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Grodno celebrates 890th anniversary

Last Saturday, one of the oldest and most beautiful cities of Belarus received congratulations and, as is customary on such days, entertained and generously treated its residents and numerous guests

Minsk-Tashkent: a new starting point in bilateral relationships

By Yevgeny Alexandrov

The second day of the official visit was especially intensive, with a negotiating marathon starting with a top-level meeting in the Kuksaroy residence, located 17km from Tashkent. We can say that this picturesque place has marked not only the reboot of Belarusian-Uzbek collaboration, but also a new starting point in bilateral relationships between the states. Alexander Lukashenko is confident, “This meeting will give an additional impulse to the expansion of bilateral interaction across all areas, filling it with new and breakthrough content.”

The current visit was in preparation for two years. Both presidents didn’t want it seen as a protocol event or tourist trip, so the agenda was developed very thoroughly. The results surpassed all expectations. Almost two dozen signed documents (not memorandums but concrete treaties and agreements on co-operation) and dozens of contracts — worth hundreds of US Dollars were signed. During his statement to the media, Mr. Lukashenko admitted that he doesn’t ever remember so many documents being signed during foreign visits.

The President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, accepted Alexander Lukashenko according to all the rules of eastern hospitality. Communication was very open, warm and trustworthy, proven by the fact that the talks in a narrow format lasted for three hours instead of the scheduled one hour. The presidents welcomed the members of the delegation in good mood, stressing that they managed to agree across all issues.

“The key result of our negotiations is that we’ve agreed that Belarus has no topics which are closed for discussion or for consequent actions,” stressed Mr. Lukashenko. “If our Uzbek brothers see something they need in Belarus, it will be done immediately: either we will relocate the manufacturing enterprise to your territory or we will set up a joint venture.” A proposal was made to establish a joint enterprise processing cotton in Belarus, with further entrance to European markets.

Mr. Lukashenko reminded us that in Soviet times, everything possible was ‘pumped’ out of the Uzbek republic. Primarily, it was cotton — ‘white gold’ — which was used to meet the needs of the whole Soviet Union and was also exported. Furthermore, no cotton processing enterprises were established in Uzbekistan, while a huge factory was built in Belarusian Baranovichy. Today, it’s high time to return to former co-operation and to make it mutually beneficial. This tackles all areas: pharmaceuticals, machine building, education or the military-technical sphere, stressed the President of Belarus. “If you are interested in our military schools and state security agencies, you are welcome to see them. If you need complex controls, we’ll create them for you. If you need rocket techniques, we’ll organise the necessary productions. We’ve agreed that we won’t only repair and modernise your military equipment but are also able to set up plants on your premises and to modernize Su, MiG, as well as armoured vehicles and tanks. There’s lots of such equipment in this region.”

The official visit of Alexander Lukashenko to Uzbekistan, held on September 12th-14th, surpassed all expectations. Without any doubt it can be stated that it was a meeting of close friends and reliable partners that got together in Tashkent.



Presidents Alexander Lukashenko and Shavkat Mirziyoyev

Mr. Lukashenko immediately clarified that there’s no charity in this. Uzbekistan possesses huge resources of gold, oil, gas, uranium and ferrous metals. The country is rich and is ready to invest big sums in the creation of new plants and the attraction of technology. This is beneficial to Belarus. He stressed, “We need markets for our own growing market and we’re offered such an opportunity. The population of Uzbekistan alone is 33 million people, while a colossal region surrounds it. We’re very keen that our Uzbek brothers help us to co-operate with Afghanistan. However, we don’t want to go there alone; we would like to come together with you, with our joint produce.”

The President of Belarus outlined the prospect of creating a powerful production cluster in the region with the participation of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and other countries which can bring a powerful synergetic effect. Mr. Mirziyoyev is keen to create this together with his team, therefore Belarus needs to go and act more boldly, said Mr. Lukashenko.

For a long time, Uzbekistan has been focusing on the raw material sector and agriculture. Mr. Mirziyoyev’s new team

has taken the course towards the creation of powerful industry. The Uzbeks see in the face of Belarus a reliable partner which won’t let them down. The President of Uzbekistan made a special emphasis on this, reminding us that in the last two years, much more has been done in relations between our states than in the previous twenty-five years. “Our states, nations and entrepreneurs have missed each other. We’re now open to the whole world. It hasn’t happened in our relations with any other country that all our governors visited Belarus over such a short period of time.”

Such trust is worth a great deal. The presidents plan to make up for the missed opportunities within a few years, including in mutual trade. Mr. Lukashenko openly told journalists, “Despite the fact that trade volumes between our states have considerably increased over recent years, colossal opportunities are still out there. I was dreaming of \$500m and arrived here with this goal. However, when I heard from the Uzbek President that the figure of \$1bn is close at hand, I thought: ‘God be thanked! If the president speaks like this, it means that there’s a goal. We’re ready for this.’”

According to Mr. Lukashenko, under the currency needs of Uzbekistan and opportunities of Belarus, trade turnover can be increased up to \$2bn in the near future. If each minister and each head of a region or enterprise will take at least one project — such a goal is quite achievable.

This will be facilitated by an impressive package of documents on co-operation in agriculture, education, healthcare, military-technical sphere, science and culture. A roadmap of the partnership will become an inter-governmental treaty on socio-economic co-operation for 2019-2023 and an agreement on the system promoting mutual trade. Alexander Lukashenko and Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed a joint statement, determining priorities for the bilateral relationship in the future.

The current visit became a clear signal for businessmen of both states to the launch of the most ambitious projects. On visiting the exhibition of Belarusian goods, ‘Made in Belarus’, it was possible to make sure that practically all our goods are in demand in Uzbekistan. The event was opened by the presidents after their negotiations. More than 150 Belarusian enterprises and organisations presented their goods here. The hosts themselves admitted that no one has ever conducted such a large-scale exposition. At practically every stand, Shavkat Mirziyoyev stopped and examined the exhibits, while asking about the details and giving his ministers instructions to develop issues of establishing collaboration alongside those that already exist.

The presidents have also solemnly opened a joint venture, Amkodor-Agrotechmash, created at the Tashkent Plant of Agricultural Machinery. In 2018, it’s planned to manufacture 220 units of produce here and, by 2021, the production volume should increase to 1,280 units (with the line-up of the assembled technique expanded). The level of localisation will increase to 65 percent.

Culture wasn’t forgotten either. Recently, in August 2018, the Uzbek authorities adopted a decision to rename one of the central streets of Tashkent as Yakub Kolas Street and to unveil nearby a bust of the Belarusian People’s Poet who, in the years of the Great Patriotic War, lived in Tashkent. Representatives of the Belarusian delegation, together with their Uzbek partners, laid flowers in the memorial place. After the negotiations, the President of Uzbekistan presented Mr. Lukashenko with a first copy of the collection of verses by Yakub Kolas, translated into the Uzbek language.

The President of Belarus became the first foreign leader to visit the personal residence his Uzbek colleague — Kainarsay, located on the bank of Lake Charvak, western Tien Shan. Mr. Mirziyoyev invited him as a sign of special respect and friendship. Here the presidents who boast very warm personal relations continued talks in an informal atmosphere in the fresh air. The heads of state’s working breakfast lasted for more than three hours and then the President of Belarus left for Minsk.

Big business starts from small endeavours

Belarus is interested in the Council of Europe experience in the sphere of local self-government, asserted Alexander Lukashenko as he met the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Gudrun Mosler-Törnström

By Dmitry Dorokhov

“Local self-government, regional government is a very important topic in the modern world. The fact that the Council of Europe devotes a lot of attention to this speaks volumes,” stressed the President. “We would like to learn more about your experience in this field, and therefore we work closely with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.”

Alexander Lukashenko thanked Gudrun Mosler-Törnström for the opportunity to hold this round table discussion in

Minsk and noted that Belarus boasts experience of inter-regional collaboration with Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic States as part of trans-boundary programmes. In October, the Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia will take place in Mogilev and then Gomel will host the Forum of Regions of Belarus and Ukraine. “I would like to take this opportunity and invite you to attend these events. You will see the tangible results of regional co-operation,” noted the President, adding that he was ready to discuss any issues that the President of the Congress has.

Gudrun Mosler-Törnström asserted that she would be pleased to arrive at the forums of regions of Belarus and Russia and of Belarus and Ukraine, if her working schedule would allow her. “I would be glad to come and communicate, as ties with people need to be established and it’s necessary to get acquainted, as personal communication is a good starting point for some large-scale relations.”

Commenting on the results of the meeting with Mr. Lukashenko, Gudrun Mosler-Törnström underlined that the Congress of Local and Regional Au-



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Gudrun Mosler-Törnström

thorities of the Council of Europe is ready to continue collaboration with Belarus. “We’ve agreed that local self-government has a huge importance because state government stems from it. We have also discussed the successful collaboration which was established between the Council of Europe and the Council of the Republic of Belarus, we hope for fruit-

ful continuation of these relations.”

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is an institution of the Council of Europe that represents local and regional authorities of European states. The Congress is made up of two chambers: the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions. The Council on Local Self-Government Co-operation at the

Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus has the status of an invited observer in the Congress, therefore the Council of the Republic and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities organised a roundtable in Minsk to discuss the pressing issues of local self-government. Attending the event were representatives of the Congress from France, Italy, the Netherlands, Greece, and Romania. Belarus has done much in the sphere of local self-government, noted the Chairman of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus, Mikhail Myasnikovich. “I think that the goals on issues of self-governance that we set will be reached. In recent years, the work with the Council of Ministers has also been activated, as well as with the European Union and with the larger united Europe. We welcome this and make much more effort to enable our collaboration to continue and develop.”

According to Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, the roundtable in Minsk was only the beginning of interaction in local self-government.

Goals are common, though everyone has their own path

Belarus Segodnya Publishing House and Xinhua News Agency sign agreement on information co-operation

By Andrey Kovalenko

The document was signed by the Head of the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House, Dmitry Zhuk, and Editor-in-Chief of Xinhua News Agency, He Ping. Editorial offices will exchange multimedia materials while columns will appear on the editions’ websites, dedicated to China and Belarus. Thus, on the sb.by portal and in the newspapers, released by the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House, ‘A Window into China’ column will appear, which will tell us about news in this country.

Close co-operation will be established in organising and providing information about the visits of the heads of state and official delegations of their countries, as well as other inter-state events and activities, conducted in both Belarus and China. Mr. Zhuk thinks this agreement will be a good platform for strengthening collaboration and mutual understanding between our countries. Much is being already done in this area. For example, the Great Stone Chinese-



ALEXANDER KUSHNER

Partners outline big plans

Belarusian Industrial Park offers good opportunities. Belarus became one of the first states to participate in the Chinese global initiative — *Belt and Road*. The Chinese President, Xi Jinping, called the countries involved ‘a community with a single fate’.

“The *Belt and Road* project has existed for five years and with each year the number of its participants increases,” noted the Editor-in-Chief of Xinhua News Agency, He Ping. “This project suggests political co-ordination and openness, single transport infrastruc-

ture, expansion of the scales of financial transactions and trade and the strengthening of friendship between the states. In this respect, the mass media should facilitate the strengthening of communication and spiritual rapprochement. In future, we plan to establish an association for co-operation in the sphere of economic information of the *Belt and Road* states and association of think tanks of the countries participating in the initiative. I hope that by our joint efforts we’ll be authoritative sources of information about opportunities of this

and other projects, promoting the implementation of tasks set by the leaders of our states.”

The major world tendency is that today each country goes along its own path of development. At the same time, there are tasks and goals — common to everyone. Each state with its own history fits into the world process and thus helps implement the general development plan. Mr. Ping believes that useful experience is very important in such a general movement forward. “I know that Belarus has the national strategy of sustainable socio-economic development until 2030, while China has tasks for a century-long development. The unity of our efforts in strategic areas will promote the general development of our states and of the whole world. I think that the goals for development set by our leaders oblige us to develop successful co-operation for many years to come,” asserted Mr. Ping.

P.S. The agreement on information co-operation was also signed by the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House with the Armenian News Agency, Armenpress.

Armenia and Belarus are within the framework of the same integration processes, emphasised the Director of the Armenpress News Agency, Aram Ananyan. “Just look at all the spheres of activity and you will see that this integration that unites us is everywhere. It would be nice if we don’t lag behind and instead learn about each other, because this opens up doors for business, tourism and cultural exchanges.”

By Vladimir Mikhailov

It must be said that the Belarusian Media Forum has long recommended itself as a venue to search for solutions via partnerships. This tackles such problems as the interaction of traditional mass media and digital media. It's no secret that Belarus attaches great importance to digitisation and a project was set up to turn the Republic into an IT-country. It means that we can't do without digital media as it's the most efficient technology. However, no less important is not to lose quality content in the process.

No need to divide the world into black and white

The issue of reputation in the media sphere is still acute. Dmitry Zhuk, the Head of Belarus Segodnya Publishing House, noted at the forum's plenary discussion that everything can be said in modern social networks, but the most important thing for us is that we are responsible for what we write and say.

Belarus' Information Minister, Alexander Karlyukevich, reminded us of the words of President, Alexander Lukashenko, that the major information task nowadays is to form a constructive point of view via serious-minded presentation of materials.

A serious reputation is one of the ways to compete for information consumers. According to the Director of the Centre for Sociological and Political Researches at the Belarusian State University, Professor David

Rotman, people are primarily concerned about the authenticity of information. He believes that demand is growing for media which gives people an understanding about what happens, why this happens and how to solve the problems they are concerned about.

Speaking about the forum, many noted the importance of it being conducted in Minsk. Director General of the Trend Agency (Azerbaijan), Ilgar Guseinov, noted that Belarusian journalism understands its responsibility to the country, nation and people. Ukrainian political analyst, Konstantin Bondarenko, said that the goal of this forum is that people and communities should achieve an information peace. Estonian Professor Eduard Tinn summed up, 'your guys are best in Europe in the IT sphere,' while Belarus' ability not to divide the world into black and white but to cooperate with everyone will ensure a great future.

After the forum a resolution was adopted. Its participants believe it's necessary to continue the practice of experience sharing, development and implementation of joint projects, aimed at strengthening the traditional mass media and their digital transformation in line with modern tendencies.

Undoubtedly, digital transformation of the media space changes journalism, the information industry is experiencing the



YURI MOZOLEVSKY

Digital is on trend, including in the media

Around three hundred people from about thirty states took part in the 13th Belarusian International Media Forum, *Partnership for the Future: Digital Agenda for Media Space*, held in Minsk



YURI MOZOLEVSKY

very powerful influence of the media due to the extent individuals can take part in the formation of the information agenda. However, alongside positive changes, digitisation of the media also brings some negative consequences, negatively affecting the authenticity, quality and objectivity of information flows.

Alexander Karlyukevich believes that traditional mass media should become a powerful uniting factor not simply in the struggle against fake information and unprofessional approaches towards coverage of serious problems, but also in ensuring information ecology and information protection for people. "The programme of the media forum has an aspiration to show which technologies of the media format Belarus can bring into the world

information space," noted the Minister. The major instrument in fighting against fake information in the Internet is people's trust. This opinion was voiced by the First Deputy Information Minister of Belarus, Pavel Legky, "Firstly, mass media should enjoy a considerable degree of trust among its audience, enabling it to confidently respond to any fake news and to nip it in the bud. Secondly, this audience should be as big as possible. If our resources and opportunities enable us to cut-off the distribution of fake news, the problem is basically solved, therefore it's necessary to start working with the audience and earn people's trust."

Editor-in-Chief of the Russian newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda, Vladimir Sungorkin, noted that legal measures of con-

During the work of the forum

trol of such information should be discussed with the wide involvement of the expert community. "Digital technologies are our strategy and our future. All the mass media are going digital. There are no alternatives. This space is so new and unprecedented that rushing legislative initiatives through is not a good idea," he said. Mr. Sungorkin added that conventional media will continue existing as long as they are needed. "Printed media are now financed by readers and by advertisers. But it is the people of an older age, who are interested in newspapers, while the masses and young people dive into the Internet -- a more comfortable environment where they should get genuine information," underlined the Editor-in-Chief of Komsomolskaya Pravda.

The resolution adopted by the participants of the 13th Belarusian International Media Forum also focuses on the fact that mass media need to consolidate their efforts in the fight against fake information and incompetence. In conditions of global digitalisation, rapid changes are observed not only in the sphere of technologies but in the forms and methods of news reporting. 'Conventional mass media and social media are rapidly penetrating each other. While people receive new technical capabilities for self-realisation, the role of the general public in shaping today's media space and the information agenda of the day increases', reads the resolution.

Communication in various formats

Participants of the forum believe that to ensure the successful development of information, for the benefit of society, under the conditions of global digitisation it's necessary to continue the practice of experience sharing, development and realisation of large joint projects, aimed to reinforce the positions of traditional mass media and their digital transformation in line with modern trends. Modern mass media should conduct a constant dialogue, noted the Director General of the Bulgarian Telegraph Agency and the General Secretary of the News Agencies World Congress, Maxim Minchev.

"The infrastructure of journalism has changed drastically and today such professions as journalism almost don't exist on their own," said Mr. Minchev. "It is not what it used to be in the past. Our readers, viewers, listeners can be with us and sometimes ahead of us. Journalism needs to look for ways to stay relevant. Therefore, it's important to maintain an ongoing dialogue with colleagues and communicate in a variety of formats to share experiences and learn from each other," he said.

Meanwhile, in 2019, Bulgaria's capital Sofia will host the News Agencies World Congress and will invite representatives of the world's major newspapers, magazines and radio stations, as well as Google and Microsoft corporations.

The competition for new information resources stimulates the development of traditional mass media. The opinion was voiced at the Belarusian International Media Forum by the Editor-in-Chief of the Xinhua News Agency (China), He Ping. "The development of a new mass media represents competition for traditional media, but this also stimulates them towards progress and pushes them towards new opportunities," said Mr. Ping. According to him, the media forum in Minsk was important as a venue to share experiences for representatives of the mass media from different countries. The forum also gave the opportunity to discuss how best to adjust towards everything that's happening in the media industry and to find optimal practical solutions.

FOCUS



Groundwork and ceiling of the Eurasian Economic Union

Important issues of Eurasian integration have been discussed in Almaty: regarding how to progress, how not to lose world markets and which currency to use in mutual payments?

By Alexander Benko

The Eurasian Economic Union has already established itself and over more than three years, its function has become evident: from an economic point of view, the EAEU countries only benefitted from closer co-operation, as mutual trade turnover grows, risks of sanction wars are falling and additional opportunities for trade are appearing. In its development however, the EAEU seems to have reached a 'psychological' ceiling which, alas, can't be broken so far.

The general population doesn't see the positive sides of collaboration because they don't tackle everyone. It's difficult to



understand why it will be good for you to live with the fact that new modern border checkpoints are being developed at the Kazakh-Chinese border or new power lines are being laid down in Armenia. Such projects create a single economically beneficial model which, as a result, has an influence on each separate citizen of the EAEU.

This was discussed at the Eurasian Mass Media Congress, recently held in Kazakhstan, organised by the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB). The event brought together representatives of all EAEU member states, as well as Tajikistan. The Congress was taking place near Almaty in the Ak-Aul gigantic yurt, mentioned in the Guinness Book of Records (its area being around 300 square metres). In the same way as in ancient times, the biggest yurt on the nomad's route brought together all guests,



At the Congress of Eurasian Media

enabling them to discuss current issues while drinking kumis [fermented dairy product traditionally made from mare's milk], the Ak-Aul invited bankers, economists, political and media experts from the whole Eurasian area, giving them an opportunity to discuss the most important issues of integration.

Along with the traditional topics of Eurasian integration,

other issues have been raised for the first time. The problem of EAEU countries being often distracted to their own infrastructural projects, instead of acting as a single block in issues of building external policy, was a significant issue under debate.

"Today the Eurasian area in the model of the world economy is seen advantageously against the background of two major

players," says Mikhail Delyagin, Director of the Institute of Problems of Globalisation. "This is like a mouse in the cage between two lions. It's necessary to be flexible in order not to be eaten." Meanwhile, the economist noted the beginning of a reverse: global markets are beginning to break into macro-regions, therefore it's vital that the Eurasian Economic Union has enough time to occupy a worthy place in the international economic system which is currently reforming.

Experts cite issues of the appearance of a single currency as one of the major problems preventing deeper integration of the countries in the economy. Proposals to introduce a single currency have been made for many years but remain at the level of conversations only. There are many reasons for this and the major one is that in recent years, single economic processes in the EAEU in the sphere of currency integration were not active because of the complex geopolitical situation in the world and worsening relations of the world powers between each other. However, this complex situation now encourages the EAEU member states to start refusing US Dollars in their foreign currency transactions. According to statistical data, over the last six years, payments in national currencies between the EAEU states have increased by 20 percent. Moreover, the refusal of the US Dollar is seen not only in trade inside the EAEU, but also in co-operation with other countries — China, India and Turkey.

Nothing vague — only specifics

By Andrey Kovalenko

Belarus became a fully-fledged member of the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) in June 2010. Since that time, twenty-six projects — worth \$989m — have been implemented by our joint efforts, and the Bank plans to continue its participation in various spheres of the Belarusian economy.

The share of Belarusian projects in the EDB investment portfolio exceeds 14 percent. Only Russia and Kazakhstan have more. However, opportunities to expand co-operation haven't been exhausted yet, noted Andrey Belyaninov, the Chairman of EDB Board. "Work is continuing with the Government and the Development Bank of Belarus. I'm confident of success. The Council of Ministers and the EDB have signed a programme of interaction which has specific details: areas of activity, projects, terms, responsible people. This is a landmark document and it took considerable to prepare it. Now, on meeting the heads of government of other founding states, I often cite Belarus as an example. The EDB established interaction with the Development Bank and we launched co-



Collaboration has good dynamics

operation in the regime of guarantees and co-financing."

Speaking about the projects the EDB plans to implement in Belarus, Mr. Belyaninov noted that the Bank is involved in infrastructure projects, particularly in the sphere of road construction. "We're funding BelAZ. Last year, its foreign currency earnings totalled almost \$800m and in spring the Bank signed an agreement with St. Petersburg Plant Zvezda — Russia's largest manufacturer of light compact high-speed diesel engines for multiply purposes. It will be developing and supplying

motors for BelAZ. This is another integration project that will be realised with support from the EDB."

According to Mr. Belyaninov, the Belarusians build well and are not expensive, therefore the Bank plans to promote Belarusian construction firms within the space of the Eurasian integration association. This has been already launched. There was time when the EDB lost the opportunity to take part in the financing of the construction of the second runway at Minsk National Airport. "We have drawn serious lessons from this mistake and plan to ex-

pand our presence on the Belarusian market," asserted Mr. Belyaninov. "Moreover, the Finance Ministry provides sovereign guarantees for a range of projects which are very attractive to us."

Belarus-EDB collaboration is mutually beneficial, stressed Mr. Belyaninov. The contribution of the country to the Bank's capital totals \$15m. He believes that this is a very successful injection, since the EDB financed projects in Belarus worth almost \$1bn. In line with the EAEU treaty, the two sides promised to form a common financial market in banking and insurance spheres by 2025. Mr. Belyaninov is confident that the common financial market in the EAEU can be formed quicker. The EDB plans to become an inter-bank clearing centre. "It boasts the software and opportunities for this. We began to conduct transactions in test mode and to open operating accounts to our clients," noted Mr. Belyaninov. "This also envisages payments in national currencies. The retreat from the US Dollar has already begun in the world and we're also moving in this direction. I'm convinced that in future, the EAEU states will be able to remove the US Dollar in their mutual payments, including with the help of the Eurasian Development Bank."

We'll fly to the Moon and get to Mars

For almost a week, Minsk turns into an international star city gathering participants of the 31st Planetary Congress of the Association of Space Explorers: with over 80 cosmonauts from 17 countries

By Victor Lyubimov

It is quite possible that, in the future, participants of the Planetary Congress of the Association of Space Explorers — which annually gathers cosmonauts, scientists and representatives of national space agencies from over three decades — will arrive at this forum on star-ships. Moreover, it will take place not only on Earth but somewhere in the vast expanses of the Universe. Minsk — which has hosted the 31st Congress — hardly resembles a cosmodrome of course, but it has recently welcomed incredible guests!

Belarus hosted an event of this scale for the first time. It is no accident that Alexander Lukashenko welcomed the participants at the opening ceremony of the Congress. After the solemn speeches, work began on thematic and technical sessions, which lasted two days: discussion of pressing issues, problems and prospects for space research, as well as the industry as a whole. The most spectacular part was flight reports, during which the cosmonauts demonstrated their films shot on board the ISS and explained the details of some of their studies.

Belarus in space is not an outsider

Despite the modest size of Belarus, its representatives have made a significant contribution to the development of the space industry. The most striking names are the pride of the world of science. This is, for example, an outstanding astrophysicist, the creator of fuel for rocket engines — Yakov Zeldovich, the developer of rocket fuel — physicist, Boris Kit, developers of space equipment, primarily optical (this avenue is traditionally strong in Belarus). Here, the merit belongs to the founder of the Belarusian optical school — academician, Boris Stepanov; the Institute of Physics of the National Academy of Sciences is named after him. It was in this institution that spectroscopic studies of plasma around devices moving in the atmosphere with the first and second space velocities were carried out, in addition to works on the creation of spectral devices for space systems.

“In the 1970s-1980s, Belarusian scientists participated in programmes of creating ‘Soyuz’ ships, ‘Mars’, ‘Proton’ and ‘Angara’ rockets, as well as the space programme for a reusable transport system — Energy-Buran, orbital stations ‘Salyut’



ALEXEY VAZMITINOV



ALEXEY VAZMITINOV

and ‘Mir,’” said the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences, academician, Sergey Kilin. “Now we have our own system of remote sensing of the Earth, creating a new device

with a resolution of less than one metre. The country runs its own space programme. We actively participate in international space co-operation and are a member of the UN Committee on Peaceful Use of Outer Space.”

Time to get out of the ‘cradle’

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky said once, “The Earth is the cradle of the mind. However, it is impossible to live eternally in the cradle.” This phrase, with the development of mankind,

is becoming increasingly relevant. In addition, it is impossible to stop the desire of people to know about the world, the Universe. Real threats of cosmic-scale cataclysms, such as gamma-ray bursts or an encounter with an asteroid, cannot be discounted.

However, there are two main obstacles that stand in the way — cosmic radiation (we are protected by the Earth’s magnetic field) and the absence of gravity. Both are overcome by the creation of additional magnetic fields and the inertia of accelerated motion. This requires significant energy resources, which we currently lack. So far, it is planned to use the lunar orbital station as an intermediate stage for moving into orbit, for example, Mars. Science is now moving forward and, according to scientists, soon, ways to break out of orbit will be found. These decisions will certainly be significant and will go beyond the proposals that currently exist. In the meantime, experts are engaged in more prosaic, but no less important issues.

Belarus is counting on full participation in the programmes for the exploration of the Moon. Whatever the sceptics say, now such things are not fiction, but the near future. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus has another interesting idea — to prepare our own astronaut for experiments in orbit and to develop the pharmaceutical industry with the help of space; it is quite strong in Belarus. Of course, major plans are also connected with high-precision optics; this is one thing that Belarusian scientists can be proud of. Many devices developed by them are now on board the ISS, and beyond.

Belarus has great star prospects. Hosting such an international landmark forum allows it to declare itself to the world and to realise the scientific and production potential accumulated over many years.

Guests never get bored

In addition to discussing pressing issues related to space co-operation, cosmonauts met schoolchildren and students. Excursions to iconic places of Belarus and a variety of cultural programmes were offered to the stellar guests. The Congress participants laid the Alley of Cosmonauts in the Botanical Garden. Each participant of space flights planted a juniper in the shape of a rocket.

OPINIONS

Bonnie Dunbar, astronaut (USA), President of the Association of Space Explorers:

We are very impressed by what we have seen in Belarus, whether it is a satellite for remote sensing of the Earth, or aviation, or unmanned aerial vehicles, which are developed and manufactured here. It is important that Belarus is making efforts to raise a new generation of young people who are interested in space and who will participate in space research in the future.

Pavel Vinogradov, test cosmonaut (Russia):

Now many countries are involved in the process of space exploration. We know a lot and know how, we know where to move on. Therefore, we are very optimistic about the future in the space sphere. Certainly, priority tasks for us are the development of the Moon and Mars. Technically, they are quite feasible. In the next 5-10 years, we are preparing to start implementing such projects.

Yang Liwei, China’s first cosmonaut, Director General of China Manned Space Agency:

I believe that space exploration is a common goal of mankind. Some states have achieved more in space exploration, others are just

beginning, but all countries are co-operating in this area. It is our common task to develop in this direction and learn about the hitherto unseen world of space. And we have already moved a long way in this direction.

Piotr Klimuk, pilot-cosmonaut of the USSR:

My colleagues Vladimir Kovalenok, Oleg Novitsky and I are proud that we were born and grew up in Belarus, proud of belonging to the Belarusian people and are glad that the meeting of cosmonauts and astronauts took place in our homeland. Belarus is not inferior to highly developed countries in scientific and technical progress. Products that are produced here can be seen in different parts of the world. The space industry will continue to develop in the country, because everyone is striving for new things, and cosmonautics is the latest trend.

Vladimir Kovalenok, pilot-cosmonaut, twice Hero of the Soviet Union:

Competition around the globe is everywhere, including between countries. However, it can hardly be called such in the space sphere. Perhaps there is still more a desire for co-operation because it is difficult for any state to solve such tasks as working in space alone. I will say for certain that the Congress is a success.



Grodno celebrates 890th anniversary

Last Saturday, one of the oldest and most beautiful cities of Belarus received congratulations and, as is customary on such days, entertained and generously treated its residents and numerous guests

By Victor Lyubimov

The anniversary date inspired residents to raise their festive mood and prepare magnificent celebrations. Grodno attracts many tourists every day, there is always something to see and be surprised at. However, on this anniversary celebration day, its almost 370,000 people were significantly increased by guests who came to the city from all over Belarus and abroad. The western border of the country is not far: it's 15km to Poland and 30km to Lithuania. Situated on the picturesque banks of the Nieman River, the city is the fifth largest in Belarus, and its area is the third largest among the urban areas of the country — occupying 142.11 square km.

The official date of Grodno's foundation is considered to be 1128. In 890 years, much has changed, not only in the Nieman: the city has repeatedly been at the centre of notable historical events. To delve deeper into them and get to know the sights of Grodno, everyone is encouraged to come here more than once. The local residents know how to celebrate major holidays and prepare for them well in advance.

The city has been transformed by the anniversary celebrations. In addition to new social facilities, Grodno is now decorated with bright art objects. Sovetskaya Square features the ancient of the City Council, which is floodlit in the evening. There is also a 3-metre globe dedicated to the 16 twin-cities of Grodno and featuring Polish Bialystok and Lithuanian Druskininkai, American Cordova and Chinese Lunnan. On the anniversary, the city centre turned into a bright festive area. In Sovetskaya Street, an avenue of famous countrymen was laid, while the Alley of Cinema was supplemented with new plaques dedicated to films shot in Grodno. Every now and then, theatrical scenes from different eras were staged in the streets. A gastronomic festival was held in Lenin Square — offering dishes cooked according to original



Holiday in the streets of Grodno



Grodno recipes. A traditional cheese festival was held in Sovetskaya Square: its programme included tastings from leading manufacturers and unusual competitions. Cosmonaut Oleg Novitsky became the guest of honour of the festival. Throughout the city, concert venues with music and songs for every taste were opened. The *Book Treasures of Belarus* Festival was held at Gilbert Park, while Grodno residents and guests of the city were offered free excursions. Those interested could take a sightseeing tour by helicopter. A superb finish for the holiday was a fire show in Gilbert Park, as well as fireworks and a laser light show near the House of Culture of Textile Industry Workers.

Trolley on a leash

The champion, a world and European powerlifting record setter — Grodno's Alexander Kodis — has devoted his own personal record to the native city. In Lenin Street, the strongman dragged... a 12-tonne trolleybus for 15 metres.

42 kilometres of friendship

Grodno residents love sport and they have been in the spotlight in the festive programme. All sports schools of the region have presented displays in their playgrounds. It was possible to dress in a fencing suit or as a yachtsman and play soccer or basketball with well-known players in over 30 venues.

Grodno offered its residents the opportunity to cycle 890km on simulators. The international bicycle ride — organised by the trade unions — took part as a dedication to the 2nd European Games and the city's jubilee. Over 150 cyclists covered the 42km distance connecting the twin cities of Grodno and Druskininkai. At the start, the participants unfolded a 25-metre flag of the European Games which will be held in Belarus in 2019.

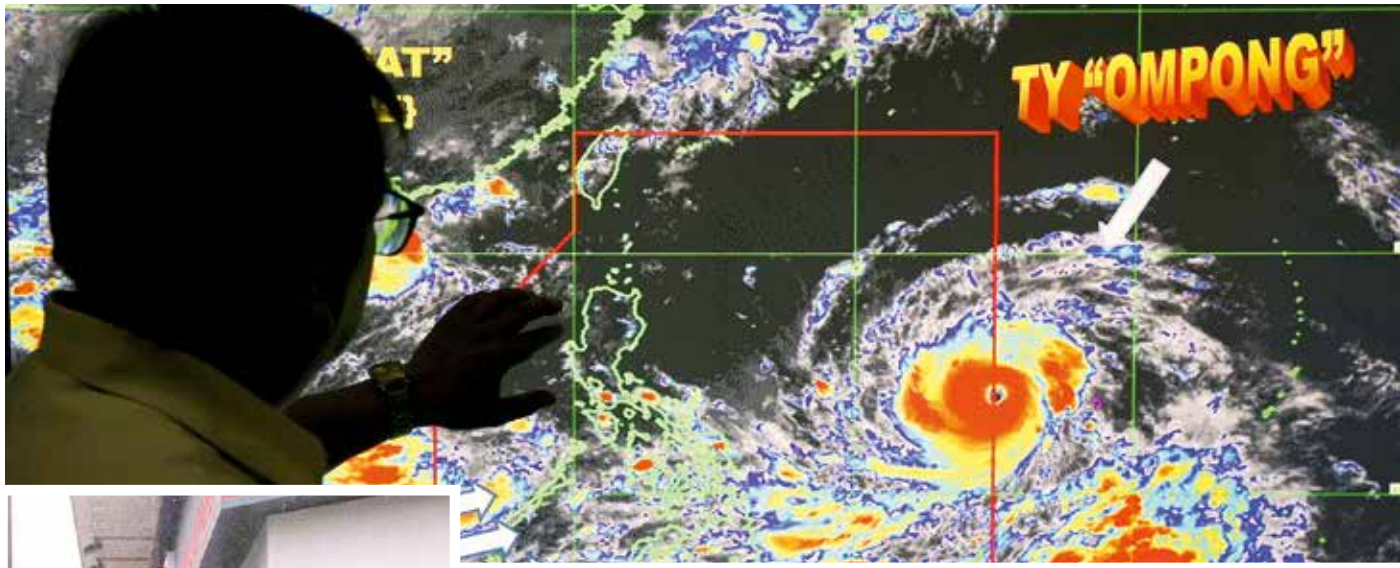
Hello, 60-thousandth visa-free tourist!

Another landmark event coincided with the anniversary of the city: the 60,000th visa-free tourist was welcomed in Grodno in 2018: Olaug Harold Bush, from Norway, who came at the invitation of fellow Belarusians who work with him.

"When they said I would be ceremonially met, I thought it was a joke," Mr. Bush said. "Of course, it's nice to be an anniversary tourist. This increased my pleasant impressions of the country. Prior to that, I knew about Belarus mainly from biathlon broadcasts. I plan to fill the gap and want to see the main sights of Grodno — visiting the suburban agro-tourist complex and the Avgustovsky Canal."

The guest was honoured at the monument to the tourist: this art object was installed in the centre of Grodno the previous day. "Many foreigners took part in the festive events. The visa-free regime contributes to the growth of tourist flow, we see that the city is interesting for guests," said the Chairman of the Grodno City Council of Deputies — Boris Fedorov. Since early 2018, sixty thousand visa-free tourists have visited Grodno and its surroundings. In 2017, there were only slightly more than 50,000 of them. Most often guests are from Lithuania, Poland, Latvia and Germany. The geography of tourists covers over 50 countries. Infrastructure development is also stimulating the growth of tourists. In recent years, many hostels, hotels, cafes and restaurants have been opened in Grodno. On average, a month's visa-free tourism brings about \$1m into the economy of the region.

Since January 1st, according to Decree No. 562 of the President of Belarus 'On Establishment of Visa-Free Entry and Exit of Foreign Citizens', the visa-free tourists' zone near Grodno has been extended to the entire Grodno Region. In addition to automobile checkpoints, railway and air transport has become available for such guests.



Deadly typhoon leaves wake of destruction

It's being called the 'King of Storms' — and at least so far this year, it is

What started out as a Super Typhoon and is now tropical storm Mangkhut is the strongest storm in the world this year. The human cost is at 69 deaths so far but that is expected to rise — and the other costs keep piling

up. Towns are flooded, buildings destroyed and crops are ruined throughout the country. Authorities and aid agencies are both trying to take stock of the damage to begin recovery efforts. In the Itogon municipality rescuers

are racing to find miners trapped in the mud after the typhoon caused two landslides in the area. Rescuers are using shovels to dig, as the ground is too unstable to bring in heavy equipment. The rain and ground conditions

mean the operation is suspended overnight and restarted in the morning. The forensics team leader on the ground, Rodrigo Real, said they will be working to identify bodies they might pull from the rubble.



Charging network to grow globally

ChargePoint, operator of one of the world's largest charging station networks for electric vehicles, is targeting a near fifty-fold increase in its global network of loading spots by the middle of next decade

The group, in which German companies BMW, Daimler and Siemens hold stakes, aims to operate 2.5 million charging points by 2025, up from a network of around 53,000 currently, it said in a statement.

The Silicon Valley-based group supplies charging hardware and software. It owns no re-

charging stations of its own but works like an Airbnb or Uber to create a network of locations and schedule bookings at available charge points.

"Our commitment to deploy 2.5 million charging spots by 2025 comes as the company embarks on the most significant period of growth in our history and in the midst of a revolution in transportation," ChargePoint Chief Executive Pasquale Romano said, adding that the commitment was linked to the assumption that there will be about 20m electric vehicles in the markets that the company caters to.

Nearly 40 fires and explosions erupt in Massachusetts

More than three dozen homes went up in flames when fires and explosions erupted in northern Massachusetts in what were believed to be gas-related incidents, authorities said

Massachusetts State Police said that at least 39 locations were affected by fires or explosions. The blazes were reported 'across a wide swath of dozens of blocks' in the city of Lawrence and the town of North Andover.

The state police described the incidents as gas explosions and structure fires and said they were also reported

in the town of Andover. State officials told residents who have gas service from Columbia Gas of Massachusetts to evacuate their homes immediately and said gas lines were being depressurised by the company.



Latest Apple Watch has a heart monitor

The new Apple Watch has a new, real-life medical app: a heart monitor

The watch has two electrocardiogram or EKG apps that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration and endorsed by the American Heart Association. They are designed to catch irregular heart rhythms that may not necessarily show up during a medical exam but that can signal serious heart risks.

The phone also has a function that detects if the wearer has fallen down and hasn't moved for a while, and can call for help.

Companies have been working for years to come up with wearable digital health products to tap into an aging, health-conscious and well-heeled population.

Japan Government more bullish on capex, eyes on US-China trade row

Japan upgraded its assessment of capital expenditure for the first time in nine months as companies ramp up spending on equipment and software

The government left unchanged its overall assessment that the economy is recovering at a moderate pace in its monthly report for September.

It also flagged the possibility that a trade war between the United States and China could hurt Japan because a large portion of Japan's exports to China are used to make smartphones destined for the US market.

Fortum to pay \$23m to Nasdaq after Norway trader's default

Finnish energy firm Fortum will pay approximately 20m Euros to help replenish a Nasdaq Commodities contingency fund after the default of a private Norwegian trader

Electricity derivatives trader Einar Aas racked up losses he could not cover, leaving commodities companies who are part of the Nasdaq clearing house, and the exchange itself, to plug a 114m Euro hole.

Nasdaq said it had covered 7m Euros of the losses, and told members of its commodity clearing operation — which include Fortum — to pay the remaining 107m within two business days or risk being declared in default themselves.

Autumn theatrical marathon

Summer this year was in no hurry to close its 'curtains', enveloping most of September in warmth. However, traditionally, theatres are in a hurry to open their curtains for the new season. Moreover, the Belarusian audience was offered a theatrical non-stop feast by three international festivals at the same time.



BELTA



BELTA

By Victor Lyubimov

The 23rd *Belaya Vezha* International Theatre Festival — held in Brest — was the first milestone of this autumn marathon. Of course, hardly anyone except the jury members, was able to watch all 26 performances presented by 25 theatre troupes from ten countries at five venues: the large and small halls of the Brest Academic Drama Theatre, the Public Cultural Centre, the Puppet Theatre and the Belarus Cinema. The performances were staged in eight languages: Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, English, Arabic, Armenian and Lithuanian. Russian subtitles helped the audience understand what the actors were saying.

This year, the festival programme included many children's performances. The forum organisers also supported young artists.

Among the innovations were the following: the world's best performances could be seen remotely, they were broadcast on a large screen in the cinema as part of the *TheatreHD* project. The audience were offered two teleconferences from London — *Carmen* at the Sadler's Wells Theatre and *Hamlet*: with Benedict Cumberbatch at the Royal National Theatre. This was not only a trip to the cinema: the organisers tried to create the appropriate theatrical atmosphere. The festival opened with the acclaimed performance of the *Inspector* of the Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre — a modern look at the classic satire of Nikolay Gogol, staged by Nikolay Pinigin and Dmitry Tishko. The action takes place in the outback of Belarusian Polesie.

On the same evening, Pip Utton's English

In the photos — scenes from *The Inspector* by Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre — a laureate of the festival in the 'Best Performance of Drama Theatre' category



BELTA

Somerset Theatre company presented a solo performance of Margaret, dedicated to Margaret Thatcher — the first woman to become Prime Minister of Great Britain. Remember that, at the *Belaya Vezha* Festival in 2016, Pip Utton was awarded a diploma 'For the Best Male Actor Role' for his performance of Charlie Chaplin in the play of the same name.

Sadly, it's impossible to speak of all performances which were judged by the Expert Council of theatre critics and media representatives from Vilnius, Moscow and Minsk. "There was no obvious favourite from the very beginning," stressed Alexander Kozak, Director of the festival and Artistic Director of the Brest Academic Drama Theatre. "Performances are different and aim at different audiences. Each is interesting in its own way, otherwise it would not be in the forum programme.

The Brest Mayor — Alexander Rogachuk — shared his plans for the next year when the city will celebrate its 1,000th anniversary. "We are building overpasses, bridges, social facilities and new roads. However, the city cannot exist without its rich cultural life and without its theatrical component. We are already thinking about the format of *Belaya Vezha* for the anniversary year. One of the main ideas is the participation of twin-cities. Brest has 32 of them in 16 countries, and all can be represented by theatre troupes."

This year's festival closed with the premiere performance of the Brest Academic Drama Theatre — *Slave*, based on the little-known play by Alexander Ostrovsky.

Hardly more than a week has passed, and Minsk is now hosting the colourful stage palette: *The Theatre Chest* which is taking place in the capital. Creative young people from 16 countries will present their performances from 20th to 27th September. The Minsk Forum of Student Theatres is considered to be one of the most prestigious in Europe. During its fifteen-year history, it has gathered together more than 150 teams from 65 countries.

According to the established tradition, in addition to performances, there will be creative meetings, discussions and master classes. Small theatre-goers will not be bored. As part of a special programme for children, young artists from six theatres will share interesting stories with their peers. The main prize of the forum — 'The Large Chest' — will go to the best performance, based on audience voting.

This is a truly great theatrical marathon, with no intervals in sight.

From Homer to the present

By Lyudmila Kovaleva

World rarities — up to 5,000 years old — on show at the exhibition, held in the National Library of Belarus

The National Library of Belarus is known not only for its huge book collection and modern approaches towards servicing users, but also by its publishing and exhibition projects. On September 20th, an international exhibition — *Belarus and the Bible* — opens here. It may seem that it's difficult to surprise Belarusians with projects dedicated to the most famous and influential book in the history of humanity. Last year, when we celebrated the 500th anniversary of Belarusian book printing and the Bible of Francysk Skaryna, many were prepared to be amazed. However, this exposition is a true sensation.

For the first time in the country's history, the exhibition displays rarities of international importance which are up to 5,000 years old. These are exhibits from the UK, USA, Israel, Korea and many private collections.

The visitors can see texts from Ur — the homeland of Abraham — written 4-5 thousand years ago in cuneiform on clay tablets; an ancient manuscript of Homer's *Iliad* in the Greek language; unique Dead Sea Scrolls which are more than 2,000 years old and which have preserved for us the earliest texts of most books of the Old Testament. The most ancient fragments of the New Testament are also on show, which date back to 2-3 centuries AD. Biblical manuscripts in ancient languages — Greek, Latin, Coptic, Samaritan, Armenian, Indian, Chinese — are also of interest. Curious exhibits are also early printed books of many nations

and countries, the first translations of the Bible into national languages, originals of the Bibles by Gutenberg, Luther and Skaryna, ancient Belarusian Biblical manuscripts and black-letter books, almost all translations of the Bible into the Belarusian language. Moreover, the exhibition also showcases the originals of engravings by Albrecht Dürer, Salvador Dali and other prominent painters, dedicated to Biblical plots.

"We have been working for the whole year so that you can see all these exhibits. I still can't believe that treasures of such high level are now exhibited in Belarus. We haven't ever had rarities of such importance!" Deputy Director of the National Library of Belarus, Alexander Susha, can't hide his emotions.



Splendour and luxury of a bygone era

National History Museum of Belarus presents *Silver Age of Russian Jewellers* exhibition, featuring truly unique exhibits

By Irina Ovsepyan

The show attracts visitors with almost 80 kilograms of silver and three lines of guards, but the precious metal is not the key here. These are masterpieces which can barely even be breathed upon. The National History Museum hosts the *Silver Age of Russian Jewellers* exhibition, with 149 unique items — including works by the legendary Carl Faberge.

The exhibition has come from the State Historical Museum of Moscow — which is an event in itself: one of the world's leading museums (which has around 5 million articles) has entrusted Minsk to demonstrate its unique valuable artefacts. Taking a collection of such rarities abroad is no easy task: the receiving museum must be reliable and have an impeccable reputation.

“We are talking about a huge volume of silver. However, apart from this, it's a national treasure, works by the greatest masters of Russia from the late 19th-early 20th century; their names are famous around the world,” explains the Deputy Director for Stock and Chief Curator of Moscow's State Historical Museum — Marina Chistyakova. “There are certain normative rules: climate control, several levels of protection and a facility report, which is a special document, according to which it is decided whether a particular museum can accept a certain collection. The National History Museum of Belarus can host this exhibition. The insurances, permission to export abroad, obtaining guarantees in the country where museum valuables are exported, packaging, delivery by plane, unpacking and placement follow; it is a significant undertaking. The most challenging stage is to select the exhibits to make

the sample representative. Our museum has many departments, including a special store. It was created in 1905 and it's here where we carefully selected exhibits for the Minsk exhibition, thinking of how best to show them.”

It took almost a year for the Belarusian museum to prepare for the arrival of these jewellery masterpieces. The exhibition is extremely interesting, enabling visitors to trace the evolution of jewellery art during the rise of Russian culture and the return of interest in the culture of Ancient Rus. It impresses all with the variety and beauty of the items on show, belonging to different jewellery schools: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev. There are articles belonging to the so-called ‘Russian style’ and ‘national romantics’ — born as part of modernism. There is also army, or regimental silver.



“This is a separate section,” smiles Ms. Chistyakova. “Such articles were made to order for the anniversary of a regiment or an officer — with symbols and attributes peculiar to the regiment and taking into account specifics of the military profession.”

Many visitors to the exhibition notice the huge punch bowl with the inscription: ‘To dear Nesvizh residents for good memories from their commander’, and the date 1911. This bowl has nothing in common with Belarusian Nesvizh however, the regiment fought in 1812 under the command of Barclay de Tolly and distinguished itself in battle near Nesvizh; as a result, the regiment became known as Nesvizh. In memory of those events, the bowl was made in the form of an ancient cannonball, with a stylised flame blazing on top.

Aristocratic household items are not distinguished by ostentatious

luxury, but each of them is a masterpiece of art and the finest filigree work: i.e. a bread roll from the workshops of Ovchinnikov — covered with a napkin; only several seconds later, is it possible to realise that this napkin is also silver. Truly, the pattern and texture of the fabric is produced extremely subtly.

As for the beloved Faberge, the exhibition presents many of his works — made in diverse workshops in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Among them are boxes, cigarette cases, frames for portraits, rings for napkins, a light bulb, a sculpture of an elephant and a keychain-guillotine for cutting cigars.

“The vast majority of people do not know that Faberge's work is not limited to the production of Easter eggs alone,” says Ms. Chistyakova. “Actually, the master has many other wonderful works. One of them is represented in Minsk: the bird Sirin. It's amazing! It's small but very capacious. The wings — adorned with simple rose quartz — hug and grasp the vase. The bowl is made of copper with patina; silver looks great on this alloy.”

The exhibition will last until November 7th and, interestingly, this is not the first joint project of Belarusian museum workers with Moscow's State Historical Museum. “Several years ago, we hosted the *Precious Patterns of Book Printing* exhibition; it aroused great interest,” said the Director of the National History Museum of Belarus, Pavel Sapotko. “Last year, our Moscow colleagues enabled visitors to our museum to see the Bible of Francysk Skaryna — the Prague edition of 1517. Belarus has no book of the kind. At present, we are presenting the exhibition about the most interesting episode of the thousand-year jewellery history of Russia. Such projects are a good way to strengthen cultural ties between our two countries.”

Anastasia Prokopenko was previously in Mexico



One more gold

Anastasia Prokopenko of Belarus claims gold at World Modern Pentathlon Championships in Mexico

By Kirill Karin

After three rounds of the programme (swimming, fencing and cross-country horse-riding) the major struggle for prizes was seen in cross and shooting. At the firing range, the Belarusian spent just 9 seconds, being one of the most quick-firing pentathlon athletes. Anastasia Prokopenko earned 1,336 points after the performance, thus earning a gold award. Silver went to Annika Schleu of Germany, who was followed by the Frenchwoman, Marie Oteiza.

“I believed with all my heart that I would manage to post a good result. The performance was a success, especially in the shooting. I saw Annika Schleu still on the firing range; however, when I was running back I noticed that I was the first. It was my day,” notes Anastasia Prokopenko.

“The women’s final was very exciting and worthy of the Olympic Games. The situation in the leading group was undecided to the end, after shooting from a laser pistol. This again proves that pentathlon athletes never give up. I’d like to congratulate the winner and medallists who demonstrated such a good struggle,” noted the President of the International Union of Modern Pentathlon, Klaus Schormann.

For Anastasia Prokopenko, this is the second gold medal at the World Championships in Mexico. Previously, she managed to occupy first place in the relay race, together with Irina Prosentsova. At the 2017 World Championships in Cairo, the

Belarusian earned bronze in the individual standings and finished first at the European Championships in Minsk. According to experts, Anastasia Prokopenko is a serious claimant for an Olympic medal in 2020 in Tokyo, after her success in Mexico.

Olympic bronze awarded to its legitimate owner

Leader of Belarus’ national team in modern pentathlon, Anastasia Prokopenko, awarded bronze of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing



A decade ago, in the Chinese capital the Belarusian athlete finished fourth, losing the third place to Ukrainian Victoria Tereshchuk. However, the doping probe of the Ukrainian athlete after counter-check of the analysis

gave a positive result for anabolic steroid Turinabol.

Following the decision of the International Olympic Committee, the bronze medal was handed to participant of the Beijing 2008 modern pentathlon tournament Anastasia Prokopenko from Belarus.

The solemn award ceremony was held during the UIPM Pentathlon World Championship in Mexico, where Anastasia had already conquered an individual gold.

Anastasia Prokopenko took part in three Olympiads: in 2008, she finished fourth, in 2012, she was sixth and in 2016 — Anastasia finished only 22nd in Rio de Janeiro.

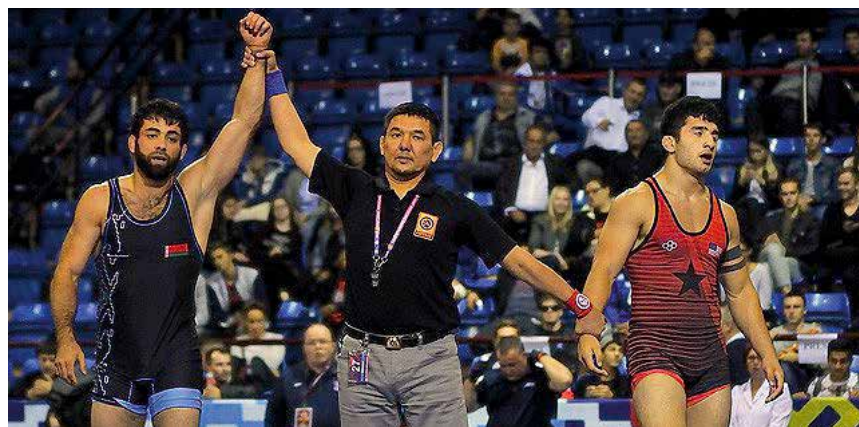
Fight for a place in the group still lies ahead

Belarusian tennis players lose to Russia in Davis Cup match — 2:3

Yegor Gerasimov lost to Daniil Medvedev of Russia — 6:7, 6:3, 3:6 — in the Davis Cup final playoff match of Europe/Africa Zone Group I.

Before the fifth game on the court of the Luzhniki Small Sports Arena, both teams had an equal score — 2:2. On the first day, Ilya Ivashko of Belarus defeated Daniil Medvedev and the duo of Max Mirnyi and Andrey Vasilevsky also celebrated victory in the doubles.

The opening set of the match between Daniil Medvedev and Yegor Gerasimov was intense. Only in the tie break did the Russian manage to achieve the advantage. In the second set, Gerasimov managed to break Medvedev’s serve and lead 3:1. The Belarusian tennis player held his advantage until the end of the set. The decisive moment in the third set was an episode that occurred when the score was 3:2 in Medvedev’s favour. Daniil managed to return Yegor’s serve and win the game. Later, he confidently played the end of the match.



Bright medal shower on wrestling carpet

Eight awards claimed by Belarusian athletes at international freestyle wrestling tournament for the prizes of three-time Olympic champion, Alexander Medved

Over 300 athletes competed at Minsk’s Sports Palace for medals in ten weight categories in men’s and women’s events. Gold went to Azamat Nurikov (74kg), Haji Rajabov (86kg) and Alexander Gushtyn (97kg). The latter defeated in the finals a strong rival from Turkey — Fatih Yasarli.

Silver medals were claimed by Vladislava Andreyeva (57kg) and Maria Mamoshuk (68kg) while bronze awards went to Nurgun Skryabin (65kg), Omar-gaji Magomedov (92kg) and Ibragim Saidov (125kg). This week, the Sports Palace in Minsk is hosting the Oleg Karavayev Greco-Roman Wrestling Memorial Tournament. The freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling tournaments in Minsk are held as test events ahead of the 2nd European Games.

Honest game didn’t go unnoticed

Arina Sobolenko wins WTA’s Breakthrough of the Month nomination

In the voting Belarus first seed was ahead of Anastasiya Sevastova of Latvia and Lesya Tsurenko of Ukraine.

Last month, Arina Sobolenko achieved victory at the representative tournament in New Haven, defeating tennis players from the top ten, and reached 1/8 finals at the US Open, losing to Naomi Osaka. The Japanese tennis player was recognised the 2018 August Player of the Month due to her sensational win at the US Open.

Thanks to her successful performance Arina Sobolenko is now ranked 20th in the rating of the Women’s Tennis Association.

Awards bestowed even after the finish of career

Darya Domracheva awarded Medal of Honour of International Biathlon Union (IBU)



The four-time Olympic champion received the Medal of Honour during the gala-evening, dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the establishment of the IBU, in Croatian Poreč. “The major surprise during the festive event is a Medal of Honour of the IBU! The date of the foundation of the IBU approximately coincides with the time when I began training. I’m very proud that for twenty-five years, both the IBU and I have progressed,” noted Ms. Domracheva. The Belarusian biathlete wished luck to the new President of the IBU, Olle Dahlin, in developing world biathlon. Together with Darya Domracheva the IBU Medal of Honour was also awarded to Ole Einar Bjørndalen. In June, the most successful Belarusian biathlete announced the end of her career, planning to concentrate on bringing up her daughter, Ksenia.

Work experience in KHL had its role to play

Belarusian coach Alexander Andrievsky now heads Sibir HC from Novosibirsk

Alexander Andrievsky replaced Vladimir Yurzinov Jr. on the position of the head coach under whose guidance the Sibir club unsuccessfully started the season and is now ranked last in the Eastern Conference tournament table.

On making a decision to appoint the Belarusian specialist, the leadership of the club was taking into account his work experience in the KHL. Previously, Mr. Andrievsky used to train Dinamo Minsk and Admiral from Vladivostok.

From 2014-2017, Sibir was headed by another Belarusian coach — Andrey Skabelka, who in 2016 brought the squad to the Eastern Conference finals.

Festival of the week



Stuntmen performed as part of the H.O.G. Rally Minsk 2018 Motor Festival

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM OF BELARUS
20 Lenin Street
Until 23rd September. *Alexander Konovalov: Marginalis, or Sidenotes* Until 30th December. *Universe of Yazep Drozdovich*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM
12 Karl Marx Street
Until 7th November. *Silver Age of Russian Jewellers*

NATURE AND ECOLOGY MUSEUM
9A Bogdanovich Street
Until 14th October. *Life with Cold Blood*
Until 14th October. *Insects and More*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS
116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 1st October. *Colourful Days* Until 21st October. *Belarus and the Bible* Until 31st October. Project: *Small Homeland — Novel of Times* Until 31st January. *Maly Trostenets*: exhibition-chronicles of large-scale horror

LIBRA
37 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 31st January. *Somewhere to the West of Minsk: Daily Life of Western Belarus*

PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY
11 Sovetskaya Street
Until 30th November. *Belarusian Lawyers of 19th Century*

MAXIM BOGDANOVICH LITERARY MUSEUM
7A Bogdanovich Street
Until 25th September. *Apple Paradise*

YANKA KUPALA LITERARY MUSEUM
4 Yanka Kupala Street
Until 29th September. *Krivichi Mecca*

OUTLETO TRADING CENTRE
44 Zhukov Avenue
Until 1st January. *Tropics* exhibition of exotic animals

CENTRE OF SWEDISH RESEARCH
11a Internatsionalnaya Street
Until 30th September. *Swedish Language in Belarus* photo exhibition

ARISTOCRAT
10-2 Logoisky Trakt
Until 30th September. Exhibition-sale of V. Gladkov's pictures — *Naked Beauty*

HIGH PLACE ART-PARLOUR
2A Gertsen Street
Until 7th October. *Minsk: City and People*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE
1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
20.09. *La Traviata* 21 and 23.09. *The Swan Lake* 24.09. *Carmen* 25.09. *Little Prince / Italian Fantasy* 26.09. *The Tsar's Bride* 27.09. *Esmeralda*

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE
5 Volodarsky Strete
21.09. *Dangerous Connections*
22.09. *How to Become Rich* 23.09. *TEART. July / Tricks of Khanuma*
25.09. *Pane Kokhanku* 26.09. *Divers*
27.09. *Inn-Keeper*

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS
13 Pobediteley Avenue
20 and 21.09. *Battlefield* 22.09. *A Very Simple Story* 24.09. *Pygmalion*
25.09. *Nobody Ever Said Life Would Be Easy* 26.09. *Mixed Feelings*
27.09. *Abduction of Yelena*

YOUTH THEATRE
17 Kozlov Street
20.09. *Double Double* 21.09. *Rich Brides*
22.09. *Man from Podolsk / Bigamist*
23.09. *Pieta / Warsaw Melody* 25.09. *Male, Singular / Zhmurik* 26.09. *Tectonics of Feelings* 27.09. *The Fool*

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE
7 Engels Street
20.09. *Inspector / Radio Prudok* 21.09. *Seagull* 22.09. *Paulinka / Shabany*
23.09. *Paulinka / Inspector* 25.09. *Not Mine* 26.09. *Elza's Land / Tolerance*

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE
44 Kropotkin Street
20.09. *This Is All She* 21.09. *TEART. New Land* 22.09. *Concrete* 23.09. *TEART. My Road* 24.09. *Grandfather* 25 and 26.09. *Wedding* 27.09. *Adam's Jokes*

CHAMBER DRAMA THEATRE
5 Frunze Street
26.09. *Featherhead*

MINSK CONCERT HALL
5 Oktyabrskaya Street
21.09. *Show in Rain 5: Man vs Woman*
22.09. *From Scratch* 27.09. *Yevgeny Kryzhanovskiy: Female Logics*

BELARUSIAN ARMY THEATRE
3 Krasnoarmeiskaya Street
20.09. *The Dog in the Manger*

CONTEMPORARY ART THEATRE
5 Oktyabrskaya Street
22.09. *House Upside-Down 2*
23.09. *House Upside-Down*
24.09. *Two Henpecked Husbands*