attentive to how they handle customer data, while bringing consumers both new ways to control their data and tougher enforcement of existing privacy rights

The European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) replaces the bloc's patchwork of rules dating back to 1995 and heralds an era where breaking privacy laws can fetch fines of up to 4 percent of global revenue or 20 million Euros, whichever is higher, as opposed to a few hundred thousand Euros.

Brazil truckers suspend strike, government to subsidise diesel prices

Brazil's government struck a deal with truck drivers to suspend a four-day protest that crippled swathes of the Latin America's largest economy, promising changes to diesel pricing that could leave it footing a \$1.37 billion bill this year

Truckers agreed to immediately suspend the strike for 15 days, government ministers said, appearing alongside representatives of truckers' groups. "We need all of you truckers to get back to work. Brazil needs you," said Eliseu Padilha, President Michel Temer's chief of staff, while announcing the deal at the Presidential Palace in Brasilia.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Estonian galleries take part in the festival



Near Yuri Gorbachev's pictures

Impressions from *ART-MINSK*

This international festival presents the identity and feelings of Belarusians — as the project curator, Italian art critic Stefano Antonelli, explains

By Veniamin Mikheev

According to Stefano Antonelli, his curator's role has enabled him to learn more about Belarusian art and learn the language. "This project represents your identity and your emotions," he said. The Italian visitor believes that projects of this kind give Belarusian art an opportunity to be recognised all over the world, since they contribute to cultural exchange. After all, a single language is needed for people of different countries to communicate: the language of art.

To participate in the first international festival *ART-MINSK* — taking place throughout the month — the works of over 300 artists were chosen. The central exhibition is located at the Republican Art Gallery (the Palace of Arts), featuring 150 works. Another section is hosted by the National Centre of Contemporary Arts and the National Library of Belarus. In total, 14 galleries in the Belarusian capital are taking part in the *ART-MINSK* festival held under the 'Minsk is Watching' banner. The organisers of the festival aim to present the diversity of artistic trends in the fine arts of Belarus. In the future (the project is planned to be held regularly), open air venues are likely to be involved, in addition to galleries.

The festival has been organised on 18 sites at the same time; never before have so many venues been involved. Pieces for the three main venues were chosen on a competitive basis, although anyone — including children — could apply. As a result, 800 works chosen by Italian curator, Stefano Antonelli, are included. The Italian also proposed the concept of the exhibition at the Palace of Arts. Mr. Antonelli described the main criterion is the possibility of a dialogue, communication and establishment of relationship between the audience and the works of art. He said that it was



Vasily Kostyuchenko 'conquers' with his colours

interesting for him to become familiar with the Belarusian identity through the language and traditions. "This makes it possible to learn who people are in reality," he emphasised.

The first surprise is the large number of picturesque applications. The curator was surprised. European genres generally include performance, installation and photography while we mostly represent landscapes — which are often seen as 'rather a tool of training than self-expression of an artist'. The festival attempted to turn the city into a single gallery, where everyone would find an art project to their liking. Since many artists brought several works, the number of works of art that residents and guests of the city could see approached 800. Moreover, they had an opportunity to choose the best work, in their opinion.

The project at the Palace of Arts has become the centre of attraction. Halls on three floors hosted around 150 paintings, graphic and photo works, sculptures, installations and art objects.

However, Mr. Antonelli, specially invited from Italy, said the huge Palace turned out to be too small in the end: otherwise, it would have exhibited more works by Belarusian and foreign artists. "I was amazed at this large-scale event," Mr. Antonelli said, adding, "I was impressed with over 800 applications and that the festival was supported by large financial companies. Moreover, I believe that Belarusian art — in which I'm gradually immersing myself — is distinguished by a variety of artistic trends. Belarus is the place where cultures meet. Belarusian art can show features, traditions and conditions that are common only to your country. The works proposed for the festival demonstrate your identity. At the same time, identity is an opportunity to start relations and, with this in mind, I'd like to devote this project to the aesthetics of relationships. Let it become a basis for new relations with other artists and other countries." Stefano Antonelli's 'From Michelangelo to Banksy, over Malevich'

also some truly shocking works aimed at provoking the audience and forcing visitors to search for meaning. Alexander Nekrashevich's 'War of the Worlds' is the largest pictorial object at the Palace of Arts. Opposite this six-metre work, a triptych by Grigory Ivanov — dedicated to Kazimir Malevich — was placed by Mr. Antonelli. Involuntarily everyone would think: does war lead to the world falling into the black abyss — the abyss of the black square of Malevich?

The curator placed a multi-figured sculptural composition by Maxim Petrul on the floor between these picturesque objects. The author believes that a sculpture is not a final object but a process. Moreover, he demonstrates all the stages which the author's idea pass through before becoming a work of art — using clay, gypsum, wax, sand and metal.

In his interview, the well-known sculptor fervently supported the festival, stressing it is needed for the creative community as it pushes the horizons of



lecture was also organised as part of the *ART-MINSK* project.

It's impossible to get closely acquainted with all the works on show. Many of them are unusual; it's necessary to examine them closely. There are

thinking and promotes renewal.

Another major object — photographic — was Dina Danilovich's 'Proximity', consisting of eight photos and demonstrating eight inner states. This is the case when a person lays bare their soul on taking off their clothes. Ruslan Vashkevich's 'Pavilion' bears the stamp of humour and irony, reminding us that the Palace of Arts offers its space to trade organisations from time to time. It's thanks to this that it survives financially. One of the undoubted favourites of the project at the Palace of Arts was by painter, Valery Shkarubo. He brought two pictures: landscapes gravitating towards lyricism and philosophy against the modesty of their themes and motifs. Mr. Shkarubo's paintings convey the life-giving power of our native land.

The second floor of the Palace featured a large collection of works by Baltic authors. Their sculptures and paintings are not brightly coloured but, on closer examination, they demonstrate the paradoxicality of artists' thinking and, accordingly, attract special attention. A whole constellation of wonderful works came from Estonia, from Tallinn's SED ARTE Gallery. Its Art Director, Olga Ljubaskina, loves Belarusian art and Minsk, liaising with our cultural institutions. The Palace of Arts hosted sculptures and paintings by Tauno Kangro, Ravshan Nur, Vlad and Vera Stanishevsky, Jüri and Henno Arak, Iris Uuk and others.



By Irina Ovsepyan

The *Fashion Mill 2018* pleased the visitors with many appeals to the Belarusian theme. In the past, there were plenty supporters of Orsha linen to make it a fashion trend or add national colour with embroidery from their grandmother's linen chest. However, even in comparison with previous years, the character and variety in national culture is amazing. Of course, the competitive slogan of this year played its role: 'Belarus is a Country of Sport and Creativity'. Meanwhile, creators are creators — able to process any idea in an original and unexpected way. The young designers turned to native landscapes and men's clothes appeared with inscriptions in the Belarusian language. Dresses, skirts and raincoats are decorated with recognisable silhouettes of architectural monuments: Mir Castle, St. Sophia Cathedral in Polotsk, Minsk churches, the National Library. The new generation of fashion designers determines independently what is a symbol of the country or the personification of homeland for them. Designer Svetlana Knyazeva has, for example, turned to the theme of Kolyady; where the goats are smiling, and Christmas stars are shining on her teenage coats.

"Sooner or later, a person begins to realise their belonging to the nation, the country, the city. We want to find something historical and unique to state proudly: we are Belarusians. It is the easiest way to promote your national culture through clothing. That's why I've decided to use folklore techniques: vytinanka and mythology unique for Belarus; among them are 'Thunder-Bearer, fern flower, tree of life and Kolyady'. I even named my collection Dyavoya, after the pagan goddess who protected girls before their marriage," said the designer.

Awards for the worthy

My many years of attending the festival have not been wasted: I managed to guess almost all the winners. In the 'Fashion

Collecting talent is worthy of praise

The 27th Republican Festival-Competition of Fashion and Photo — *Fashion Mill 2018* — names the winners: the best and the most promising have been chosen from almost a hundred collections of new designers by the international jury. As usual, preference was given to skill, bold ideas and creative imagination rather than to the abstract: this imagination can easily be transferred to a strong manufacturing product.



Master Craftsman' nomination, the 1st place given to Minsker Alexandra Zhuk was no surprise: the experienced participant — who has repeatedly won prizes and held many creative seminars and workshops of the *Fashion Mill* — won easily and deservedly. Also, second place of Anna Krasner from Vitebsk and third place of Brest's Anastasia Batrachenko were no surprise: both young fashion designers have already demonstrated their impressive creativity and quality of work at competitions in recent years.

The 'School of Fashion' nomination attracted the greatest number of participants. Here, awards

are distributed separately for men's and women's collections, clothes for children and teenagers. This makes it possible to appeal to different age categories: Belarus needs fashion artists ready to sew for all segments of the population. In the design of women's and men's clothing, first place went to Karina Ganina (Vitebsk) and Darya Khilko (Minsk). 1st place for the children's collection went to Tatiana Rudak from the city of Kirovsk; her humorous clothes with the author's portraits of cats look modern and recognisable. In teenage fashion, the collection of Alexandra Logvina won; last year, this lady was granted an internship at Svitanak: the jury ap-

preciated her complex cut, original ideas and a charming mixture of patchwork, shabby-chic and pyjama style. The 'Photo' nomination was won by Yelizaveta Shaveko (Minsk State Linguistic University), while Natalia Bogdanichik from the Fashion Style podium school won the 'Miss Model-2018' title.

From study to production

Fashion Mill is a launching ground for beginner-designers who work under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and the National Centre for Art of Children and Youth. As Igor Ivanov — the Head of the Fashion Style state podium school — says, participation in the project is free of charge. "Participants are provided with the services of stylists, hairdressers and makeup artists. They do not need to search models for the catwalk and pay them: the Fashion Style school gives

a choice. We are very pleased that, this year, the Belleprom Concern has taken part in the festival's work: the winners and prize holders will be presented with fabrics produced at the concern's enterprises for their further work. We hope to expand co-operation, since many models demonstrated by our participants are suitable for production and can be manufactured even in large batches."

Winners traditionally receive educational and production related awards: participation in international creative workshops, internships in European fashion houses. To select the most promising young fashion designers, experts from Italy, France, Russia, Latvia and Georgia have come to Minsk.

"I remember the Bylinsky sisters who, in other years, won the contest twice — while still being schoolgirls!" Dzhemal Makhmudov, from the Russian Silhouette Charity Fund, said.

"The girls spent a year selling fish on the market to earn money and sew a collection.

After the competition, they received



significant support. I want to thank the festival organisers. The *Fashion Mill* is a unique event. Collecting talent from all over Belarus and giving them a way to progress is worthy of praise."

Diego Maradona: to be continued

Famous Argentinean presented as Brest Dynamo's Chairman of the Board

By Tatiana Pastushenko

Over 5,500km separate Brest from Abu Dhabi but, it was there — at the Emirates Palace Hotel on the Persian Gulf shore — where a press conference was organised. Diego Maradona was introduced as the new Chairman of the Board and the fans could watch it live. The broadcast clearly disappointed the Russian-speaking audience as people could only distinguish the words 'Dynamo', 'Brest' and 'Belarus'.

There were however, many other sights to see. For example, the luxurious interior of the hotel — decorated with silver, gold and glass — proved to be amazing. Surrounded by Arab journalists dressed in traditional white robes, Maradona shared his plans, "I've spent several wonderful years in Dubai and moving to Belarus opens new horizons and work opportunities for me. This is a new challenge, but I do not plan to lock myself in the office: I will work jointly with the team at the stadium and I will give Dynamo the best I can to make the club more competitive. The footballers are enthusiastic, and this is important to me. I will also work with young players from the Dynamo Academy."



The contract of Diego Maradona with Brest Dynamo is for three years

Maradona said he wants to find a competitive team in Brest. So far, it has not achieved leadership even in the national championship. However, Maradona is in no hurry, "Initially I need to look at those who are at our disposal, to see the strengths and weaknesses of Dynamo. In the future, we can strengthen the line-up with players from the United Arab Emirates, Italy or Argentina. Of course, Neymar and Messi are too far from us in terms of the level of our preparation, but there are no doubts that Dynamo will gather a combat-ready team."

Brest's footballers will soon need this. After winning the Cup of Belarus, they will play in the Europa League (beginning their

performance from the second qualifying round). The new Chairman of the Board admits that the possibilities are unlimited. "I would like to say that Brest Dynamo will challenge in the Europa League. However, I'm not a magician. I am a person who wants to work in football and wants to chair Dynamo. I want the team to develop along with the club. We will work hard to achieve this. We have no other goal but to work hard."

Dynamo's General Manager — Valdas Ivanauskas — hopes Diego's co-operation will benefit not only the club, but all Belarusian football. "I think this is a great day, not only in our club's history but throughout the country. We are grateful to Diego for

accepting this difficult challenge. He comes to the club and will invest his experience not only in the team but also in our future: our children. I hope our co-operation will continue for many years."

The contract of Diego Maradona with Brest Dynamo is planned for three years.

At the end of the press conference, the best footballer of the twentieth century was given a shirt with his name and the number ten, which Maradona even kissed. Behind him was the inscription "Belarus is closer than you think". We hope the Argentinian will turn to business and to Belarus and Brest closer than a distance of 5.5 thousand kilometres.

New hosts of final matches

The Executive Committee of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), at the press conference in Kiev, named the cities that will be hosting the major matches of continental club tournaments of the 2019/2020 season

The final of the major tournament of Europe — the Champions League — will be welcomed by the Atatürk Olympic Stadium in Turkish Istanbul. The final match of the Champions League will be held at the Polish Gdansk Arena. The winners of these meetings will play for the UEFA Super Cup in Portuguese Porto, at the Dragão Stadium. One of the contenders for the Super Cup-2020 match was Minsk's Dinamo Stadium.

The UEFA Executive Committee approved the calendar of the final tournament of EURO-2020 that will take place in 19 arenas across the continent — for the first time in history.

Master class from Mikhail Grabovski

Lokomotiv hockey club to be created in Orsha

The new club plans to play in the Extraleague of the Belarusian Championship. Work to form the squad has been already begun in Orsha. Within a year, it should also include a sports school with the same title.

The master class for young hockey players at Orsha school was conducted by famous Belarusian forward, Mikhail Grabovski. The NHL forward shared his developments in preparing young players with coaches in an hour and a half session. He focused on the elements of technical preparation, while also telling the youngsters how to prepare psychologically for training and matches.

Confirming the status of the strongest team



Handballers from Brest in blue uniform

HC Meshkov Brest wins the title of Belarus' champion among men's teams for fifth time in a row and tenth time in history

In the decisive match for gold at the 26th national championship, Brest players defeated Minsk SKA at home — 22:19

— and took first place, earning 57 points.

Minsk SKA were defeated with a gap of three points and again, for the sixth time in a row, claimed the silver medal. Bronze went to the handballers of Gomel who scored 23 points. The group of four strongest squads also in-

cludes Mogilev's Masheka, with 16 points.

This week, Uruchie Sports Palace in Minsk will be hosting the decisive match of the Belarus Cup. The semi-final matches will see SKA playing against Gomel and Brest Meshkov facing Grodno's Kronon. The winners of these matches will play for the trophy, while losers will play-off for 3rd place.

In the women's competitions, BNTU-BelAZ squad played a golden double: earning both the champions title and Belarus Cup. The best womens handball players of Belarus are now preparing (under the banner of the national team) for the two final meetings of the qualifying stage of the European Championship against teams from the Netherlands and Hungary.



Reaching the finals

By Yegor Vetrov

Basketballers of Belarus' student team ranked second at tournament in Moscow

Belarusian basketballers took second place at the International Student Basketball Cup. In the finals, they faced the Russian first team, losing 66:72.

At the tournament, the Belarusian team was represented by the reserve players

of the Tsmoki-Minsk club, coached by Rostislav Vergun. At the first stage of the competition in the Russian capital, his team defeated their rivals from Greece (77:52), the Russian second team (73:71) and Cyprus (71:51) and took first place in the preliminary group A. In the quarterfinals, the Belarusians beat Bosnia and Herzegovina (87:56) and also defeated basketballers from Syria (79:74) in the finals qualification match.

Fest of the week



Participants of Pawa group at Golshany Castle-2018 regional festival

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS

20 Lenin Street
Until 26th June. *Chinese Painting of Ideas*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM

12 K. Marx Street
Until 10th June. *Under Muse's Heel: Footwear History Facts* Until 11th July. *Criminal Money or History of Money Counterfeiting*

EXHIBITION HALL OF NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM

9A Bogdanovich Street
Until 3rd July. *Song Birds and Pigeons*

MUSEUM OF MODERN BELARUSIAN STATEHOOD

38 K. Marx Street
Until 26th June. *Man. Cosmos. Belarus*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 1st July. *My Homeland — Tale of Times* project Until 31st August. *Enlightenment. Experience. Progress* Until 15th September. *ABCs from Around the Globe*

VANKOVICH'S HOUSE

33a Internatsionalnaya
Until 18th July. *Dreams of the Past*

YANKA KUPALA STATE LITERARY MUSEUM

4 Kupala Street
Until 16th June. *Bulgakov as Illegal Phenomenon*

HIGH PLACE

2A Gertsen Street
Until 26th August. *Hello from Minsk*

YAKUB KOLAS SQUARE

Until 8th September. *The Artist and the City: open air exhibition of Georgy Skripnichenko's pictures*

BELARUSIAN STATE CIRCUS

32 Nezavisimosti Avenue
01 and 03.06. *Circus! Circus! Circus!*

MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square
Until 2nd June. *Touch of Beauty*

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

6 Kirill and Mefody Street
Until 1st July. *MotoVeloMinsk: Two-Wheeled History*

GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR HISTORY MUSEUM

8 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 13th August. *Piotr Masherov: His Heart Beats for People*

THEATRES

NATIONAL ACADEMIC BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Street
31.05. *Rigoletto*
01.06. *The Fountain of Bakhchisaray*
04.06. *Viva la Mamma!* 06.06. *Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Petrushka. Firebird*
07.06. *Ballet Summer in Bolshoi. Petrushka. Scheherazade*

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
31.05. *Cherry Orchid* 01.06. *The Bat*
03.06. *Merry Widow* 04.06. *Dubrovsky*
05.06. *Women's Revolt* 06.06. *Wedding in Malinovka* 07.06. *Cleopatra*

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTORS

13 Pobediteley Avenue
31.05, 01.06. #13 02.06. *Abduction of Yelena* 04-06.06. *Nobody Ever Said Life Would be Easy* 06.06. *The Makropoulos Case* 07.06. *Merchant Yepishkin's Theatre*

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street
31.05. *ART; Elza's Land* 01.06. *Paulinka. Radio Prudok* 03.06. *Inspector. Elza's Land* 04.06. *Radio Prudok; Tolerance* 05.06. *Pinsk Gentry; Love as Militarism* 06.06. *Pan Tadeusz*

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
31.05. *Private Lives; Husband Leaves His Wife* 06.06. *How to Become Rich* 07.06. *An Ideal Husband*

REPUBLICAN THEATRE OF BELARUSIAN DRAMA

44 Kropotkin Street
31.05. *Live Until Premiere* 01.06. *Wine from Dandelions* 04.06. *People's Love* 05.06. *Golden Heart; Uninvited Guest* 06 and 07.06. *Miracles in Circus*

YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street
31.05. *Playing Happy Family* 05.06. *Caught by Love* 06.06. *Sasha, Take Garbage Away* 07.06. *Love of Three*

BELARUSIAN STATE PUPPET THEATRE

20 Engels Street
01.06. *Belvedere* 02.06. *Little-Red-Riding-Hood* 03.06. *Wash'Em/Clean*

YOUNG SPECTATORS' THEATRE

26 Engels Street
31.05 and 01.06. *Cat's House* 04.06. *My Little Enchantress* 05.06. *Thumbelina* 06.06. *Doctor Aybolit* 07.07. *Wolf and Seven Goats*