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A famous Belarusian artist — Rygor Sitnitsa — awarded the honorary title 'Honoured Figure of Arts of the Republic of Belarus'

## We are proud of you

President Aleksandr Lukashenko has presented state awards to about forty representatives of various fields of activity: employees of the production sphere, scientists, figures of culture and arts, sportsmen, teachers and the military. “We honour hard-working, talented and purposeful people — those whose triumph will be shared by the whole country today. Before presenting you with these well-deserved awards, I would like to note that the work of each of you is very important for our state, your honesty and dedication are admired, and good results cause a feeling of sincere pride for our people,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said at the awards ceremony held at the Palace of Independence.



# Housing prices, pensions, ecology

Current issues concerning the economy were discussed at the traditional meeting of the President with the leadership of the Council of Ministers. The Head of State considers direct dialogue with the developers of regulatory acts to be effective, and it will continue. Several projects were reviewed on this occasion.

By Dmitry Kryat

**Preceding the discussion, Aleksandr Lukashenko gave two important messages, one concerning possible changes, "They will continue because life doesn't stop. But if someone wants changes aimed at scrapping the policies that are being pursued, this will not happen. There will be elections, there will be alternative candidates, they will offer the demolition of the old system and new changes and the people will decide. We will be purposefully implementing our ideas. These changes will be made in a measured, not revolutionary way."**

The major principles of the current policies are well-known. They, in fact, have never changed. As the President noted, people and their interests are in the spotlight, "People are different. It happens sometimes that people demand things that the state should not really do, but we must still listen to them," emphasised the Head of State. "No matter how

complex and urgent the problem is, an assessment of how to solve it and how it will affect a particular person is necessary."

## Housing must be affordable

Enough housing is being built in the country. No one can argue with this, but prices are sometimes problematic. The Government has prepared a draft document that should moderate the appetites of developers.

The President reminded them that at one time there was an instruction dealing with pricing for housing under construction, which has already been tested in practice. It proved that it's possible to build with a profitability of 5 percent without damaging developers' businesses.

From a subsequent conversation it followed that priority will be given, regardless of the form of ownership, to those companies that are ready to build at lower cost and lower prices. For the rest, priority will be set to receive the remaining orders. The President stressed, "We don't want to help rich



people pay double the price of housing and fill their pockets with profits."

Another indisputable requirement of the Head of State is that those companies that have their own production base should build. It is not acceptable for an order to be received by a company that has only an office, and then it looks for contractors in the form of the same state-owned construction enterprises. As for the proposals of the Government on pricing, specific questions were raised, "Will this lead to a real reduction in prices? Are there any flaws in the proposed solution?"

## Ecology plus economics

Special attention is paid to the topic of waste management and packaging. The Head of State has repeatedly underlined that it's under his personal control, noting, "We

must not allow ourselves to suffer the fate of neighbouring countries where people are suffocating from the number of landfills, and the soil has been poisoned by chemicals for decades. The state of the environment is the most important issue. The health of our citizens and the next generations of Belarusians is priceless."

At the same time, the President focused on the fact that, despite the importance of the environmental aspect of the problem, it should also be considered from an economic point of view, "Developed countries, which, like ours, do not have rich reserves of natural resources, have learnt how to extract the necessary resources from waste. I ask you to report on how the developed draft decree implements the instructions to restore order in this area based

on the world's best practices and achievements."

## In the interest of people

Another issue proposed for discussion tackled professional pension insurance for workers who work in adverse conditions. "There are proposals that we could support them by providing the right to receive an early pension. Please report back on whether such a decision is possible. Are there any funds needed for this?" Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

Looking ahead, we must say that, on this topic, it's been ordered to once again work on the proposals. As for the remaining issues, after the meeting, the First Deputy Prime Minister, Dmitry Krutoy, and Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Kухharev informed journalists about them.

# All facets of common business

**On January 1st, our country took the baton of the chairmanship of the Eurasian Economic Commission. In February, it will be headed by Mikhail Myasnikovich. The post is one of great honour and responsibility, since this is a structure where strategic problems for the Eurasian Economic Union are solved. In his talk to the Main Broadcast programme of the Belarus 1 TV Channel, the member of the Board (Minister) for Industry and Agribusiness of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC), Aleksandr Subbotin, spoke about the progress that has been achieved during the 5 years of the work of this association, as well as what initiatives are expected from the presidency of our country in the next four years.**



Aleksandr Subbotin

By Svetlana Mikhovich

"Not only me, but many others, expect Belarus to make a breakthrough and achieve basic freedoms — the movement of goods, labour, finances and services. These fundamental points are strategic. Europe has followed this path for five or six decades. We are trying to go through this in five years

and speed up the process as much as possible. Some things are easier, some are more difficult. But we are still moving ahead, studying the experience and mistakes of our colleagues," Aleksandr Subbotin stressed.

Speaking about the success of the Eurasian integration in the sphere of industrial and agro-industrial complexes, the EEC Minister noted two significant achievements. In the field of agriculture, this means signing agreements at the highest level on common requirements for the production of seed turnover and livestock breeding products. This allows us to gradually move away from the export of high-tech genetic material.

"Almost all seeds and breeding animals are bought abroad — so we become dependent: productivity and quality will depend on what is sold to us. Moreover, we can be cut off from these opportunities by political sanc-

tions. Therefore, it is very important that the requirements are uniform throughout the region — to ensure that Belarusian seeds that have received a top certificate in their country do not have to go through additional certification in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This will be easier, faster and more efficient for a farmer or an ordinary villager," the official added.

The second important achievement is the machine tool engineering centre, which was commissioned last summer. Mr. Subbotin explained, "Machine-tool construction is the most innovative industry saturated with new technologies. It is recognised that one job in this area gives six to seven jobs in conventional industry. And here is a centre in which all countries have already joined. It will make it possible for us to determine where and what kind of machine we produce, so as not to look for somewhere abroad. If we do some-

thing co-operative, for example, we can take the technology from Belarus, and some from Kazakhstan and put a plant somewhere in Smolensk. This is a focal point for this particular industry."

The introduction of new technologies through the development of a single digital system of industrial co-operation helps establish interaction between enterprises and the EEC regions. 6,000 companies participate in the work of this platform and their number is expected to increase to 50,000 by the end of next year. In fact, according to the Minister, a close conglomerate of industrialists has been created — who can communicate, find friends and partners and thus facilitate the process of selling goods, reduce the cost of production and increase its competitiveness. This will make it possible to develop exports to regions such as the Middle East, South America and Africa in the future.

**The President met with the Latvian Prime Minister, Krisjanis Karins. The conversation was extensive — covering economic co-operation and the expected visit of the Belarusian President to Latvia to the upcoming World Hockey Championship. Aleksandr Lukashenko proposed to seriously expand liaisons between the two countries.**

# Minsk-Riga: a good background for co-operation

## Restoring ties

Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that the two countries have had very strong economic ties since Soviet times. “I am really happy to welcome you and your colleagues to Minsk. I hope that Minsk is not a strange city for you, just like the capital of friendly Latvia is not a strange city for us. No matter where we are, no matter what we or other people say, we used to be part of a one big country in the past. We used to have close, friendly relations. Our economic ties were very strong,” he said. “Much has been lost in recent years, but it is more important to look forward rather than to reflect on the past. In this regard, Belarus and Latvia have determined many avenues for co-operation.”

According to the Head of State, in contrast to other Baltic States, the backdrop of co-operation between Belarus and Latvia is very good. “I believe we should use this moment to bolster our liaison. Moreover, it could be very beneficial for the economies of Belarus and Latvia,” Mr. Lukashenko noted.

The President remarked that the Belarusian side was making serious preparations for his visit to Latvia. “Thank you and your colleagues for the invitation to visit this friendly country. I believe that your visit to Minsk can be seen as a serious step towards

the preparation of agreements which can be ultimately approved during my visit to Riga,” he said.

## Without barriers

On the whole, the President said that he was ready to answer any questions and invited the Prime Minister to discuss all topics of interest in an open and honest way. “We need to discuss all issues in order to establish open, honest and sincere co-operation with each other. If we succeed now, in the future we will not have cause to reproach each other and will be able to overcome any barriers,” said Mr. Lukashenko.

In turn, Krisjanis Karins noted that Latvia is interested in developing good relations with Belarus. “It is important for us to see an independent, stable and prosperous Belarus,” he said, adding that Latvia is preparing for the visit of the Belarusian President. The Prime Minister hopes the Belarusian delegation will include representatives of the business community for the sides to discuss not only political but also economic collaboration.



## Top priority event

During the meeting, the parties also discussed preparations for the 2021 World Hockey Championship which will be co-hosted by Minsk and Riga. Krisjanis Karins said that

everything is going according to plan on the Latvian side. “We are very excited about the opportunity to co-host the IIHF World Championships with you,” he said. “What is especially pleasing is that Belarus and Latvia

## Logics of co-operation

After the meeting with the Head of State, the Latvian Prime Minister answered questions from Belarusian journalists. In particular, Mr. Karins confirmed the possibility of oil supplies to Belarus through Latvian ports, saying, “On the one hand, it is possible to export oil products from Belarus through Latvian ports. But we can also discuss another possibility: imports of oil from all over the world through Latvia to Belarus. We are already discussing such possibilities. Of course, companies need to investigate this issue, because the business must be mutually beneficial. Here we see great opportunities for Latvia and Belarus.”

Answering a clarifying question about when

it will be possible to reach such agreements, the Prime Minister said, “This question should be addressed to the companies. As for the Government, it is extremely interested in developing business opportunities. This is a practical question. We need to communicate with terminals and railway companies that will provide these supplies. As for Latvia’s position, we are interested in a longer-term relationship. In this case, it is possible to plan a business, and this allows you to lower prices, which is good for all involved.” The Prime Minister stressed that it is extremely important for the Latvian Government to work on improving relations with Belarus and making them stronger.

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# The status of a deputy brings responsibility

Badges and certificates were given to deputies of the seventh convocation of the House of Representatives in the Oval Hall of the House of Government. Before the start of the official ceremony, the Chairman of the House of Representatives, Vladimir Andreichenko, addressed those elected. He spoke of their tasks ahead, solving serious issues that were determined by the Head of State at a meeting with parliamentarians in December last year and which are dictated by the specifics of the current year.

By Yevgeny Kononovich

## Promptly and efficiently

“The main political event for the whole country will be the conduct of the Presidential election campaign, in the preparation of which the deputies will certainly take an active part,” emphasised the Speaker of the House of Representatives. “The five-year plan is coming to an end, and all state bodies, including the House of Representatives, must contribute to the achievement of its programme goals. Moreover, deputies will have to join in the development of a programme of socio-economic development for the country for the next five years. In addition, we should take part in improving the Constitution.”

Mr. Andreichenko called the quality and efficiency of decisions the criterion for assessing legislative activity.

The term for consideration



**The Chairman of the House of Representatives — Vladimir Andreichenko — presents a deputy’s certificate to Andrei Savinykh**

of bills in the House of Representatives shall not exceed one year. Moreover, all laws should ensure the sustainable development of the country, economic growth, improving the welfare and standard of living of the population.

There are currently 40 draft laws in parliamentary commissions and their number is constantly increasing. The schedule

for preparing bills is to be approved at a meeting of the Council of the House of Representatives on January 30th. Vladimir Andreichenko reminded them that the President has decreed that a draft updated Code of Administrative Offenses and Code on Execution Procedures of Administrative Offenses be prepared within six months, “A number of deputies were included in the working

group on the preparation of the documents. I must emphasise that all parliamentarians should take part in this.”

## The basis of sovereignty

In the process of getting to know the Etalon information retrieval system and other state information resources, the Oval Hall also discussed urgent topics such as risks and challenges in the information space.

“The danger of information technologies lies in the fact that society is not protected from their impact,” says Oleg Makarov, the Director of the Belarusian Institute of Strategic Studies. “Today, with the high-quality production of false content, it’s impossible even for experts to distinguish from the truth. Moreover, the vulnerability of public consciousness is superimposed on technical capabilities. Society as a whole gravitates towards negative news. Everything that applies to them is

considered true. Everything that is positive is denied, they say, this is propaganda. In truth, this is a civilisational trend.”

How to respond to it? Oleg Gaidukevich, the Deputy Chairman of the Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs, proposes putting more emphasis on the development of our own resources and own content, “We must clearly show our citizens where the fakes are and where the truth is. Any questions related to the economy, politics, elections... — immediately there is a lot of lies, false and provocative information. All this is done with a specific purpose: to split society and cause confusion. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen our informational influence. Our people should draw information primarily from their media. This is the basis for strengthening the sovereignty, statehood and unity of the country.”



# New investment record

## The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has set a new record for its operation in Belarus



By Olga Korneeva

In 2019, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) set a new record for its operation in Belarus: the bank invested over \$433m

(390m Euros) in 24 projects in the private and public sectors, achieving a record high as far as annual investments are concerned. The EBRD also facilitated syndicated loans to the tune of 40m Euros and mobi-

lised a considerable amount of financing as grants.

The largest financing project was a sovereign loan of 126m Euros for modernising 12 bridges in Belarus. Over 300,000 residents of such towns and cities

as Kletsk, Lyuban, Fanipol, Baranovichi, Bereza, Zhlobin and Shklov will be able to use upgraded wastewater treatment facilities thanks to the EBRD's investments of 26.8m Euros. Residents of 80 populated localities in the Vitebsk Region will get access to clean drinking water thanks to the EBRD's loan of 15.5m Euros to the Vitebsk Region's water company.

In 2019, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development also continued working with Belarusian financial institutions with a view to expanding lending for small and medium businesses and assisting with the development of international trade. Since the EBRD began working in Belarus in 1992, it has invested nearly 2.9bn Euros in 130 projects in various branches of the national economy.

It has recently been announced that Marina Petrov

has been appointed EBRD Head of Belarus — replacing Alexander Pivovarsky, who has served as Head of the Belarus section since 2016 and will continue his career at the EBRD's headquarters in London. Marina Petrov, a Moldovan national, has most recently served as Deputy Head in Ukraine, responsible for one of the EBRD's largest project portfolios and looking after the energy and infrastructure sectors.



Marina Petrov

ECONOMY

## Taking into account climate change



By Irina Sergeeva

### Recommendations on adapting agriculture to climate change being developed in Belarus

"We're working on adaptation to climate change. One of the areas of focus is the need to change the timing of sowing and harvesting," Svetlana Kuzmich, the Deputy Head of the Republican Centre for Hydrometeorology, Radioactive Contamination Control and Environmental Monitoring, noted at a

press conference. According to her, the timing of some agricultural work also requires adjustments.

Considering that climate change is understood not only as a rise in temperatures, but also as droughts, which have become more frequent in Belarus and are now beginning in April, the issue of making recommendations for agriculture requires a systematic approach. In particular, it could be flooding of territories or afforestation. All these will change the wa-

ter regime of the territories and the National Academy of Sciences is currently working on this.

Specialists have already carried out work in one of the districts of the Gomel Region, following which a report was submitted to the Government with a recommendation on how to adapt this region to climate change. In particular, it's proposed to cultivate heat-loving and drought-resistant crops while carrying out agrotechnical water-holding measures.

## Geography of co-operation



By Arina Novikova

Belmastroy Zrt. specialises in providing a wide range of construction services and has significant experience in implementing projects in the construction sector, while also being a member of the National Federation of Construction Contractors in Hungary.

"Export exchange trading of building materials is a pilot project aimed at improving the efficiency of sales of products from the Belarusian construction industry in foreign markets. Here, we work closely with the Ministry of Construction and Architecture and exporting companies," said BUCE spokesman, Roman Yaniv. "Despite the fact that regular auctions for this product group only recently began to be held, a pool of regular buyers from Lithuania, Poland, Russia and Ukraine has already formed. With the help of our new broker, we also expect to enter the Hungarian market."

### Belarusian-Hungarian joint venture Belmastroy Zrt. becomes first broker of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) in Hungary

As a stock broker, Belmastroy Zrt. intends to attract buyers for building materials from Hungary and other EU countries to the stock market, as well as to inform representatives of the business community from this region about the possibilities of using the exchange mechanism to enter the market of Belarus. With the assistance of the company, it is planned to organise regular deliveries of Belarusian cement, gravel, bricks and cellular concrete blocks to Hungary — including as part of the project for the construction of new nuclear reactors: Paks. These products are now sold in two exchange sections: industrial and consumer products and advanced exchange products.

Apart from building materials, the Hungarian broker does not exclude the possibility of working on other promising product areas presented on the BUCE electronic platforms — such as agricultural products, those made of ferrous and non-ferrous metals and timber.

Currently, 11 non-resident brokers of Belarus from 10 countries are accredited at the BUCE.

## Brand to be preserved



By Natalia Yemelyanova

A new manufacturing division will be able to make 1m running metres of woollen fabric per annum. The enterprise is expected to reach planned output capacity by 2024. The trademark of the largest Belarusian textile company, Sukno, will be preserved.

### Kamvol to start making woollen fabric

The project represents the most effective way of setting up a modern woollen fabric manufacturing enterprise in the country because it allows for the minimising of risks relating to sales and the acquisition of raw materials. It will also allow effective use of Kamvol's production floor space and a reduction in the cost of equipment purchases.

Kamvol has been chosen for setting up the new enterprise because the company uses similar manufacturing technologies. "We see integration rates of up to 20 percent as far as the equipment is concerned," commented Belleprom Chair, Tatiana Lugina.

The innovative fund of the Minsk City Executive Committee will allocate Br65.8m (around \$31m) for the establishment of the woollen fabric enterprise in 2020-2021.

# Oil workers have reached new horizons

Three new oil deposits with a reserve of at least 800,000 tonnes have been discovered in the Gomel Region. A new drilling rig already towering over the Rechitsa District and commercial production of strategic raw materials is to be launched in April. Our correspondent visited the Gartsevskoye oil field to learn more.

By Olga Valchenko

Drilling caused many difficulties, which the experts successfully overcame. Until recently, it was an unremarkable clearing a few kilometres from the village of Makanovichi in the Rechitsa District. Now round the clock operations are in full swing, and, in total, more than 30 people currently work at the facility.

The drilling process never stops, a depth of 4,300 metres has now been reached. The Director of the BelNIPIneft Research Institute, Aleksandr Tsybrankov, holds a small cylinder in his hands and explains, "This is a rock sample that has been raised from a depth of more than 4,000 metres. It has oil that we will extract. You can see these brown drops within it. The oil is inside the rock, in the channels."

The rock, from the point of view of oilmen and geologists, has good characteristics: sufficient porosity and permeability. This makes it possible to organise an industrial influx of black gold. And the oil itself, according to



experts, has in this case good conditioning qualities.

The discovery was preceded by serious seismic work on the 3D system, with a three-dimensional study of the subsoil. This showed the wealth of the Gartsevskoye oil field at the Pripyat flexure, more precisely, its southern block.

The Deputy Director General for Geology at Belarusneft Production Association, Piotr Povzhik, assesses the prospects, "At a depth of 4,073 metres in the interval of the Voronezh horizon, we received an influx of more than one hundred tonnes per day, which is a very good indicator for our region."

This year, Belarusneft will be implementing the largest geological exploration programme in the search for new oil fields over the past 30 years.

They began to build a well in the Rechitsa District at the end of 2019.

The Deputy Head, Chief Engineer of Belarusneft's Svetlogorsk Drilling Department, Sergei Legenky, focused on the difficulties of the process, "Each new well needs its own approach, its appearance is a complex process. At this site, on the way to the oil, several unstable rock layers had to be bypassed. In each particular case, it was necessary to increase, then reduce the density of the drilling fluid, to use certain aggregates. It wasn't easy."

A skilful approach has reduced construction time. They reached a depth of 4,320 metres in little more than two months. In April, they plan to commission the well and assess the resource base. But preliminary figures have already shown that the country will receive reserves of at least 800,000 tonnes of oil. Moreover, work at the site will continue, Mr. Povzhik outlined the plan,

"We plan to build 7-9 production wells, each of which will produce at least 50,000 tonnes per day. In the next ten years, we will focus both exploratory work and production drilling here."

Belorusneft's plans are impressive: the largest programme in the search for new black gold deposits over the last 30 years is scheduled for 2020. The company aims to increase the volume of field seismic exploration using the 3D system to 379 sq.km and increase the footage of exploratory drilling to 39,000 metres. Mr. Povzhik is also optimistic about the situation with oil production, "Since 2017, we have been increasing the volume of oil production. Last year, it amounted to 1 million 690 tonnes, and we plan to maintain the upward trend. As for the Rechitsa field, we are mining more there now than during Soviet times."

## NEWS IN BRIEF



### Silichi and Logoisk named among CIS top-10 best ski resorts

They have joined the list of the top-10 most popular ski resorts in the CIS for winter holidays for Russian tourists. The best CIS resorts for skiing and snowboarding are in Kazakhstan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. The CIS top-10 best skiing destinations visited by tourists include Shymbulak, the Altai Alps and Nurtau in Kazakhstan, Logoisk and Silichi in Belarus, Shahdag and Tufandag in Azerbaijan, as well as Tsaghkadzor in Armenia, Karakol in Kyrgyzstan, and Chimgan in Uzbekistan.

The rating is based on the analysis of tours and vacation offers in the CIS winter resorts.

### Unmanned vehicles to be developed at Chinese-Belarusian Great Stone Industrial Park

The company developing the Industrial Park has signed an agreement with the international technology company — Intelligence Equipment



— to create an experimental centre for the development of unmanned vehicles in the Great Stone.

According to the document, the Chinese company will conduct research and development of unmanned vehicles, with work scheduled to start in May.

Intelligence Equipment is a resident of the Great Stone, focusing on research, development and testing of eco-friendly unmanned vehicles, with use of new energy sources.

### First edition of the UEC Super Cycling European Championships may be held in Minsk in 2021

The agreement of intent was signed by the President of the European Cycling Union (UEC), Rocco Cattaneo, and the Chairwoman of the Belarusian Cycling Federation — Natalia Tsilinskaya. Mr. Cattaneo noted that Minsk has almost everything needed to host large-scale cycling competitions.

It is planned that, during the two-week event, elite European championships in



Olympic disciplines, events on the highway, track, BMX-race and BMX-freestyle will be held. A mass start of Gran Fondo lovers is expected to be a true celebration. About 5,000 participants are likely to compete for prizes at the Minsk event, with 72 sets of medals at stake.

### World's first year-round atmospheric lidar developed by Belarusian scientists

This year-round lidar aims to investigate the atmosphere in Antarctica and, by the end of 2020, the device is expected to be delivered to the site. It will help our scientists conduct atmospheric research, becoming the world's first year-round lidar.

The development of the Institute of Physics attracts demand all over the world — including in Russia, China, and Europe. The Institute of Physics is among the initiators of the European lidar network which includes several dozen lidar stations and helps assess the movement of pollutants in the atmosphere. Almost every such station is equipped with software developed by Belarusian scientists.



# Showing yourself while attracting others



Victor Hugo called world exhibitions 'The Great Peace Treaty'. As an engine of trade, they became popular in the mid-19th century. Even digital technologies were unable to beat them. This year, Belarus is busy preparing for the World Expo 2020 in Dubai and, in parallel, plans to build its own National Exhibition Centre. This and more will be necessary to be noticed in the international arena. Having one's own exhibition centre is a matter of image for any state. What will the new complex in Minsk be like?

By Maria Kucherova

## At the command of time

Since the demolition of the old VDNH building in Yanka Kupala Street, other venues have been used for events — the Football Stadium, Minsk-Arena, Chizhovka-Arena, the administrative building at 14 Pobediteley Avenue. "However, the lack of a specialised pavilion hampers the development of exhibitions. Belarus could become a very powerful trading platform for meetings between Russia, Europe, Asia and Africa. But for now, we have to set the schedule of exhibitions taking into account sporting events," says BelExpo Deputy Director, Yevgeny Brigadny. "Moreover, from a technical point of view, these buildings are poorly adapted for expositions. After all, the main requirement is the ability to quickly install and dismantle stands, and for this there must be normal access roads, separate entrances and exits, so that the exhibitors do not interfere with the visitors..."

The glass pavilion in Kupala Street was quite small: the total area is about 5,000sq.m, of which 1,500sq.m is the inaccessible second floor, because of which height was lost and it was physically impossible to install many modern stands or add suspensions to the ceiling. Moreover, the building was cold, it took a great deal of money to maintain a comfortable temperature.

## For all occasions

When designing a new complex, the developers relied on the best practices of Germany, Poland, and Russia. One of the obligatory conditions is that the exhibition must be convenient in terms of transport. It is assumed that the future centre in Minsk will appear at the intersection of Logoisky highway with the Minsk ring road, near the Expobel shopping and entertainment centre. It was on this site that the chief architect of Minskproekt, Vladimir Arkhangelsky, developed his project, "From a technical point of view, nothing is too complicated, more time was spent on searching for a concept, and this is the reason for numerous projects; this is already the sixth," notes Vladimir Arkhangelsky, showing us the model of the future complex. "It is important that the centre is recognisable, individual and is associated with Belarus. Cornflower, in my opinion, is a successful architectural image. There will be three petals and a core — 25,000sq.m of covered premises. The contour of the stem is formed by green spaces and tiles laid out in the form of a Belarusian motif. Each of the 8 leaves of the cornflower is an open exhibition area for large equipment. The complex design of the roof which will double as both working and decorative, will give the effect of light. Meanwhile, the core will be decorated with a transparent glass roof.



Vladimir Arkhangelsky

You can enter each pavilion from different sides; there will be several entrances with metal detector frames and ticket offices. There will be spacious 12-metre covered esplanades between the pavilions, enabling visitors to go from exhibition to exhibition, bypassing the street. Nearby there are multi-level and open parking lots for cars, sightseeing buses and containers for the transportation of exhibits."

The length of the petals of the exhibition 'flower' is 290m, two and a half football fields. The core is a round pavilion, housing permanent expositions representing various industries and regions of Belarus — an analogue of the Moscow Exhibition of Economic Achievements.

In the central petal there will be the largest exhibition hall, covering 10,000sq.m. There are no supports and columns only around the perimeter. A huge 90x110m space allows to do what you want and to hold any exhibitions. The ceiling height is at least 14m. Transformable suspended partitions are provided, which ride on rails and divide the room into several parts, depending on the format of the meetings. This is the international principle of constructing such facilities.

The left petal is a pavilion covering 5,000sq.m while the right one is a congress centre where there will be several halls for conferences, seminars and presentations for potential consumers. Moreover, the need for specially equipped rooms for this is growing from year to year. Although there may not be any problem finding smaller halls, seating 50-100, present at almost all hotels, then finding larger rooms that are suitable for larger conferences is much more difficult.

Mr. Brigadny notes that all our wishes were taken into account when designing the 'Cornflower blue sky'. In the future, if there are not enough pavilions, there's an opportunity to develop the centre and complete the petals. Now we're waiting for approval for the project and we will then begin to think through the centre in more detail. By and large, in this matter success is determined not by form, but by content.

## Our Children: wider circle!

We recently saw the end of one of the country's biggest and most significant projects — *Our Children*. It has been held under the patronage of the President for almost a quarter of a century and invariably confirms that kindness and willingness to share warmth are at the heart of our people, especially where children are concerned — the future of our country.

By Olga Savitskaya

Every year, ministries, departments, organisations and considerate people choose the addresses of those who need our help most. This time there were 122 of them on the list. These are orphanages, special schools, foster families and family-type houses, as well as hospitals and rehabilitation centres. Every year, there are more and more people who want to help. The project this year was supported by more than 100 organisations. As always, the first guests included ministers, officials, representatives of departments,

the deputy corps and public associations.

This time, the total amount of gifts exceeded Br1.3m! (more than \$600,000). For a long time, this kind of New Year's charity has not been limited to the presentation of sweets. The most popular surprises are now computers, tablets, educational games, equipment for sports fields and sports equipment. And this is far from a complete list, since the *Our Children* campaign has gone beyond the framework of one-off New Year's gifts — patrons provide constant support, knowing the problems of their charges and always bringing

what they need. Close friendships can last for years, with guests attending all the important holidays for the children, school assemblies and graduations; together they hold amateur sport competitions, give interesting trips and simply help wherever they can. Attention is paid not only to children: they also take gifts and good wishes to nursing homes and care homes for the disabled, while also visiting veterans. Moreover, among the philanthropists there are more and more who have simply decided to help on their own or by teaming up with friends and colleagues.

In general, there was not a



single kindergarten or school (and even a university!) or medical institution in the country, where the New Year celebrations with gifts and presentations wasn't held. It seems that the final chords of the last children's matinees had just sounded, when the Ministry of Education began thinking about how to surprise everyone this year.

## FOCUS

*Our Children* campaign has been held since 1995 on the initiative and under the patronage of the President. Gradually, the event became so popular that it covered the whole country and became an integral part of the social policy of the state.

# A new path to the heart: two in one

## In 2024, a hybrid cardiac surgery centre to appear on the site of the Cardiology Scientific and Practical Centre

By Lyudmila Gabasova

The Cardiology Scientific and Practical Centre has a new ambitious goal: to develop hybrid cardiovascular surgery. Its Director, academician of the National Academy of Sciences Aleksandr Mrochek, is certain that this is the future. This is also a matter of principle in a country where 55 percent of mortality statistics, alas, are due to diseases of the circulatory system. Creating a symbiosis of two high-tech areas — traditional cardiac surgery and interventional technologies — is when doctors work through the arteries and veins with the finest instruments, with a minimum of injury and maximum effect. The opening of the hybrid cardiac surgery centre is scheduled for 2024.

Even a decade ago, interventions were rare: according to Mr. Mrochek, about a dozen were done on coronary vessels, while today, it's thousands! Last year alone saw an increase of 18 percent. And more and more doctors are able to do the procedures, e.g. to radically solve the problem of arrhythmia, in contrast to pills, which have long been considered the only way to control the disease. All sorts of smart devices are being implanted with the help of subtle

technologies to help combat the phenomenon of sudden death, which accounts for 20 percent of all cardiac deaths. Just imagine, via intervention, all four heart valves can be replaced... In combination with classical cardiac surgery, which is also constantly improving, the effects are those which previously one could only dream of.

In general, the idea is to combine efforts and to create a new understanding, new techniques, and ultimately a new doctor with relevant skills. Not just a cardiac surgeon, but a specialist who is also focused on interventional technologies. For this, of course, we need a technological base which is fundamentally different, because so far both directions exist separately. The first hybrid operation in the field of cardiac surgery in Belarus was conducted in December 2018 in the specially prepared X-ray operating room. In general, the conduct of such interventions requires certain conditions. The current operational and resuscitation unit of the Cardiology Scientific and Practical Centre



has been functioning for more than twenty years, so is morally and physically outdated. Global modernisation will be more expensive than the construction of a complex specially designed for the increased capabilities of surgeons.

The state is investing Br97 million in this project, with the building itself costing Br28 million while the rest will be spent on the purchase of the latest equipment.

Doctors say there won't be problems with personnel. They

are already being trained, including in medical universities. But it's also necessary to catch up from a technological point of view. Currently, many of the consumables for such operations are purchased abroad, but we can set up our own production. There is already an example of an enterprise engaged in the development of devices for hybrid surgery — Polytechmed — a joint project of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre and the Belarusian National Technical University. It already boasts certain successes. In any case, it is not a good idea to be forever in the role of buyers, otherwise we will lose the pace of educating specialists who understand this top medical field. Moreover, medicine is one of the main suppliers of innovative ideas, which then migrate into other industries, even into the space sphere.

## Punctuality essential for business world

### Minsk National Airport has claimed first place in the 'Small Airports' category (2.5-5m seats) in the OAG Punctuality League for 2019

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

Minsk airport was also ranked as the world's most punctual small airport in 2018.

On-time performance (OTP) refers to flights that arrive within 15 minutes of their scheduled times. This indicator characterises the timeliness of airport operations in servicing

aircraft and passengers, handling cargo and mail.

The Official Airline Guide (OAG) is a UK-based research company which provides the most reliable digital information on flight status to airports, airlines, tourism-related service companies, aircraft manufacturers and consultants all around the world.

Minsk National Airport provides the entire range of airport services. It operates two artificial runways fitted with advanced equipment and can handle all types of aircraft without restrictions in difficult weather conditions. The airport offers flights to 55 destinations in Europe, the Middle East, and other regions.



## The Sleeping Beauty of Europe

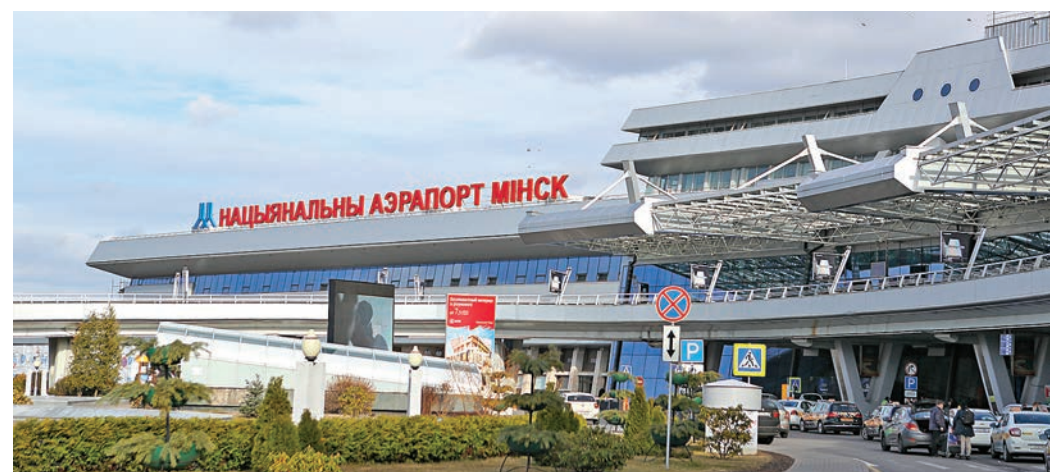
**The French newspaper *Le Figaro* has included Belarus in the top 20 tourist destinations worth visiting in 2020**

By Natalia Yemelyanova

“We can call it The Sleeping Beauty of Europe,” said *Le Figaro* about Belarus. The newspaper noted that our country is the birthplace of Marc Chagall, hailed the architectural heritage of Minsk and

the country's amazing nature: primeval forests and extensive national parks which are home to lynxes, brown bears, hazel grouse and wolves.

*Le Figaro* noted that Belarus is now open to tourism thanks to visa-free entry. The newspaper's top 20 destinations for 2020 also include Australia, Madagascar, Indonesia, Barbados, the United Arab Emirates, Slovenia, Georgia, Cuba, Japan, Hawaii, etc.





# US and China signed phase one of trade deal

**President Donald Trump and Chinese Vice Premier Liu He signed phase one of a hard-fought trade deal, capping a bitter 18-month battle between the world's two largest economies that has roiled markets and slowed economic growth worldwide**

Through the deal, the Trump administration aims to resolve some long-standing American concerns about Chinese trade abuses. However, the accord appears to leave questions about how Washington and Beijing will enforce its terms and prevent further tensions.

The \$200 billion trade deal includes 'an average' of \$40 billion a year for the next two years in agricultural purchase targets from the Chinese; a pledge to purchase \$77.8 billion more in US manufactured goods, such as cars, aircraft and farm machinery; \$52.4 billion in US oil and gas purchases; \$37.9 billion in financial and other services; and increased protections for US intellectual property.

The President said the US and China are 'righting the wrongs of the past and delivering a future of economic justice and security for American workers,

farmers and families'. He added that the deal has 'total and full enforceability'.

The Chinese leader called the trade deal 'good for China, for the US and for the whole world'. He wrote that 'in the next step, the two sides need to implement the agreement in earnest'.

The phase one agreement marks a major step in efforts to rein in a more than 18-month trade war between Washington and Beijing. Mr. Trump has pushed to crack down on what he calls China's abusive trade practices and follow through on one of his core campaign promises.

## New virus surging in Asia rattles scientists

**The number of people infected with a new virus in China tripled, with the outbreak spreading from Wuhan to other major cities**

There are now more than 200 cases, mostly in Wuhan, though the respiratory illness has also been detected in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

Three people have died. Japan, Thailand and South Korea have reported cases. The new strain of coronavirus, which causes a type of pneumonia, can pass from person to person, China confirmed.

Respiratory expert Zhong Nanshan, who heads the health commission team investigating the virus, said 14 medical workers had caught it while treating patients.

The sharp rise comes as millions of Chinese prepare to travel for the Lunar New Year holidays. Although the outbreak is believed to have originated from a market, officials and scientists are yet to determine exactly how it has been spreading.

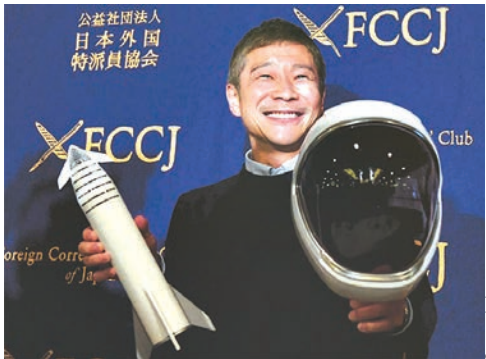
The outbreak has revived memories of the SARS virus — also a coronavirus — that killed 774 people in the early 2000s across dozens of countries, mostly in Asia. Analysis of the genetic code of the new virus shows it is more closely related to SARS than any other human coronavirus.

Experts in the UK said the number of people infected could still be far greater than official figures suggest, with estimates closer to 1,700.

The World Health Organisation said it was currently not recommending restrictions on travel or trade, but was providing guidance to countries preparing for any outbreak.

Airports in Singapore, Hong Kong and the Japanese capital Tokyo have been screening air passengers from Wuhan, and US authorities announced similar measures at three major airports in San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York.

## A Japanese billionaire is looking for a 'life partner' to fly with him to the Moon



**It sounds like the plot of a science fiction movie — but Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa is serious about his search for a special someone to join him on a space voyage to the Moon**

Fashion mogul Maezawa has launched an online appeal for a female 'life partner' to accompany him on SpaceX's maiden tourist voyage — a slingshot trip around the Moon tentatively scheduled for 2023.

"As feelings of loneliness and emptiness slowly begin to surge upon me, there's one thing that I think about: continuing to love one woman," 44-year-old Maezawa wrote in an online appeal.

Maezawa, who founded Japan's popular online shopping site Zozotown, is worth an estimated \$2 billion, according to Forbes.

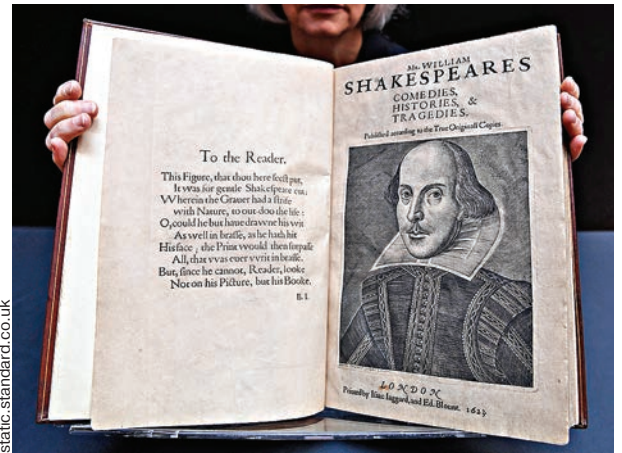
A rare, eccentric figure among Japan's usually conservative entrepreneurs, he made global headlines in 2018, when Elon Musk's SpaceX revealed that he had chartered a flight aboard the company's Big Falcon Rocket.

The Big Falcon Rocket, which was subsequently renamed Starship, has a launch target of this year, according to the SpaceX website.

Widely known as a high-rolling art collector, Maezawa announced in 2018 that he planned to take six to eight artists with him on the Moon voyage and inspire them to create new art — a project he called *Dear Moon*.

"What I want to do is show the people of Earth just how beautiful our planet is by taking artists up there, so that they can convey that beauty to the world," he said.

## Shakespeare's *First Folio*: rare 1623 collection expected to fetch \$6m at the auction



When John Heminge and Henry Condell collated and published what became known as William Shakespeare's *First Folio* in 1623, they were only just beginning to understand the English playwright's greatness

The Stratford dramatist had died seven years earlier in 1616 but over four centuries later he is now still regarded as the unparalleled master of his art.

It could be contended that the folio itself contributed towards the success of the content within, as this large form format was almost exclusively used for religious texts and would have thus attributed a status to the tome that other literary publications could not have rivalled.

"*The First Folio* always stands out. It is a phenomenon. I mean partly just because of the text and resonance of Shakespeare and that he does speak to all ages, and all people, and cultures and so a complete copy of the first folio really is in any

context going to be a tremendous moment," says Margaret Ford, the Head of Books and Manuscripts at Christie's, where the auction is taking place.

Knowledge of what actually constitutes the complete Shakespearean cannon is hard to come by. The authorship of certain plays remains a matter for debate in literary circles, with eight or more plays thought to have been the result of collaboration.

There are also a cadre of people — known as Anti-Stratfordians — who believe that Shakespeare was used as a front for other writers whose profiles in society were too lofty to admit authorship.

But whatever the provenance, this book saved so many

classic plays from extinction. Without it, 18 in the collection may not have survived as they had never been printed, despite their popularity — *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar* to name but two.

Heminge and Condell compiled it from what are known as the 'good quartos' and from long disappeared manuscripts such as prompt books and working drafts (amusingly named 'foul papers').

The copy that will go under the hammer in April was studied by 18th century scholar Edmond Malone and was exhibited as part of the 1951 Festival of Britain.

The folio will be auctioned on April 24th at the New York branch of Christie's.

**Materials prepared with aid of information agencies**



# Returning the symbol

Brest's City History Museum displays an original copy of the Brest (or Radziwill) Bible for the first time — a unique and priceless monument of the Renaissance, masterpiece of world printing art and one of the symbols of Brest



The Chairman of the Brest City Executive Committee — Aleksandr Rogachuk: 'This is a unique artefact'

By Valentina Kozlovich

It's now the only such complete edition of the Brest Bible in Belarus. It was purchased from a collector by Brest businessmen. Last September, Aleksandr Lukashenko presented the original of the Brest Bible to the city at an official event on the 1000th anniversary of the city.

Over more than two decades, Brest's City History Museum has welcomed many guests: representatives of the re-

gional and city authorities, diplomatic missions, creative and scientific intelligentsia and the wider public. All came to see the beautifully decorated folio with subject index, illustrations and engraved title pages.

The uniqueness of the Brest copy of the Bible is that it has preserved two engraved title pages for the Old and New Testaments. The Brest Bible was published on September 4th, 1563 in the Brest printing house by order of the

Berestie Head and the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Prince Mikolaj Radziwill the Black — who also covered all the costs. This is the largest printed edition from the 16th-18th century, with the first circulation of about 1,000-1,200 copies. For four centuries, the Radziwill Bible was read and used in divine services but, by the mid-20th century, not a single copy remained in the city. Belarus joined the study of this legacy in the 21st century. Brest

worked on the return of the folio step by step and, in 2003, thanks to the efforts of the Deputy Director of the Brest Regional Library — Alla Myasnyankina, a facsimile copy restored in Poland joined the library's collections. In 2014, the library purchased fragments of the folio for a budget price: more than 200 authentic pages. In 2017, a monument to the Brest Bible was erected and, in 2019, a 15kg facsimile edition, made by the National Library and Belneftestrah, was presented.

Anticipating the display of the most beautiful, expensive and rare book of the 16th century and the printed symbol of Brest, the Chairman of the City Executive Committee — Aleksandr Rogachuk — said, "The idea seemed almost fantastic but, about four years ago, we began working on it. Thanks to hardworking people, patriots of the city, I realised that there was a possibility of implementing the idea. The issue of the authenticity of the Bible was fundamental. We've succeeded. We've been presented the gift by the Head of State. This is a unique artefact which our city lacked."

The rarity is now available to the public. The folio was placed in a special display case with climate control, developed by Belarusian specialists. There are no similar showcases in the country's museums. The period of exposure of the original is three months a year, since the rarity requires not only careful handling, but also special storage rules. Then the Bible will be placed in a special container and next displayed in 2021.

## He lived and worked in this house...

A memorial plaque to the famous Belarusian novelist, playwright and publicist — Vasil Bykov — will soon be unveiled in Minsk's Maksim Tank Street

By Victoria Popova

Sculptor Igor Zasimovich is responsible for the artistic part of the project and he will soon present a sketch of the memorial plaque to his fellow artists at Minsk's City Expert Council on Monumental Art, which they will then discuss.

"The facade of the building, as you know, is all glass and concrete: in recent years, many stores have opened on the first floor. That's why I proposed hanging a nameplate in the courtyard. However, my colleagues suggested that I look for an appropriate place on the front of the

building," Mr. Zasimovich says, walking around Bykov house with a tape measure, measuring each millimetre of free space and correcting the sketches which will soon be presented to the panel of experts. His work is supervised by the initiator of the project — the Charity Fund of Maria Magdalena Radziwill which is headed by Aleksandr Sapega who says, "At a session of the Advisory Council for Belarusians Abroad under the Foreign Ministry, we expressed this idea — to perpetuate the memory of the people's writer with a memorial plaque in Minsk: last year,



Vasil Bykov

Bykov's 95th anniversary was celebrated. The project was immediately supported by Minister Vladimir Makei, who instructed the Foreign Ministry to provide us with all possible assistance."

According to Anatoly Glaz, the Head of the Information and Digital Diplomacy Department of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, the idea was supported not only by the For-

eign Ministry but primarily by the Advisory Council. Official approvals from the Ministry of Culture, the Minsk City Executive Committee, the National Academy of Sciences, the Union of Writers of Belarus, the Museum of Belarusian Literature History and other organisations were received.

"It's logical that, within the framework of our competence, we helped implement the col-

lective decision as much as we could. We think the idea is right," Mr. Glaz adds.

As a result, a memorial plaque will soon be unveiled on the famous red house where the writer lived for a long time. Its address and the inscription on the sign remain unchanged: 'Vasil Bykov lived and worked in this house in 10 Maksim Tank Street from 1978 to 2003'.

# Especially valuable papers



Irina Patekina has already devoted 37 years to her profession

By Alina Kasel

## The story of Belarusian restoration

The mecca of restoration of valuable archival documents of our country is the central laboratory for microfilming and restoration of documents at the State Archives, located in Minsk's Kozlov Street.

"During the USSR, institutions were established in all republics to ensure the preservation of archival documents and artefacts. Our institution appeared in 1956," says Director Vladimir Klyuiko, while escorting us to the main figure in the business, Irina Patekina, known as the legend of Belarusian restoration.

Forty-two people work here. Three major divisions include the binding and biological control department, the microfilm department, and document restoration and conservation. Irina works in the latter.

We enter a large room where a dozen restorers are poring over old papers. Surprisingly: they are all women. Why? Vladimir Klyuiko recalls how men do respond to vacancies but he warns them, "You have no idea what perseverance, scrupulousness, pedantry and accuracy are necessary." A day later, the men scatter like smoke: well, it is really very difficult.

## The morning does not begin with coffee

Irina Patekina, who heads the department, has a desk full of decrepit documents of various sizes and shades. Documents regarding noble origins, refugee passports from 1926 and a book with information about Jews born in Slonim in 1905 are waiting for restoration... It's scary even to touch them; it seems that they will crumble at the slightest movement.

Every day the morning begins with brewing not fresh aromatic coffee, but glue: water, flour, antiseptic and glycerine. No synthetic materials can be added. About 10–20 litres are needed for the preservation and restoration of documents.

Paper remains the main carrier of information transfer. Digital technologies are certainly good, but they have not existed for very long and cannot prove that they will keep safe the most important information for researchers and future generations, as paper did and still does. Alas, time rules over this fibrous material. But there are specialists in our country who can try to restore the initial form to valuable and important documents and save them.

Before Irina shows us how to save and preserve the documents, she explains that their department is not the first in the chain of restoration of the archives. Before they reach them, the papers go through the biological control and hygienic cleaning area. Microbiologists examine them for mould and fungi damage and other microorganisms. Even if there is no fungus, they still treat the paper with a wet swab dipped in an antiseptic alcohol solution to remove age-old dust: this is simple cleaning.

"Sometimes we receive items that almost crumble in our hands. In order to preserve them, we lay them out like a mosaic, literally bit by bit," Ms. Patekina shows us on a table with a backlight how the restoration process takes place: a paper base is laid — auxiliary paper, similar to the document in colour and structure. This base is cut to shape by hand especially for the document. The role of the foundation is to become the restoring part that the old sheet lacked. In addition, it creates joints for future binding. The document is then strengthened from both sides with restoration condenser tissue paper. Depending on the condition of the document, they use both a simple one — purchased in Russia — and Japanese cotton paper. It is expensive but worth the money."

"We impregnate papers with glue to preserve the document, then we remove the excess with a roller. Afterwards we put the sheet on the dryer and wait for it to dry naturally. Some documents are in such a bad state that they are lost: when wet with glue, they can even dissolve. But we try to keep everything possible. Prior to this, all documents undergo the process of digitisation so as not to miss anything or lose them," the expert explains.

The next day, when the papers are dry, they are moistened with gauze soaked in water and transferred to cardboard so that they don't stick together and put under the press.

## Book restorer and book fan

"Our major tools are a scalpel and brushes, which are used to ensure that there are no seams at the joints of the old document and auxiliary paper, as well as

glue and a roller, but most importantly our hands," Ms. Patekina nods to her colleagues. "I have already devoted 37 years to this profession, and many of my colleagues have been committed to the job for more than 20 or 30 years."

Interestingly, the profession of a restorer of archival documents is not taught in our country. An ideal candidate for the job is a graduate of the Faculty of History, Academy of Arts, University of Culture and Arts. But only those who are extremely scrupulous can work here.

As far as paper is concerned, the restorer has a special love for it. Ms. Patekina and her husband enjoy paper books and newspapers. She says that holding a book is like feeling what is written.

"We never glue books with tape: it will turn into sticky dust over time. It's better to use a sheet of paper and ordinary glue," Ms. Patekina says. "Of course, you shouldn't wet your fingers and turn the pages — books deteriorate faster this way! And under no circumstances should you

hold your hand in the middle of the binding or break the pages. My colleagues and I sometimes come to the reading room of the National Archives to see documents that have undergone restoration handled there. Our work is complicated, painstaking, assiduous, and when you see what documents turn into after frequent use by readers, it's sad: the edges can be uneven, torn in some places... we need to be more careful with such rarities."

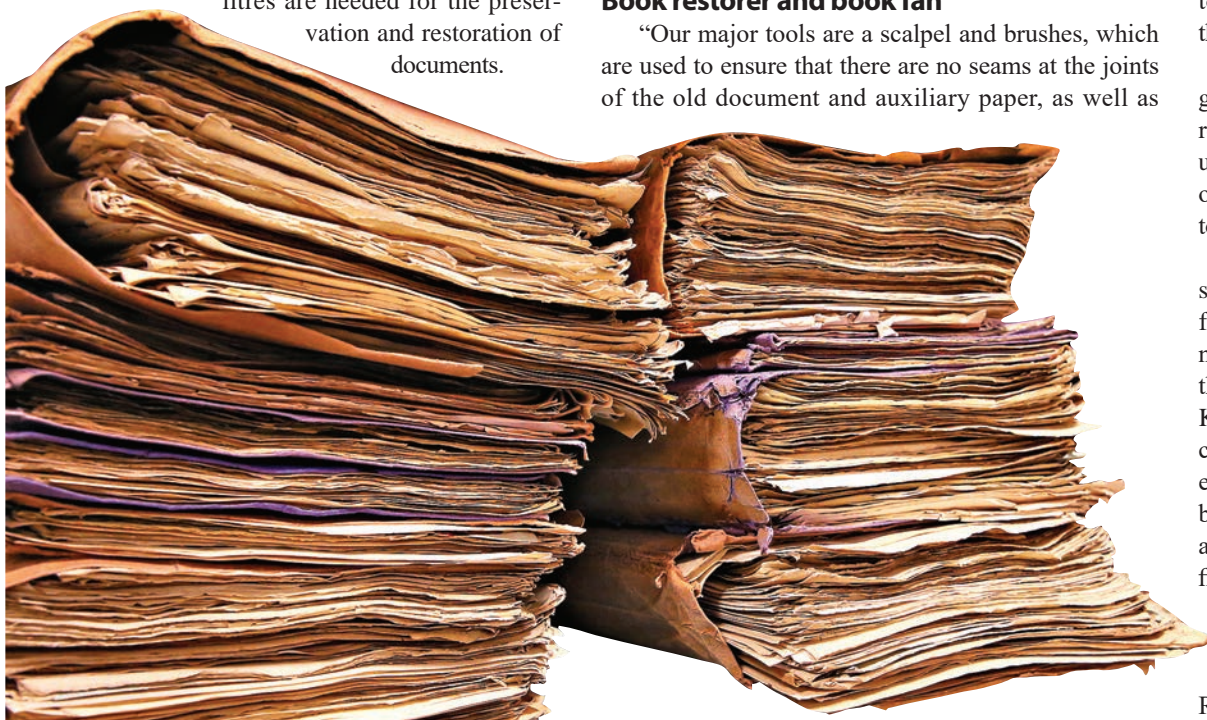
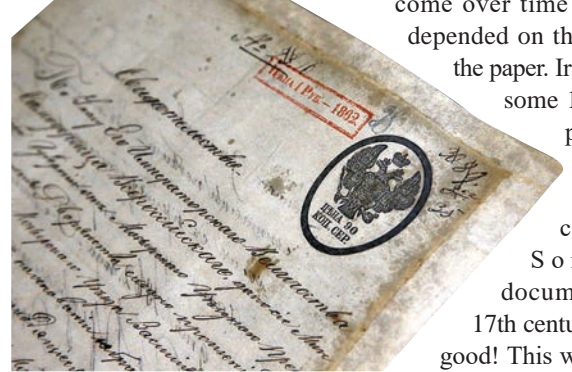
What documents will become over time has always depended on the quality of the paper. Irina shows us some 19th century papers — often in excellent condition.

Sometimes documents of the 17th century also look good! This won't always be said in the future about

modern documents. Alas, the quality of modern paper is not so good. I ask if secret documents are brought to them. Maybe she has read something interesting in the archives?

"No, we don't receive any secret papers and that's good," she laughs. "In general, we don't have time to read them all. Sometimes papers come, for example, documents of partisan movements on notebook sheets in various formats, and we sit down to discuss how to put all this together and save it. This is a difficult and important task."

After Ms. Patekina's department has restored and saved the documents, they are handed over to specialists for binding. Each sheet is manually fastened, then connected by a cover and sent to be put under the press. Only then are they returned to the archives. Director Vladimir Klyuiko adds, "Documents on paper, stored in state archives, are the ultimate life resource; loss, fires and other risks are considered. Therefore, for especially valuable documents, we create digital insurance photocopies, and also record them on photographic film in the microfilming department. Film producers guarantee 500 years of information security. Copies on the negative film are transferred for storage to Dzerzhinsk in the Belarusian State Archive of Films, Photographs and Sound Recordings."



# Games in a new way

LAUSANNE  
2020  
YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES

The 3rd Winter Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne have ended. This time the Games brought together a record number of athletes, more than 1,870 people from 79 countries. For many of the participants, this competition was the first major event in their careers. But they will be memorable not only for this reason.

By Tatiana Pastushenko

The Youth Olympic Games in Lausanne are unusual, and this applies even to everyday routines. For example, the organisers of the competitions invited the participants to travel to the sports arenas not on special shuttles, as is customary at major international events, but on the subway and buses. They wanted the multi-sport forum to become part of the life of the country and the host cities, enabling the participants to get to know the venues of the competition more closely. All the athletes stayed in one unusual round building, translated as the 'Whirlwind'. Interestingly, it's heated using a power system that runs on water from Lake Geneva, and more than a thousand solar panels are installed on its roof to generate electricity. The geography of the Youth Olympics is vast: alongside several Swiss arenas and complexes, a stadium is involved in the French town of Les Tuffes, hosting the biathlon competitions, in which our Yulia Kovalevskaya won the first medal for our team — bronze in the individual race. Skaters don't compete on the usual covered ice arenas, but on the ice of a frozen lake in beautiful St. Moritz!

But the main features, perhaps, lie in the competitive programme. Alongside traditional biathlon, skiing, freestyle, speed skating and other competitions, the programme also included new disciplines for the first time, such as ski mountaineering — skiing uphill — and 3x3 hockey. In addition, the major

feature of the Games in Lausanne is its multi-national nature. In several sports, athletes compete in mixed teams formed after a special draw.

Four Belarusians went to the Games in Lausanne: three field players — Ilya Korzun, Daniil Karpovich and Andrei Murashko and goalkeeper Yan Shostak. The organisers offered a completely new format for the game: where, at the last Youth Olym-

players fighting for victory on the ice, but only three field players and a goalkeeper, which gave dynamism and entertainment to the game. And these are not all the innovations: hockey players were divided into teams consisting of players from different countries, and names were given to them depending on the colours of the game's kit. Our youngsters ended up in four different teams: Korzun — in the 'green' squad,

"Everything happens much faster than in classic hockey, although the 5x5 format is more familiar to me," said Ilya Korzun. "We were trained by a Serbian coach, and we agreed to throw as much as possible to the opponent's goal, since the size of the pitch is small. We had a good team and understood each other well."

Perhaps it's precisely in this type of competition that athletes need to fight not for the victory of their country, but for their teammates, and this is the main idea of the International Olympic Committee. Friendship and mutual support is the main idea of such tournaments. Together with our Ilya Korzun, gold medals were received by athletes from Russia, Ukraine, Spain, France, Norway, the Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary, Estonia and even Luxembourg and Hong Kong. It's unlikely that the players from the last two countries where hockey is not well-known would have managed to become winners of the Youth Olympics as part of their national teams, but, having united with other youngsters, their dreams of gold became a reality. In the unofficial medal standings of the Games, awards won by athletes in multinational teams are not counted.

But is this the main thing for the youngsters who still have their whole sporting life ahead? What is more important than the impressions, new incentives and benchmarks that these still very young athletes receive at such events. And they, no doubt, will be more than enough!



Ilya Korzun

pics, athletes competed in hockey skill and mastery, a new 3x3 competition was prepared for them in Lausanne. On the ice platform, divided into two parts by special sides, two matches were simultaneously held: a male and a female tournament, and in each team it wasn't six

Karpovich — in the 'black', Murashko — in the 'yellow', and Shostak — in the 'orange'. In the end, the green team won, and Ilya Korzun became a champion of the Games. After the first few matches, the players commented that playing in this format is interesting.

## Bronze sun of the desert

By Arina Novikova

**The crew of the Belarusian MAZ-SPORT auto team under the leadership of Sergey Vyazovich took third place in the general truck classification at the Dakar-2020 rally**

The Belarusian MAZ team lost to the leaders of the race by 2 hours, 4 minutes and 42 seconds. A Russian KAMAZ-master truck — under the leadership of Andrey Karginov — won the race, completing 12 stages of the rally in 46 hours, 33 minutes and 36 seconds. Second place went to his teammate Anton Shibalov's crew (lagging behind by 42 minutes and 26 seconds).

The Belarusian crew led by Aleksey Vishnevsky took eighth position in the overall standings. The truck driven by his teammate Aleksandr Vasilevsky finished 12th.

The total length of the final 12th special stage was 167km. The truck driven by Russian Andrey Karginov came first in this stage — covering the distance in 1 hour, 28 minutes and 41 seconds. Aleksey Vishnevsky's team finished second in the MAZ (lagging behind by 2 minutes and 1 second).

Third place was taken by the crew of KAMAZ-master under the leadership of Eduard Nikolaev (behind by 2 minutes and 7 seconds). As for Sergey Vyazovich's crew, at the final stage, he finished 17th (12 minutes and 28 seconds behind the leader) but this did not stop our crew from winning bronze at the end of the rally.

This year, Dakar has been held in the Middle East for



dakar.com

the first time, where the event moved after 11 years in South America. From 2020, for at least five years in a row, the marathon rally will be hosted by Saudi Arabia which has become the thirtieth state in the Dakar's history.

The total length of the route this year was 7,800km, includ-

ing 5,000km of high-speed sections. The route passed through the Tihama Desert, which stretches along the Red Sea. Sandy plains intersect the beds of dried rivers and the remains of ancient rocks. The average air temperature at this time of year reaches +30°C. According to scientific sources, the climate in the Tihama Desert is classified as 'difficult to tolerate'.

A total of 47 cargo crews from all over the world were announced for Dakar 2020. Three Belarusian MAZ cars took part, as well as KAMAZ, IVECO, TATRA, RENAULT and MAN. In addition, 170 motorcyclists and 134 crews on SUVs, buggies and ATVs participated in the extreme races.



### Final missed

**Belarusian tennis player Arina Sobolenko (ranked 12th in the world) failed to make it to the final of the tournament in Adelaide, Australia with a prize fund of \$780,000**

In the semi-final match, the Belarusian lost in two sets to Ukrainian Dayana Yastremskaya (24) — 4:6, 6:7 (4:7). The match lasted 1 hour and 46 minutes.

At the start, Arina Sobolenko beat the representative of Chinese Taipei — Hsieh Su-wei (36) — 5:7, 6:1, 7:5, then she beat American tennis player Bernarda Pera (70) — 7:6 (7:4), 6:2 and, in the quarter-finals, for the first time in her career beat Romania's Simona Halep (4) — 6:4, 6:2.

### Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee presents tickets for Summer Olympics

**The ticket design uses traditional Japanese colours: red, blue, purple (the colour of Japanese Wisteria) and green, which are designed to reflect the four seasons of the year**

Depending on the venue of the competition, the colour marking of the tickets differs, and sports pictograms are added.

Some of the tickets for the upcoming Olympic Games have already been sold to local fans through a special lottery. Offi-

cial ticket sales will start in the spring. The cheapest tickets cost \$22 and the most expensive (for the opening and closing ceremonies) can be purchased for \$2,680 and \$1,965. The average ticket price is set at \$72.

The 32nd Summer Olympics in Tokyo will be held from July 24th to August 9th, 2020.



SPORT

The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
January 23  
2020

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## Photo of the week

Orthodox believers celebrated the Baptism of the Lord. The tradition of plunging into an ice hole in this day has been preserved

### EXHIBITIONS

#### NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 1<sup>st</sup> February. *Kalyady Calling*  
Until 15<sup>th</sup> February. *Light and Air. Piotr Shapiro's Pictorial Art*  
Until 17<sup>th</sup> February. *Encyclopaedia. National Project*

#### NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

47 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 1<sup>st</sup> February. *Panna Doll'ya*  
international exhibition

#### BELARUSIAN CINEMA HISTORY MUSEUM

4 Sverdlov Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> February. *Light*

#### MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN NATURE AND ECOLOGY

12 Karl Marks Street  
Until 1<sup>st</sup> February. *Magic of Wild Birds*

#### CAT MUSEUM

23 Internatsionalnaya Street  
Until 31<sup>st</sup> January. *New Year Season at Cat Museum*

#### LIBRA

37 Nezavisimosti Avenue  
Until 26<sup>th</sup> January. *Pablo Picasso. Paragraphs*

#### NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

20 Lenin Street  
Until 1<sup>st</sup> February. *Always Ready and Brave*  
Until 19<sup>th</sup> February. *Schraga Zarfin. Leading to the Light*

#### TROITSKY SUBURB

7A Bogdanovich Street  
Until 6<sup>th</sup> February. *Children's Colours in Poet's Wreath*  
Until 12<sup>th</sup> March. *Robo Art*

#### MIKHAIL SAVITSKY ART GALLERY

15 Svobody Square  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> February. *Beijing Through Belarusian Photographers*

#### LEONID SHCHEMELEV ART GALLERY

10 Revolyutsionnaya Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> February. *Miraculous World of Embroidered Pictures*

#### ZAIR AZGUR MUSEUM-WORKSHOP

8 Zair Azgur Street  
Until 25<sup>th</sup> January. *Silver Happiness*

#### VLADISLAV GOLUBOK PARLOUR

14 Starovilenskaya Street  
Until 2<sup>nd</sup> February. *Time of Fairy-Tales*

### THEATRES

#### BOLSHOI THEATRE OF BELARUS

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square  
23.01. Traviata  
24.01. Sleeping Beauty / I Embrace You With Love  
26.01. Little Prince  
28.01. La Bohemia  
29.01. The Nutcracker, or Another Christmas Story / Three and Mozart concert  
30.01. Figaro's Wedding

#### YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street  
23.01. First / Jeweller's Jubilee  
24.01. Pan Tadeush  
25 and 26.01. Zavalnya Nobleman, or Belarus in Fantastic Stories  
26.01. Pinsk Gentry  
28 and 29.01. King Lear  
29.01. Elza's Land  
30.01. Hangdogs

#### CHAMBER DRAMA THEATRE

5 Frunze Street  
25.01. Featherhead

#### MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street  
25 and 16.01. Jewish Happiness  
27.01. Dubrovsky  
28.01. I Want Your Husband  
29.01. Ball in Savoy  
30.01. Titanic

#### MAKSIM GORKY THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street  
23.01. Edip  
25.01. Oscar and Pink Lady  
26.01. Circle of Love  
28.01. Bridal Shower

#### BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street  
23.01. Doctor Raus' Career  
24.01. Three Giselles  
25.01. Serezha  
26.01. Medea's Syndrome  
28.01. Chernobyl Prayer  
29.01. Concrete  
30.01. A Mad Woman

#### YOUTH THEATRE

17 Kozlov Street  
23.01. Family Weekend  
24.01. Pieta / Vanyushin's Children  
25.01. Happy New Year!  
26.01. Dear Pamela  
28.01. Lesson of Love. Kosciuszko's Story / Love of Three  
29.01. Double Double  
30.01. Not Invented by Us

#### BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE

3 Krasnoarmeiskaya 3  
23.01. Three Sisters  
24.01. Suffering of Tender Heart  
25.01. Not Leave Me  
30.01 Star Time