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During Prayer for Belarus solemn ceremony

Tribute of gratitude toward generation who defended peace

All Saints Memorial Church in Minsk hosts Prayer for Belarus ceremony, involving President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko. The inextricable connection between the past, present and future was the common thread throughout.

The church was erected 'in memory of victims who served our Fatherland, paying tribute to past generations, who fought to ensure peace. Arriving at the church, Alexander Lukashenko went to the crypt, where the Metropolitan of Minsk and Zaslavl, Pavel, read a prayer. Capsules containing soil from graves of Belarusian soldiers who died far from their native land were then buried in specially prepared niches, with soil brought from Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Italy.

The glorious yet tragic fate of our warriors, who fought in Europe with the noble goal of ridding the world of the 'brown plague', is worthy of honour. We have inherited calm skies thanks to their sacrifice. It is a legacy we are now tasked

with passing to coming generations.

Can we preserve this legacy? The answer to this question lies in the meeting between the President and heads of major religious confessions, alongside heads of national public associations of Russians, Lithuanians, Poles, Ukrainians, Jews, Kazakhs, Armenians, Azerbaijani, Germans and Koreans. These are diverse in faith and origin, yet are all part of the Belarusian nation.

The atmosphere was friendly and constructive, noted the Chairman of the Muslim Association of Belarus (Mufti), Abu-Bekir Shabanovich. Asked how many Muslims live in Belarus, he answered approximately 10 million together with the whole Belarusian nation. His view is that we've lived and developed together

for many years that understanding of one another is in our blood, and that nothing can divide us.

The heads of each religious confession agreed that members of various faiths and ethnicities do more than just co-exist peacefully; they constructively co-operate, assist and support each other. It's a priceless asset and pays a tribute of gratitude to the generation who fought for peace. We aim to preserve this for the future.

Chatting to leaders of national and religious associations, and then speaking from the church steps, the President reminded everyone of which treasures are most valuable. Wars bring tragedy and the suffering of the innocent but, sooner or later, even the most destructive wars end. Over time, wounds heal, but never

without leaving a scar. The Great Patriotic War, and the Second World War show this to be true.

Danger lies in diluting traditional moral principles, as Mr. Lukashenko underlined at the UN GA meeting recently; he repeated the sentiment at All Saints Memorial Church.

The Prayer for Belarus stirred emotions not only among the faithful but among all who love their nation and harbour warm feelings of kinship with fellow Belarusians. We share a home and its welfare is in our hands.

Many gathered at All Saints Memorial Church, while others watched the live TV broadcast. The prayer certainly resounded in our hearts, reminding us that the future of our children lies in our hands. As long as we remain united, it's in reliable hands.

Vital to find way to change world for the better

Speaking during the UN General Assembly's 70th session general debate, the President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, has stated with regret that the world is yet to become something we can take for granted. Life is not stable, predictable or comfortable for most residents of the planet, despite the colossal efforts made to implement the UN plans.

By Vladimir Khromov

Mr. Lukashenko noted that, on the eve of the summit, the UN's ambitious agenda had been approved for the coming 15 years. The final document focuses on five strategic areas vitally important for all of us: people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. These notions are the logical continuation of efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals. However, he believes that these efforts cause conflicting emotions.

"Yes, there are certain shifts in reducing global levels of poverty, increasing protection and health care for mothers and children, and ensuring access to education. Yet, we should recognise that we have not achieved a significant breakthrough for the benefit of human civilisation," underlined the Belarusian Head of State. "Moreover, we see that the world is being engulfed by ever new challenges, while old problems become more acute. These challenges and problems do not concern just one area, but all of the most important areas of human activity."

Mr. Lukashenko emphasised that the world is facing absolutely new geopolitical phenomena and military conflicts. He stated, "The current level of tension in international relations is almost unprecedented. Unanswered threats are coming to the fore with ever greater clarity. Focusing on minor disputes over secondary issues, the global community has overlooked the emergence of aggressive terrorist states."

The President of Belarus asserted that efforts to impose a certain development model on other countries continue unabated. "Where does this lead to? As a result of foreign intervention, the export of 'colour' revolutions and controlled regime change, previously stable countries have been plunged into chaos and anarchy, all under the canopy of 'democracy'."

The Belarusian Head of State continued, "We're increasingly dependent on each other. The actions of one country have direct implications for the interests of many others. There are no more invulnerable countries."

"We must honestly admit that no effective system of checks and balances exists. States that claim global leadership cannot, unfortunately, escape the temptation to use force and economic blackmail to promote their own interests. The world has come dangerously close to de-facto renunciation of the principles of interna-



At the reception honouring heads of delegations of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly on behalf of the President of the United States of America

tional law enshrined in the UN Charter," stressed the Belarusian leader.

"This is why I'm strongly convinced of the need to have a broad discussion in the UN about the principles of future coexistence of states and peoples. I've mentioned it before, but I want to stress it once again: the Organisation must not become a place for mutual accusations and confrontation of states."

Mr. Lukashenko added, "There is no alternative to dialogue! We must deal with our problems collectively. We can certainly build new walls and draw division lines, but this won't make problems disappear," the Belarusian Head of State is convinced.

Speaking at the general debate of the UN General Assembly's 70th session, Mr. Lukashenko proposed embodying an integration of integrations in the world economy, to counteract global economic threats.

"Currency wars, sanctions, re-division of material resource markets, unfair competition and other negative phenomena are aggravating the global crisis. Attempts by a number of leading states to solve their problems at the expense of other countries only add to confrontation and estrangement"

According to the President of Belarus, only one way exists out of this deadlock: all-round co-operation of economies and sustainable development for the benefit of the entire world community, rather than for separate states. The support of poor countries is of utmost importance in this respect.

"Only through common efforts will we be able to forge a new formula of universal mutually beneficial col-

laboration. As the foundation of such interaction, Belarus proposes an integration of integrations, as the most topical trend in the modern world," stated Mr. Lukashenko.

He emphasised that a number of new integration entities have emerged in recent years. "Today, we speak of prospects of co-operation between the European Union and the Eurasian

Only through common efforts will we be able to forge a new formula of universal mutually beneficial collaboration. As the foundation of such interaction, Belarus proposes an integration of integrations, as the most topical trend in the modern world.

Economic Union, about the major Great Silk Road project, about creating the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Free Trade Zone, among dozens of others," said the Belarusian leader.

"If we succeed in avoiding unnecessary and dangerous competition among integration models, and instead make them compatible and



deep-lying root to all these crises: an artificial cult of individual rights and freedoms to the detriment of collective social interest," the Belarusian Head of State underlined.

"I can assure everyone with absolute confidence that anarchy, lawlessness and violence will never take root on Belarusian land, under any slogan, including that of democracy. We are strong enough and self-assured enough not to let them in from the outside," stressed the President of Belarus.

"Paradoxically, humanity has entered the 21st century with a large number of failed and ineffective states. What is a failed state? It basically means the absence of law and stability, outrageous inequality and extreme poverty, lack of motivation and healthy moral values among youth," asserted the Belarusian leader.

He stressed that people in Belarus understand all of this very well. "Over the past two decades, we've been purposefully building a sovereign independent state, with a socially oriented economy. We have paid utmost attention to policies that strengthen the family and help young people fully realise their potential."

"It's only through self-restraint that we can ensure well-being and protection for all: the powerful and the vulnerable alike. This is precisely the essence of international law, that is the only alternative to the 'law of the jungle,'" believes the Belarusian Head of State.

"Regarding our national experience of development, I'd like to draw the following conclusion: only the union of powerful, responsible and efficient states, united by a system of international law, can adequately counteract global challenges and threats."

The Belarusian President is certain that the role of the United Nations Organisation is vital in this respect. "We sincerely believe that the answer lies in the realm of ideas proposed to the world 70 years ago, by the UN founding fathers. First and foremost, we must unconditionally condemn violence," he emphasised.

At the end of his speech, the President of Belarus quoted Nelson Mandela. "Addressing his contemporaries, this unbroken fighter for justice in the world once said: 'Sometimes it falls on a generation to be great. You can be that generation. I hope very much that such a destiny will fall on our generation. I'm confident that we'll find strength and common sense to do whatever it takes to change the world for the better.'"

complementary, we'll be able to establish a global integration structure encompassing the entire planet, and closely connecting regions and continents. Such a paradigm would enable peaceful coexistence of nations and states, united by common purpose of progress and prosperity," Mr. Lukashenko advocated.

"The value of the integration process lies in its democratic nature. To a certain extent, it equalises opportunities for all stakeholders and enables small and medium-sized countries to develop their potential and become an important link in this process," underlines the President of Belarus. According to him, the most vital condition for integration is mutual benefit.

The Belarusian Head of State noted that global threats in the social, humanitarian and ecological spheres cause concern. "In recent times, resounding calls for maximum freedom have tested the basic foundations of human society, including family, good moral values and virtue."

"We'll do everything that we can to enable our grandchildren, great grandchildren and their descendants to preserve our nation's moral values, kind traditions of spirituality and culture," asserted Mr. Lukashenko.

He believes that the same selfish attitude is characteristic of mankind's approach to nature. "The international community has been trying to meet the challenge of climate change for many years. Many simply prefer to shift the burden onto others."

"Thinking about such problems, one cannot help arriving at one particular conclusion. There is one

Plans for our planet, for the next 15 years

70th jubilee session of UN General Assembly inspires serious thoughts as human development priorities set for coming 15 years

By Dmitry Kryat

State leaders have agreed on the necessity of developing co-operation across five major avenues:

People. Battling hunger and poverty, while providing equal rights and caring for the environment;

Planet. Protecting the environment against degradation, ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, and battling the negative consequences of climate change;

Prosperity. Implementing measures towards economic, social and technological progress, without damaging the environment;

Peace. Based on the thesis that 'sustainable development is impossible without peace, while peace cannot exist without sustainable development'; and

Partnership. Renewal and strengthening of nations' partnerships.

In this context, 17 global focuses were outlined for sustainable development, via 169 tasks. However, the GA session indicated that countries' national interests must remain a



Meeting with Federal President of Austria, Heinz Fischer

priority — despite our shared understanding of global threats and challenges. Such an approach has grounds but leaves the floor open to contradiction, since the interests of small states are in opposition to those of major players at times. Of course, the latter have most power with which to realise their goals.

Barack Obama's speech on equal rights and democratic values made a great deal of sense. However, his transparent hint that Washington

views Russia and China as competitors, or even rivals, wounded me, as did statements regarding the USA's powerful armed forces. Mr. Obama noted that the military are only brought to bear in extreme cases but a later remark mentioned that armed forces would be used if necessary.

Swordplay between the USA and Russia on the Syrian problem was evident; Vladimir Putin proposed a coalition to fight against the



Meeting with President of Ecuador, Rafael Correa Delgado

Islamic State, assisting the Syrian army, while Mr. Obama called the Syrian president a tyrant bombing children. Of course, nothing is simple in global politics. Global peace seems a far off and fragile concept. Belarusian President Lukashenko spoke of an emerging 'spectre of war', only to be warded off by dialogue reflecting mutual interest and respect.

The UN venue not only promotes multilateral contacts but strengthens grounds for bilateral talks. In two days of work in New York, Mr. Lukashenko held several meetings with colleagues. On the last day of his stay in America, he met the Federal President of Austria, Heinz Fischer, sharing opinions on key aspects of Belarusian-Austrian co-operation. Mr. Fischer thanked the Belarusian President for the important steps taken to commemorate victims of World War Two and mentioned the open-

ing of the Trostenets Memorial. In turn, Mr. Lukashenko invited the Federal President of Austria to visit Belarus in any time convenient.

Chatting to the President of Ecuador, Rafael Correa Delgado, the two discussed preparations for Mr. Lukashenko's forthcoming visit to Ecuador, which is likely to take place next year, as part of the Belarusian President's tour of several Latin American states.

On meeting the President of Egypt, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, the two agreed to exchange top level visits. Meanwhile, a roadmap of co-operation is planned for development by an intergovernmental commission, in Cairo, in late 2015.

These meetings bring not only mutual benefit but contribute to more sustainable world architecture, with contacts strengthened. The President notes their necessity, while emphasising the need for an integration of integrations.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS-2015

Elections offer sincere choices for the future

President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko notes that elections must be democratic, peaceful and highly organised, speaking at government session to discuss country's social, economic and political situation

By Vasily Kharitonov

The President has underlined that elections are the most important form of expression of a nation's will. He notes, "This is true democracy, and the cornerstone of this democracy is the expression of the nation's will."

Mr. Lukashenko has encouraged Belarusians to attend polling stations and vote as they deem necessary, because every vote is important for the country's future. "We must keep in mind that, in choosing the head of state, we determine the country's future development. The choice is based on our care for our people, families, prosperity, calm lives, and security," comments the President.

The current election campaign is taking place during a difficult time economically. "Everyone has to be thrifty, cutting back on spending, and reducing their costs," admits the Head of State, adding that the problem was mentioned



by leaders of major states during the UN Summit.

Nevertheless, Government measures shouldn't affect people negatively, urges the President, saying, "Salaries, pensions and other state social obligations are a priority, as are prices, exports, and accounts receivable."

Mr. Lukashenko recalls

that, since Soviet times, Election Day has been a celebration for people. He is convinced that we have everything to turn this election into a celebration too; there will be no expenses connected with entertainment or retail.

The President stresses that the organisers of the

election have no hidden agenda to persuade anyone. He says, "This would be inadmissible. Belarusians are not fools; they understand everything. When we begin to coax people, they wonder why. Therefore, don't do stupid things. We must take part in the election and remember that it is a test."

"Foreigners are free to say whatever they want to about the election. They hold such events in a different way, like a show," adds the Head of State.

The elections are to be held in compliance with Belarusian legislation and the Constitution; no one can break these laws, as Mr. Lukashenko asserts. He says that Belarus is ready to listen to the West regarding election legislation, making revisions if proposals are rational and reasonable, and don't contradict national legislation. Belarus has already done much in this field.

Mr. Lukashenko has stressed that 'the elections should be held openly, in strict compliance with Belarusian legislation and observation of public order'. He says, "We must fulfil all our commitments, including normal and unhampered activity for our observers and those from abroad." The Head of State has called on everyone bearing responsibility for organising and

carrying out of the election campaign to mobilise efforts to the utmost, in order to see the elections held perfectly.

Another bloc of issues has tackled the provision of public security and order, both during the election campaign and afterwards. "We cannot allow any provocations, unauthorised events or illegal actions to occur from various destructive forces," stresses Mr. Lukashenko.

According to the Belarusian leader, his taking part in the UN Summit allowed him to see once again the battle to redistribute access to resources, and for world domination. "Fighting is in progress. Actions are covered up by pretty words, proposals and statements but behind those we can see every country's own interests, particularly those of the strongest countries. This is why we must remain vigilant; we have to protect our nation, taking good care of people's interests. We should serve this nation," concludes Mr. Lukashenko.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS-2015

Brief results before the final

Rehearsal organised this week on threshold of elections, notes Chair of Central Election Commission (CEC) Lidia Yermoshina

By Marat Orekhov

Ms. Yermoshina has announced a general rehearsal to check communication tools for use by all election commissions in advance of polling day. On October 5th, all election commissions transferred information to the CEC on the number of observers registered at each polling station, as well as information on the number of ballot boxes, including those which are transparent, and the number of received polling papers, accredited observers and other data.

The aim was to ensure efficiency. The recent campaign address

was placed on the CEC website on October 5th, with the Chair of the Central Election Commission giving preliminary results on the election campaign. Some have already been voiced, such as information on the first round of elections.

The election campaign is using some innovations, including personal funding by candidates and transparent ballot boxes in the Vitebsk Region. Is the political culture of election participants changing with time?

WORD-FOR-WORD

Lidia YERMOSHINA, Chair of the Central Election Commission, speaks about opportunities for propaganda on the day before the elections:

We don't have any 'day of silence'. This is absent in our legislation, so there are no bans. However, the law directly stipulates that propaganda is forbidden on Election Day.



Lidia Yermoshina details election preparations

Mr. Yermoshina tells us with a smile, "I'd like to tell you something amusing. I received a complaint against myself, which may show the level of political culture of the person concerned. They said that one of the observers from Gomel had demanded from the Central Election Commission the 'suppression of illegal activity of unknown people who were spreading illegal propaganda materials'."

She continues, "The 'illegal propaganda materials' were information materials describing the candidates for the position of President. In other words, everything was legal, produced by the

Central Election Commission and officially spread via Belpochta enterprise."

However, Ms. Yermoshina is inclined to believe that the political and legal literacy of both candidates and the public have significantly risen.

"These days, people are more aware of the subtleties and nuances of electoral legislation. The legal literacy of those collecting signatures and those who offer them has increased, while political culture is directly connected with human personal culture. If a candidate for the President is cultured in themselves, all else will follow."

Each vote truly matters

The Presidential campaign is relentlessly afoot, with meetings in halls and information distribution on the street. Voters have much to think over before making their final choice and people are taking every opportunity to learn more about candidates' programmes.

By Alexander Pimenov

It was a true challenge for all those interested to find a seat within the large hall of Molodechno's Palace of Culture. At the end of his working day, Semen Shapiro — the Chairman of the Minsk Regional Executive Committee and an election agent for Alexander Lukashenko — arrived to meet voters. Everyone expected the conversation to be sincere and open, and no one was disappointed.

"Life is impossible without peace. Development requires calmness, and creation is based on order. These are clear and well-known axioms. Until recently, they were viewed as secure and unbreakable but the sad experience of our neighbours reminds us of the opposite. Does everyone remember how the path of our independent state began," Mr. Shapiro addressed those present, reminding them of two decades ago, when factories were obliged to halt production and farms were destroyed. Shops couldn't get hold of stock, and criminal activity flourished.

"In failing to recollect the past, it's hard to apprehend the present and almost impossible not to make mistakes in the future. At present, among our voters are the generation who learnt about those hard times from soap operas and their parents' stories," Mr. Shapiro continued. "It's important for them to understand: Belarusians have always made their bread by hard yet fair work. Only owing to this does every house have bread."



Journalists have many questions for Head of OSCE ODIHR Mission, Jacques Faure

In a short period of time, queues gathered by the two microphones. It appeared a great opportunity for Molodechno residents to thank the President (through Mr. Shapiro) — on behalf of themselves and their families.

Sergei Gaidukevich's election campaign is also in full swing, with several meetings organised daily countrywide. His election agent — the First Deputy Chairman of

the Liberal-Democratic Party, Oleg Gaidukevich — is convinced that it's necessary to use all accessible means to attract voters. Accordingly, the working schedule is tough: in the morning, he meets people outside and, during the day, chats with voters. As Oleg Gaidukevich admits, he prefers to encourage dialogue rather than giving long speeches. "We describe our programme in short, inviting voters to

ask questions. Of course, people are worried about the economic state of the country and the escalating problem of migrants in Europe. We begin all meetings with a call to attend polling stations, irrespective of which candidate people support. Indifference is the most awful state, for any society or country. A peculiarity of the present election campaign is citizens' absolute disaffection with radical rhetoric," he adds.

Mostly lecturers were waiting for Oleg Gaidukevich and his colleague — another election agent, Yevgeny Kryzhanovsky — at the Minsk State Auto-mechanical College, where most students are under 18. A separate meeting is planned with the Minsk Automobile Works staff. Artiste Kryzhanovsky began with a joke — as is common for his profession. However, he then spoke of serious matters, saying, "It would be a great mistake for people without managerial experience to come into power. Their populist slogans would be unlikely to achieve implementation."

Another Presidential candidate, Nikolay Ulakhovich, is also active across the regions. His agent in Vitebsk, an ataman of the Vitebsk Regional Branch of the Republican Belarusian Kozakdom Public Association, Victor Nikolaev, explains that, in recent time, two outdoor meetings have been organised in the regional centre. Leaflets were distributed among residents and Mr. Ulakhovich was present personally to chat to voters.

Dmitry Bondarchuk, an agent for Tatiana Korotkevich in the Grodno Region, explains, "Our candidate has a tough schedule: ten meetings in just four days. On September 26th, Ms. Korotkevich was in Iyve and Lida; on September 27th — in Slonim, Novogrudok, Dyatlovo and Berezovka; and on September 29th — in Skidel, Shchuchin and Grodno. Many voters attended those meetings, asking topical questions."

At the junction of west and east

Transport co-operation to expand with container carriages

By Valentina Kozlova

This year's heat in Belarus has left railway transportation extra busy, following falling water levels on the River Bug near Brest. Moreover, the movement of heavy vehicles has been restricted along the M1/ E30 Brest-Minsk-Russian border motorway, due to the heat. However, the railway continues to work just fine.

Over the first six months of this year, Belarusian railways has transported 3.7m tonnes of transit cargo (covering East-West-East directions) and, according to its estimates, will see the volume of container transportation rise 4.5-fold by 2020. It is being facilitated by a new joint enterprise, established by Belarus and Russia in Brest, with the volume of investments reaching \$6.6m.

The figures were presented in Brest at a recent co-ordination session involving representatives of railway administrations from Belarus and Russia, as well as heads of transport-logistics companies



Brest's container infrastructure is well developed

from these countries, alongside those from Kazakhstan and Germany.

The important geopolitical location of Belarusian Railways, at the junction of 1.435m and 1.52m gauge lines, has long predetermined its role as an interlink between Western Europe and the Union State, and the Eurasian Economic Union. It is skilfully using the situation to its advantage, using specialised container trains which can travel through Belarus, from Krasnoe station (on the border with Russia) to Brest, in under 12 hours.

It's difficult to overestimate the role of the Brest rail-

way junction for the Eurasian transport-logistics market: the time of train processing is reduced, and there is plenty of capacity. Meanwhile, the Brest-Severno cargo terminal provides a range of services, relating to processing and storage, as participants of the session saw during their tour.

The head of the Belarusian delegation, the First Deputy Head of Belarusian Railways, Vladimir Mikhailyuk, notes that the range of services at Brest will be expanded. He tells us, "Brest boasts developed infrastructure, being able to reload up to 700 carriages and over 900

containers daily, and to store up to 1,590 containers. On average, 100 carriages are reloaded daily at the Brest railway junction, so there is plenty of capacity for more. We can increase our volumes of container train transportation 10-fold."

Belarus is contributing the

terminal assets of Brest-Severno station to the statutory charter of the new joint venture, while Russia is injecting \$1m in funds, to enable the purchase of new equipment, including machinery for lifting, and an IT system.

Belarusian Railways is to hold a 86 percent share against Russia's 14 percent, and the new joint enterprise will be part of the United Transport and Logistics Company (UTLC), dealing with organisation of railway container transportation. The company was set up in December 2014 by Customs Union member states, aiming to increase cargo flow from western regions of China. The UTLC will become a key infrastructural service for the enterprise.

According to UTLC President Piotr Baskakov the joint venture is nearly ready to launch. He notes, "The property assessment report is now complete and the business plan is ready, with a memorandum and article of association. It is at the completion stage, so we plan to set up the JV by the end of the year. It should pay for itself within nine years."

Alongside traditional reloading of cargoes, comprehensive and innovative services are envisaged, ranging from all forms of transit customs clearance and transportation to processing of small batches of cargo.

WORD FOR WORD

Boris PASTUKHOV, Senior Vice President of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry:

The Union State and its programmes are pursuing one goal: intensive development through innovations and sci-tech achievements. One of the key vectors of development for the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry is innovation. Using Belarusian industrial opportunities, we can achieve much. I've always been impressed by how our Belarusian colleagues find new points of application, so we can certainly learn from each other. We should co-operate as equals, understanding that we can obtain much by sharing our innovations.

Window of opportunities for businesses

International financial institutions are ready to provide assistance in preparing pilot projects of public-private partnership

By Piotr Fedosov

Belarus' Economy Minister, Vladimir Zinovskiy, spoke at the opening of the session of the Interagency Infrastructure Co-ordination Council, announcing, "We have seven pilot public-private partnership projects for which we've received conformation of funding, from international organisations such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank's Global Infrastructure Facility and the International Finance Corporation. They are ready to provide assistance to the Belarusian Government in their preparation."

The Minister underlined that Belarus is shifting from the establishment of public-private partnership to its development. He added, "An important result of our activity has been the release of the first national infrastructure plan for Belarus for 2016-2030: the first attempt to de-

The Interagency Infrastructure Co-ordination Council was established in May 2014 to develop proposals to attract private capital, including foreign capital. It aims to promote efficient legal, economic and informational conditions, supporting infrastructure development projects via public-private partnership principles.

termine the country's infrastructure needs and to assess the deficit of resources for their financing"

Mr. Zinovskiy believes it's necessary to set up a special department within the Economy Ministry dealing with PPP issues, saying, "I believe that colleagues from the Fi-



During the Co-ordination Council session

nance Ministry should also think about the creation of such a structure within their department."

Belarus' First Deputy Economy Minister, Alexander Zaborovsky, notes that the Economy Ministry estimates the country's need for infrastructure investments for the period until 2030 at \$60bn. "Our key task is to combine state budget resources with private sector resources, and loans from major international institutions. The infrastructure package is well-balanced. Half of our resources can be obtained from the state budget while the rest can come from private businesses. Showing a window of opportunity to the private sector is the main task of the infrastructure plan," he asserts.

Experts at the UN Economic

Commission for Europe have highly praised Belarusian public-private partnership projects, as noted by the Chairman of the UNECE PPP Business Advisory Board, James Stewart, before the session of the Interagency Infrastructure Co-ordination Council. He stressed, "Our experts have assessed the projects presented by Belarus, highly praising all. We'll do our best to compile a programme for their implementation."

Chief of the PPP programme at the UNECE, Geoffrey Hamilton, noted that, over the past two years, Belarus has made great headway in developing public-private partnership. He underlined, "I believe that, if you continue working in this direction, you may become a PPP leader in the Eastern European region."

According to Mr. Stewart, one of Belarus' best PPP achievements has been its drafting of a law on public-private partnership, allowing implementation of infrastructure projects, with good results.

Mr. Zaborovsky commented that the Interagency Infrastructure Co-ordination Council plans to discuss all seven public-private partnership pilot projects in detail, covering such fields as construction of roads and kindergartens, and public utility issues. "The next package represents 100 vital infrastructure projects to be 'green-lighted' after the pilots have finished. Undoubtedly, the national infrastructure plan will be gradually updated," he explained.

Public-private partnership is viewed as a model for co-operation between the state and the private sector, encouraging the implementation of important social projects through reliance on private business innovations, capital and resources. This eases the strain on the state budget. Each private partner should create and service an infrastructure object for a period of time specified by contract (10-20 years usually) in exchange for fixed payments allocated from the state budget. After the contract expires, the state (via a municipal government agency) takes over the asset.

Door opens

Moscow hosts opening ceremony of Belarusian Embassy to Russia's Business and Culture Centre

By Yulia Vasilieva

Maroseika Street is home to the new triple-storey Belarusian Embassy building, dedicated to business and cultural pursuits. Almost a decade has passed since the idea was first voiced. Belarus' Prime Minister, Andrei Kobyakov, joined the State Duma Chairman, Sergey Naryshkin, in cutting the red ribbon.

The opening ceremony featured many top level guests: the First Deputy Prime Minister of Russia — Igor Shuvalov, the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia — Arkady Dvorkovich, the State Secretary of the Union State — Grigory Rapota, the OSCE General Secretary — Nikolai Bordyuzha, the Head of Russia's Central Election Commission — Vladimir Churov, and various ministers of the Eurasian Economic Commission, deputies and diplomats.

In his speech, Mr. Kobyakov noted that the idea was born long ago, aiming to promote understanding of Belarusian culture, and of our scientific and economic potential. Ambassador Vladimir Grigoriev initiated the project, which was approved by Ambassador Vasily Dolgolev and came to completion under the present head of the diplomatic mission, Igor Petrishenko.

"The new building aims to become an advanced venue for presenting Belarus' export and investment potential: a place for business circles of our countries to meet and a place to support Belarusian-Russian interaction across diverse fields," Mr. Kobyakov stressed.

"The Business and Cultural Centre is impressively multifunc-



Head of Belarusian diplomatic mission — Igor Petrishenko (L) — offers tours to top level guests

tional, with all grounds to meet modern requirements to host a wide range of events — including state parties, business consultations and negotiations for premieres, performances by classical and pop stars, international exhibitions, symposiums, briefings and press conferences."

Mr. Naryshkin is confident that the new venue will prove busy, welcoming guests to a range of friendly meetings and business negotiations. He notes, "I'd like to stress that efficient strategic partnership between our countries is successfully developing along all avenues. Sincere respect and friendship between Belarusian



Triple-storey building of unusual architectural form perfectly suits diplomatic complex

and Russian nations are fundamental to our co-operation."

The General Director of Construction Trust #8 JSC (Brest), Mikhail Vodchits, handed a symbolic key to the Belarusian Ambassador to Russia, Igor Petrishenko, who then took his guests on a tour of the building.

The Business and Cultural Centre is unique in comprising a conference hall able to seat 240 (with sign interpretation for 280), a multimedia press centre, a musical-literary parlour, a library, a gym and a restaurant of Belarusian cuisine. It occupies over 15,000 square metres and, without exaggeration, has been built by the

whole country.

Designs were developed by Minskgrazhdanproekt Institute, while the wooden furniture (on the first floor) was made by Belarusian factories, to individual requirements. Original lamps in the form of raindrops have been designed by Belarusian masters, and produced at Kaskad Plant (Lida, Grodno Region). Some products were brought from abroad: the marble hall on the first floor uses Venezuelan tiles.

A museum of folk crafts is situated inside, as is a library of Belarusian language books, and the Belarusian diaspora now has its own hall — able to seat 60.

Soul for Minsk

By Irina Petrova

Victoria Khomich and Olga Vovk, from the Belarusian National Technical University's Scientific Library, have invented a method to produce interactive text. The idea is that a reader can choose how to continue a story begun by an author. Importantly, the plot takes place in Minsk, so those writing the story need to have visited the places they describe.

Famous writer Andrey Zhvarevsky is headlining the *Writing Minsk* project. To join his 12 co-authors, applicants were invited to fulfil certain tasks, such as finding the smallest library in Minsk and photographing it. As a result, Mr. Zhvarevsky is 'assisted' by a literary radio programme host, an editor of a librarian magazine, two librarians, an economist, a BNTU student, a journalist, a game technician, a craftsman, the head of a charity project and an ecologist.

The co-authors gathered at a café to discuss where the main action should take place: in the Upper Town or Komarovka, Chizhovka, Vesnyanka or at the Circus. Four extracts were placed on the CityDog, by portal and users were invited to vote for their favourite options. A photo competition has helped seek out the spirit of the city, with Olga and Victoria wishing to find 'whether Minsk has a soul'.

The final stage took four weeks to conclude, with the interactive *Spirit of Minsk* story written in Russian and Belarusian, featuring young Minskites: future physicist Nasta and future surgeon Kostik. They eventually discover the city's spirit in a mirror. Project participants have researched the places where the major events of the plot unfold, to ensure a feeling of authenticity.

Of course, the story is not an artistic masterpiece but, importantly, people are interested in the history of their native city and in literary art. Let's hope we see more projects of the kind in the future.

Future economists see much of interest

By Vladimir Minin

Belarus' beauty and business possibilities make it even more attractive

Belarus recently received a delegation of around 40 alumni from Ljubljana University's Economics Department. Among them were young people from Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia, Mexico, India and Turkey — headed by famous Slovenian Professor Janez Prašnikar. Among the group also were five other lecturers, with the delegation visiting the Belarusian State University's Economics Department, to meet local students and lecturers.

Mr. Prašnikar delivered a speech on the topic: 'The Cyclic Nature of Employment Across 18 European States' and the Slovenian guests asked Belarusian lecturers various questions.



Slovenian guests visit MTZ

One lecturer from the Slovenian delegation admitted that he was impressed with Belarusian young people's good knowledge of English and their overall extensive knowledge.

The group took a tour of industrial giant Minsk Tractor Works, where they saw globally known Belarusian machinery under assem-

bly. The future economists were interested in the components being used, and the work of designers, as well as markets for the machinery and whether the plant has partners in Slovenia.

The visit is part of a new educational project, which will continue as part of an international business conference in autumn, in Slovenia.

Led by Mr. Prašnikar (who heads the organisational committee for the forum), each student will develop an individual economic theme, to present at the conference.

The Minsk programme has proven rich, including various visits to Belarusian enterprises, banks and universities. The guests have been amazed by our capital and its cleanliness, as well as our modern facilities and highly qualified workforce.

Delegation co-ordinator Natalija Glazar Berčič, who is from Slovenian Riko company, comments, "Our company has been successfully working on the Belarusian market for a long time. With this in mind, we aim to represent Belarus as being attractive for investments and co-operation. Modern students and future post-graduate students will apply their

knowledge in practice — establishing their own companies and investing in other countries. We'd like to see Belarus among these states."

Slovenian student Dasa Fercnik had never imagined Minsk being so modern or with such well-developed infrastructure. Meanwhile, student Lea Urbančič is interested in the Belarusian economic model, in particular, regarding machinery production.

Riko's General Director, Janez Skrabc (among Slovenia's most authoritative directors) has been working on the Belarusian market for over 15 years. He graduated from Ljubljana University's Economics Department (learning under Mr. Prašnikar) and has kept in contact with his alma mater ever since. It was his idea to demonstrate Belarus' business attractiveness to young Slovenian economists.

Fortress holds its position

Those who visit Brest Fortress for the first time often think it stands only in silence: an immobile memorial. However, it is more than this, being a 'living' commemoration of the defence of 1941, defending historical truth and memory.

By Alexander Mityukov

The Director of Brest Hero-Fortress Memorial, Grigory Bysyuk, tells us about the life of the fortress, its difficulties, and if there are any mysteries in its history.

One of the grandest projects of recent years at the memorial complex is its new museum.

Yes, it's turning out well, as various experts and visitors agree. Since last year, when it opened, over 30,000 have visited, and we've hosted 1,000 excursion groups. Our work of 2014 earned us a special award from the President.

Our new site is an extension of the Museum of Defence, but also shows new sides of the fortress' history, and that of its defenders. In particular, we're looking at juvenile prisoners and prisoners of war: a theme long ignored. After being in German captivity, many defenders of the fortress passed through our filtration camps. We've opened another page of history, about which we didn't dare speak for a long time...

The museum has required major investments. Russian sponsors have rendered essential help.

Yes, Gazprom paid for the Museum of War's Territory of Peace: 15 billion Roubles were allocated over two and a half years, for repairs. Also, utility lines were laid to supply the exhibition premises.

What other innovations have there been?

We have a new excursion, to Pogranychny Island's Terespol Fort. About 3,000 visitors have already visited and interest is growing — not only among Brest residents, but foreign visitors.

In one interview, your predecessor, Valery Gubarenko, said that there were problems with the condition of monuments, utility lines and fortress constructions. How are things going now?

One stage of reconstruction ended in 2007, with the memorial complex brought into good condition. However, over time, new problems emerged, such as the ruined barracks of the 333rd regiment needing repair.

Serious questions arose concerning the repair of roofs at the southwestern and southern barracks, as last preservation works occurred 10, 20 and, even, 30 years ago. Immediate intervention was required. The Ceremonial Square and the White



Palace also await restoration, as does the bridge, which is the main access road to the central island.

Besides restoration, do you have plans to develop the memorial?

Certainly. We'd very much like to add an exhibition on the history of Brest Fortress, with a panorama, and technical novelties, as we have at the new museum. One of the most interesting sites is the V Fort, which we'd like to use to host an exhibition on the First World War, and the history of its pre-war construction.

Who are the most frequent visitors of the fortress, and where do they come from?

They come from all regions of Belarus, and many from Russia. Tourism has grown considerably since the screening of the film 'Brest Fortress'. Last year, we received almost 400,000 visitors: more than 7,500 groups. From CIS countries, we've welcomed 2,660 excursion groups, and 70 from elsewhere abroad (677 people). Over 23 million visitors, from 140 countries, have come to us since our site opened. Last year, over 160,000 people visited our website.

You're carrying out major research work too?

Our research assistants are



seeking out new material in the archives, as well as working with veterans and their relatives, to create exhibitions and gain new artefacts for display. They prepare articles for the media relating to Brest Fortress, and participate in conferences across Belarus and abroad. It's important that they continue to conduct research.

Coinciding with the 70th anniversary of the Victory, we've been receiving three or four letters a week from the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of former soldiers. Often, they know the surname, name, patronymic and place of service (the Fortress), so we can search our archive for information. It's laborious but essential.

Fortress research continues. Sergey Smirnov wrote much about the site. Are there still 'mysteries' to be solved?

Certainly. He himself admitted as much, as did the de-



Grigory BYSYUK

The Director of Brest Hero-Fortress Memorial:

The museum is turning out well, as various experts and visitors agree. Since last year, when it opened, over 30,000 have visited, and we've hosted 1,000 excursion groups. Our work of 2014 earned us a special award from the President.

fenders. For example, Piotr Gavrilov said that Smirnov had written a great deal but that much remained to be discovered. Gavrilov recollects a group with whom he served in defending the Eastern fort, but we have no idea which group. There were other Red Army soldiers nearby of whom we know little. Besides which, a war is never over until the last soldier is buried. We continue our excavations.

Do other museums help you with your research?

Yes, and not only in Belarus. The Central Armed Forces Museum, the St. Petersburg Museum and the Kiev Museum of War have all helped us, having material on the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918.

We've been liaising closely with some Russian museums; in particular, we've been working with those in regions where our defenders lived before the war or after Victory. We're convinced that local museums also have materials on these people. There are so many examples of co-operation. We've exchanged exhibitions with the Kaliningrad Museum, which also has a V fort, and have worked with the Ryazan Museum in the same way.

Do you gain new exhibits regularly?

Recently, we attended a conference in Russia and brought back a Singer sewing machine, owned by Master Sergeant Nozdrin's family. He was a defender of Brest Fortress, and went missing at the beginning of the war. However, his wife and son continued to live in Brest during the occupation. Nozdrin's son, Dmitry Ivanovich, donated the sewing machine to us. It joins more than 87,000 exhibits. We have over 45,000 substantial items.

Recently, there's been much talk about further development of the territory around Brest Fortress. What's your feeling?

There are major prospects for doing so. The Development Fund of the Fortress has been created, and serious investigations carried out. We've received many offers, including from the Russians, the Austrians, the Dutch, and well-known people in the field of historiography.

We've begun work on a concept of development, focusing not only on the memorial territory, but the whole Fortress site: the western part of Kobrin Fort, and Terespol and Volyn forts.

We have two proposals: the concept of the Development Fund and that of well-known Brest architect Mikhail Gaidukovich. The first, 'Brest 2019', is quite well-developed, though some areas still need elaboration. Unfortunately, we yet lack a partner but there's no rush. It's better to choose wisely. We may need to place some remains in storage, putting as much in order as we can and including these sites within a tourist route. Time will show us where to go next.

Deadly flash floods strike French Riviera

A major stretch of the French Riviera has been declared a natural disaster zone after torrential rain caused catastrophic flooding



Towns such as Cannes, Antibes and Nice have all been affected. At least 17 people have been confirmed dead and four others are still missing. Residents were taken by surprise by the exceptionally violent downpour.

"In ten minutes water rose up to here (showing his legs), in ten minutes, and with the doors closed. It swirled around, it was a terrifying,"

said one man. Those staying in mobile homes had been particularly at risk when the River Brague broke its banks near Antibes and the force of water swept everything away in its path.

One British tourist told of his narrow escape, "I thought that I was going to die. Because when this was going I thought should I let myself go and travel with the water ... down

there. There was a girl behind me... she wanted to get her car... she disappeared."

Many of the victims had been caught in their cars as the flood waters rose. The French President flew straight to the stricken region by helicopter to show his solidarity with those affected by the flooding.

750 firefighters were mobilised throughout the region. Francois

Hollande met some of them in Biot, one of the towns most severely hit, "I would like to express my support to all the affected families who are today in mourning. I would also like to pay tribute to the work done by the emergency services, firefighters, departmental agents and agents from all municipalities affected."

Thousands of home were left without power.

Portugal's centre-right edges into new term

Portugal's centre-right coalition government under Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho has won another four-year term

In what was seen as a test of tough austerity measures, he's the first leader in Europe to be re-elected after having imposed hardships on voters under international bailout deals. However, Passos Coelho has lost his overall parliamentary majority.

Speaking to supporters, Portugal's Prime Minister said he had already spoken with his coalition partner to organise as quickly as possible national meetings to formalise their coalition agreement.

The results have the government on nearly 37 percent compared to just over 32 percent for the main opposition centre — left Socialists. That translates into 99 seats and 85 seats respectively. It means the government will be outnumbered in the 230 seat chamber making the prospect of political instability extremely likely.

Socialist leader Antonio Costa warned the next government it will have to change its conduct now its lost its majority. He also denied reports he was quitting.



Brave Man's Bridge: China's spectacular glass walkway

The appropriately named Brave Man's Bridge has opened in China's central Hunan Province

The 305 metre long glass walkway offers jaw dropping views of Shiniuzhai Geological Park. Not such a good idea if you suffer from vertigo, the see through structure hangs some 180 metres in the air.

Sweden 'increasingly experimenting' with six-hour workdays

An increasing number of businesses in Sweden are said to be experimenting with six-hour working days

Reports say that Toyota service centres in Gothenburg switched 13 years ago, and more recently an app developer and a retirement home made the change. Employers across the country are following suit, according to the Science Alert website.

Productivity is said to be up compared to eight-hour days. Staff are reportedly happier, with more time spent outside work. In return employees are banned from using social media at work; there are fewer pauses and meetings... the aim being that staff will be more motivated to work more intensively.

Tesla's electric Model X SUV almost ready for the road



It's been a long time coming — but after many delays Tesla's Model X electric car is getting ready to hit the road

It's a significant moment for the luxury SUV market — and Tesla's glitzy but rare launch events have been compared to Apple's. The new car was first unveiled three and a half years ago. Now customers who pre-ordered them are seeing their new cars for the first time.

Compared to the Model S, Tesla hopes the Model X will attract new kinds of customers. It's taller and wider, with space for up to seven passengers and unusual doors that open vertically. Shipments of the new car have been delayed several times.

Queen Nefertiti's tomb or bust Egypt vows to find her burial place

Egyptian authorities say that they will obtain the radar equipment needed to complete the search for Queen Nefertiti's tomb

The latest theory suggests a secret chamber exists behind the tomb of King Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings. The high-tech equipment will help resolve the ancient riddle.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Works by world famous painters from Tretyakov Gallery fit in harmoniously at National Art Museum of Belarus

Masterpieces obviously dazzle with their everyday beauty

National Art Museum hosts *From Realism to Impressionism...*, displaying around 60 picturesque canvases by world famous masters, including Vasily Vereshchagin, Isaak Levitan, Vasily Polenov, Ivan Shishkin, Alexey Savrasov, Vladimir Makovsky, Ilya Repin, Stanislav Zhukovsky, Igor Grabar, Konstantin Korovin, and Filipp Malyavin

By Veniamin Mikheev

The exhibition in Minsk showcases Russian painting from the second half of the 19th century and early 20th century, from the Tretyakov Gallery. However, it is the first time that these works have been exhibited.

Pavel Tretyakov wrote to landscape painter Apollinary Goravsky, in the 1860s: 'I need not grand landscapes, nor a magnificent composition, nor spectacular lighting, nor miracles. Give me a dirty puddle and it will be filled with truth and poetry, as can be found everywhere.'

These words expressed not only Tretyakov's opinion, but that of the realism movement, which dominated Russian art in the second half of the 19th century. Realism provided an individual perception of nature, as reflected in the creativity of many landscape painters, who strived to portray their world objectively.

The lyrical landscapes by Alexey Savrasov, who was the brightest representative of the Moscow art school, are found side by side with those of Ivan Shishkin, from St. Petersburg. Savrasov's early landscapes had deep emotional intensity, while his more mature works expressed consonance with the human soul (*Landscape with a Marsh and Forest Island*, from the late 1860s and early 1870s). Savrasov's pupil, Isaak Levitan, followed in his footsteps; his works are also on display in Minsk.

Shishkin, meanwhile, showed great objectivity, painting in the open air, and portraying the complexities



of the natural environment: the air, sun and light (such as we see in *A Summer Day* landscape, 1891).

Shishkin's student, Fiodor Vasiliev, skilfully combined 'thoroughness of execution without dryness', bringing vivid emotions to his landscapes, embodying the spirit of those French artists who championed harmony between nature, air and light (later called plein air painting). His delicate and convincing style is apparent particularly in *Road Through a Birch Forest*. Sadly, Fiodor passed away at a young age.

Plein air landscapes became popular among young Russian artists in the 1870s and 1880s. The head of the Peredvizhniki (The Itinerants), I. Kramskoy, gave the following advice to the young generation, saying that Russian art needed 'to move towards air, light, and colour'. His notion became popular with many artists.

Arkhip Kuindzhi is considered to be one of the brightest and most unusual artists in the Russian land-



scape school, giving a realistic perception of

the world, combining romanticism with his own brand of creative individuality. His first pictures were associated with the traditions of the Itinerants but later moved towards new means of expression.

Kuindzhi's *Birch Grove* was exhibited for the first time at the Association of Itinerants exhibition, in 1879; it set a new trend, depicting the sun, light and shadow. In its dazzling beauty, the *Birch Grove* brings together symbolic meanings and reality. Ilya Repin called him 'the painter of the world' and said, "The illusion of light was his God. No artist was his equal in achieving this miracle of painting."

Kuindzhi's contemporaries compared his style and skill with that of Claude Monet and the first French impressionists. He was the first Russian impressionist to paint in this way, recreating the 'fluorescence' of nature on canvas.



Work by Ferdynand Ruszczyc

The early 1870s saw French impressionists influencing Russian painters, shaping their individual style. Artist Vasily Polenov was one of the Russian painters who familiarised students at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture with the works of French artists in the new style. He began to harmoniously combine traditional landscapes with elements

of the new genre, setting the scene for what would become the new 'norm' for the next generation of artists, many of whom were his pupils.

This new stage in landscape painting was associated with the name of Isaak Levitan: a pupil of Savrasov and Polenov. He adapted what he had learnt, creating a new style of landscape painting, incorporating spirituality elements from the 19th century and diverse emotional states, as well as artistic skill.

His own *Birch Grove* (created in 1889) is in pre-impressionistic style, with balanced details, and a free manner of execution. The results are sublime.

Konstantin Korovin was the brightest representative of the Russian impressionistic style, preserving freshness, to convey a sense of joy, and a feast of colour. His works delight both the eyes and the soul. Korovin was

striving to 'merge with nature and dissolve in it'. To achieve this, he used free, wide brush strokes and plenty of light in his landscapes, still life works and portraits.

Igor Grabar belonged to the most radical Russian impressionists, using a new means of expression among his peers: separate strokes and a combination of additional colours. He avoided large colour patches and clear contours, working to combine tones, to create an authentic feel.

Stanislav Zhukovsky and Sergey Vinogradov (who have Belarusian roots) had a painting style which we may call Russian lyrical impressionism, having a manner both calm and impressionistic. Their landscapes feature old cottages, forest lakes and quiet rivers, creating an atmosphere of elegiac nostalgia, and the sadness brought by the arrival of autumn.

In the compositions of Konstantin Yuon, there is both immediacy and festive solemnity. Striving for monumentality, he used large-sized canvases, with generalised silhouettes. He emphasised reality, in a new style, which came to be developed by the next generation of artists.

Almost all painters from the late 19th and early 20th centuries used impressionistic elements but Russian impressionism had its own flavour. Unlike the French artists, the Russians did not 'dissolve' their subject in light and air, but preserved its tangibility in a free artistic manner. Lyricism had been traditional in Russian landscapes since Savrasov's times and impressionist inspiration, from the 1880s-1900s, continued until the end of the 20th century.

New version of Onegin

Yuri Bashmet enjoys recognition and love in Minsk. Moreover, this year, posters promoting his 10th international festival are competing with those for a concert by famous Stas Mikhailov. For the first time, tickets to the opening show of the Philharmonic, classical music event sold out quicker than those for the 'king of chanson'.

By Yulia Leonova

Brilliant musician and talented manager Yuri Bashmet knows well how to harmonise the world of classical music and mass culture. His concert brings together such greats as Konstantin Khabensky and his wife, actress Olga Litvinova, Zhala Ismailova (a winner of prestigious musical contests), soloists from the Bolshoi and Mariinsky theatres, and musicians from the *New Russia* Symphony Orchestra. They offer a balance between lofty art and easily 'digestible' melodies.

This time, Mr. Bashmet is bringing Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* to Minsk, offering poetry and classical music. The master has many times spoken of an interpretation of Piotr Tchaikovsky's famous opera and, speaking at a press conference just before the Minsk premiere, repeated that he aims to enlighten new generations to the delights of Pushkin's novel and Tchaikovsky's music. It helps having Konstantin Khabensky's name on the poster but, as Mr. Bashmet admits, it takes skill to successfully advertise classical music.

It's not the first time that Mr. Khabensky has joined



Maestro entrusts role of Tatiana to Salzburg operatic singer Zhala Ismailova



Yuri Bashmet admits he's happy to return to Minsk every year

forces with Mr. Bashmet to combine music and drama. Past efforts have been well-received; both are experts in this field, having liaised for several years. In the first version of *Eugene Onegin*, Ksenia Rappoport and Oleg Menshikov portrayed the drama of Pushkin's poem. Mr. Khabensky was invited several years ago and, later, was joined by Chekhov Art Theatre actress Olga Litvinova, from Moscow.

At the Minsk show, Olga managed to match Konstantin's stature only towards the end, perhaps due to her 'wife' status. At times, her performance seemed a little rushed, as if she were afraid of forgetting her lines. Nevertheless, the Artistic Leader of Minsk's Contemporary Art Theatre, Vladimir Ushakov, praised her portrayal, saying, "I love it! I'd work with Olga and Konstantin anytime, with pleasure. The idea of the performance is great, having an orchestra, singers and actors meet on a single stage. The story is well known, even where people haven't read the original poem (it happens!) so it's wonderful to stage something."

Another fan of the artistic duo is famous Belarusian conductor Mikhail Snitko. He attended the premiere, and commented, "It's a complex show. I love the idea of organically intermixing Tchaikovsky's eternal music with extracts from the poem of the same name. I love the *New Russia* Orchestra: it's an international level team, from whom we can learn much. Wagner used to say that an orchestra must imitate a choir, by 'singing', i.e. musicians and artistes playing in unison. The *New Russia* Orchestra is this 'singing' orchestra. Bravo to maestro Bashmet!"

There were many calls of 'bravo' from the audience, directed at Konstantin Khabensky and Yuri Bashmet. There was also hearty applause for Ms. Ismailova (who performed Pushkin's Tatiana), baritone Ilya Kutyukhin (*Onegin*), Svetlana Shilova and Sergey Romanovsky. The latter was especially moving in his performance; singing the aria *What Will Happen Tomorrow?* prior to his death scene, cries of 'bravo' rose ardently from the stalls.

Being rewarded with rich applause, Mr. Bashmet promised to bring his musical-poetic readings to Minsk another time. Mr. Khabensky has already agreed. They share a love for this type of work, with musicians appearing as actors and actors becoming musicians.

Global film premiere

By Veniamin Anisin

Belarusians are first to see *Belovezhskaya Pushcha. Primeval Forest*, filmed by Animal Planet TV Channel

The Animal Planet (Europe) Discovery TV Channel worked with the Information Ministry on the initiative, with the participation of Kosmos TV JSC and the Belarusian Presidential Administration. Before the world premiere, the film was screened in Belarus: at the Palace of the Republic's small hall. Among the invited guests were members of the diplomatic corps, foreign media journalists accredited in Belarus, Belarusian journalists, and representatives of state bodies and the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park. In addition, the film was screened at Oktyabr cinema, for the public. Minsk students and schoolchildren were invited to Moskva cinema and, at present, the film is being shown in Belarusian schools — including those in regional centres. Photo exhibitions and thematic events (including a Parade of Aurochs flashmob) have been organised involving schoolchildren.

The film was shot between June and July 2015, within the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park. Lasting 45 minutes, it demonstrates the unique flora and fauna of the reserve and its rich diversity. The UNESCO World Heritage List site has great tourist potential, which is being balanced with commitments to preserving the environment; it is a major cultural, scientific and tourist centre, receiving serious state support.

Opera at the cinema

By Yulia Leonova

Theatre lovers sure to enjoy viewing theatrical, operatic and ballet performances from all over the globe in October, at Minsk's Tsentralny Cinema

World-renowned performances, screened 'live' and arriving in Minsk via the *TheatreHD* project, initiated by the ART Corporation Centre of Visual and Performance Arts. Its Director, Anzhelika Krashkevskaya, is convinced that Minsk will love the innovation.

"Such screening of performances is a new format for Belarus but is already widespread practice across Europe and the world. The *TheatreHD* project unites over 35 cities in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan, with Belarus joining on October 3rd, showing Giuseppe Verdi's *Il Trovatore* (staged by the Metropolitan Opera). Anna Netrebko — an outstanding operatic singer of our modern times — is performing Leonora, while Duke de Luna is played by her usual stage partner, Dmitry Khvorostovsky," she comments.

Apart from *Il Trovatore*, audiences are invited to another six shows. Among them are *Giselle* (staged by Russia's Bolshoi Theatre), *Othello* (premiered by the Metropolitan Opera) and the much anticipated *Hamlet* (staged by the Barbican Theatre).

Original dialogue between public and true art

By Victor Mikhailov

On October 8th, Autumn Salon with Belgazprombank art project launches at Minsk's Palace of Arts — running until the end of the month

The *Autumn Salon* art project is unique for Minsk's cultural life, being a part of Belgazprombank's large-scale imitative — *Art Belarus* — aimed at reconstruction of the integral and unbreakable process of the Belarusian culture's development. An exposition has been formed to meet this goal; it unites works by 90 best young Belarusian artists aged 18-40. All of them have

passed a selective round and are pretenders for the bank's *Art Belarus* Award. The works on show at the Palace of Arts have been created in recent three years and represent different art styles and manners: pictorial and graphical art, sculpture, glass works, photos and installations. According to organisers, these represent the best works of the young generation of the early 20th century Belarusian art.

Moreover, the exhibition will be supplemented with masterpieces of global pictorial art and sculpture, from Belgazprombank's corporate collection. These have been created by famous countrymen,

representatives of the legendary Parisian school and real participants of French Autumn Salons of the early 20th century. Apart from works by Chaim Soutine and Michel Kikoïne, Minsk's public will for the first time see several new exhibits which the bank has bought recently: March Chagall's *Sleepwalker*, Dmitry Stelletsy's *St. John's Night*, Ossip Lubitch's *City Landscape*, sculptures by Polina Khentova and Leon In-



denbaum, and drawings by Yevgeny Zak.

The project is aimed to act as an active venue for presentation of Belarusian art and will include a rich cultural programme: lectures, round table discussions and work with children. It's supposed to revive a dialogue of the public and art.

Roma came to win but was beaten

A true football favourite arrived in Borisov for the match, but Belarusian champion BATE managed to defeat Italian Roma, its famous rival, 3:2, making the crowds at Borisov-Arena rise to their feet in great excitement



ALEXANDER KULEVSKY



REUTERS

BATE Borisov's Nikolay Signevich celebrates first goal in Roma's goal, scored by his teammate Igor Stasevich

By Kirill Karin

The head coach of the Rome club, Rudi Garcia, for whom the match against BATE was his 100th in this position, will probably hope not to meet the squad from Borisov again anytime soon. In fact, BATE defeated his team three years ago, when he was head coach of Lille (BATE won the match, in France 3:1).

Roma was missing some of its star players, since Francesco Totti,

Seydou Keita and Edin Dzeko were injured during an A series match against Carpi. Meanwhile, the strong-voiced Belarusian fans and unfamiliar, severe weather went against the Italians. Despite Roma being the favourite, and the pre-match announcement by Garcia of the team being ready for victory, the Borisov squad simply outperformed its rival.

The Belarusian team is beyond playing safely, hoping for a draw;

rather, it plays aggressively, to win. Last autumn, fans were wondering where BATE's fighting spirit had gone to, following five defeats across six matches (2 goals to 24).

Though it began with defeat from Leverkusen 1:4, the tables are now turning. Filip Mladenovich scored beautiful goals, sending the ball past Wojciech Szczesny, while Igor Stasevich did brilliantly as half-back, as did other Belarusian players in defence.

Of course, there were some mistakes, especially in the second half, but we can overlook those. BATE chased off Rome's 'wolves', while claiming three goals.

In the third round, BATE will face powerful Barcelona, which will be a real challenge. However, it if can bring some of the fire it showed against Roma, the Champions Cup holder will certainly give the Spanish squad some exercise on the pitch. No one is born a master.

Returning from France with medals

By Yegor Glebov

Laser Run World Championships held for first time in French Perpignan

At this modern version of the Pentathlon, our Belarusians won two gold medals. Anastasia Prokopenko won the mixed competition, partnering Nikolay Gayanovsky. "As regards my victories, I never inflate their importance, as I'm a realist. In the personal tournament, I only had seven rivals," Anastasia comments modestly. "We finished as a group but I demonstrated the best time among the women. In the mixed relay, there were ten teams."

She continues, "It was a good start to the new season. My primary goal is now to gain a place in the Olympic Pentathlon event. Those who win the World Cup finals, or who occupy the top three places at the World Championship gain places, as do those with top ratings."

Sergey Rutenko leaves Barcelona

Spain's *Marca* sports newspaper has reported that Sergey Rutenko — a titled Belarusian handball player — will continue his career with Qatar's El Fallujah club. He has confirmed his transfer to Qatar, but adds that he will also play for Lekhwiya.

This season, the Belarusian failed to play full-time for Barça, despite being on good form. It's thought that Sergey has had problems with coach Xavier Pascual. Nevertheless, his leaving the club (which he has supported since 2009) has aroused embarrassment. It's also questionable how this situation may affect the Belarusian national team, since Sergey has been its leader and captain.

In early 2016, the national team will play in the European Championship finals. Of course, we hope to see Rutenko participate on peak form.

Dinamo fails to please its fans

By Igor Grishin

This season, Vienna Rapid has just missed out on reaching the Champions League. During the Europa League group stage it defeated formidable Villarreal of Spain (2:1) and is currently doing much better in its domestic championship than Dinamo Minsk.

Before facing the Minsk squad, the club from Vienna was considered the favourite, despite the match being hosted by Borisov-Arena. Of course, football is unpredictable and Dinamo fans were hopeful of defying the odds. Alas, this didn't happen.



DMITRY TKACHEV

Dinamo fails to surprise

Captain Steffen Hofmann managed a shot straight into the corner of the Dinamo net soon after half-time, and Rapid secured a 1:0 victory. The Austrians haven't experienced a single defeat during the Europa League group stage, while Dinamo can count eight defeats in a row (taking into account matches within the Belarus Championship); the picture is looking gloomy.

No one may be surprised if Dinamo will soon see a retirement of its coach.

Victory was within just touching distance

By Kirill Pirogov

Belarusian women's volleyball team leaves European Championship, failing to join strongest eight teams after losing to Poland — 2:3

"We weren't lucky in being set against such rivals. The Belarusian team unites skilled players from the Turkish, Italian, Russian and Polish championships so it will be a challenge to win," emphasised the head coach of the Polish women's team, Jacek Nawrocki, before the match. Our team is ranked below Poland's, but our Belarusian sportswomen put up a serious fight, losing only five sets.

The match was full of drama, although the Belarusian team looked weak in the first two sets. It was only later that it truly transformed, with



Missing out on victory by a hair's breadth

the Belarusians leading a tie-break — 10:7. Sadly, victory escaped them, resulting in the squad leaving the European Championship.

However, it deserves no criticism, since our sportswomen de-

feated the strong Croatian and Bulgarian squads and played worthily against the Russians (Europe's pleni-potentiary champions). The play off match against Poland will be long remembered by fans.

Forum of the week



Scene from *Donka - A Letter to Chekhov* performance at 5th International TEART Theatre Forum in Minsk

Exhibitions

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

20 Lenin Street

Until 2nd November. *Great Patriotic War in Art*

Until 11th December. *From Realism to Impressionism* (19th-20th century painting)

Until 30th December. *Celebrating Victory Day in Museum*

NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street

Until 31st December. *Major Presentation of Museum Relics: 79 Steps Inside History*

MUSEUM OF MATURE AND ECOLOGY OF BELARUS

12 Karl Marx Street

Until 6th March. *Jungles behind the Window*

Until 17th January. *Mummies of the World*

LASANDR ART GALLERY

24 Romanovskaya Sloboda Street

Until 1st November. *Indian Summer*

CAT MUSEUM

11 Dzerzhinsky Avenue

Until 31st October. *Cats in the City*

PICTURE HOUSE

89/3 Pobediteley Avenue, office 3

Until 31st December. *Great Classics of the 20th Century*

MINSK

11 Nezavisimosti Avenue

Until 30th November. *Month of Photography in Minsk-2015*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN CINEMA HISTORY

4 Sverdlov Street

Until 25th October. *Hat Vernissage*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue

Until 22nd October. *Fashionable China*

Theatres

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE OF BELARUS

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square

09 and 11.10. *The Sleeping Beauty*
10.10. *Rigoletto* 11.10. *Magic Music*
13.10. *The Grey Legend* 14.10. *Giselle, ou les Willis; Opera Fairy Show* 15.10. *La Traviata*

BELARUSIAN STATE ACADEMIC MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street

09.10. *Sofia Golshanskaya*
10.10. *Red Riding Hood. Generation NEXT; The Bat*
11.10. *Women's Revolt; The Nutcracker*
15.10. *One Thousand and One Nights*

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street

09.10. *Pesnyar* 10.10. *Run* 11.10. *Double Eternity*
13.10. *Pane Kokhanku* 14.10. *Ninotchka*

YANKA KUPALA NATIONAL ACADEMIC THEATRE

7 Engels Street

09.10. *Kolyady Night*
10 and 11.10. *International TEART Forum of Theatrical Art: MatchAtria*
10.10. *The Seagull* 14.10. *Pinsk Gentry*
15.10. *Pan Tadeusz*

THEATRE-STUDIO OF FILM ACTOR

13 Pobediteley Avenue

09.10. *...Forgetting Herostratos!*
10 and 11.10. *The Mechanical Man*
12.10. *Master and Margarita*
13 and 14.10. *The Battlefield*
15.10. *The Makropoulos Case*

MODERN ART THEATRE

5 Oktyabrskaya Square

10.10. *A Midsummer Night's Dream or King Lear*
11.10. *I Pay for Pleasure*
14.10. *Two Hen-Pecked Husbands*

MINSK CONCERT HALL

5 Oktyabrskaya Square

10.10. *Keep Your Chin Up!*
15.10. *Thank You, Margo!*

Kaleidoscope of history unveiled

October of decades and centuries past comes to life

October 9th. In 1949, Konstantin Uglyanitsa — a Belarusian scientist in the field of clinical and experimental oncology, a Doctor of Medical Sciences and a Professor — was born in the village of Dyatlovichi (Drogichin District).

October 10th. In 1919, a USSR Hero — Ivan Strochko — was born in the village of Pozharishche (Vitebsk Region, Lepel District). He commanded a detachment of anti-tank guns and, in August 1944, participated in the Visla forcing, near Polesie Sandomir.

October 11th. In 1899, a scientist, a Doctor of Chemical Sciences and a Professor — Sergey Lipatov — was born. From 1940-1944, he was the Deputy President of the Academy of Sciences, also heading a laboratory at the Chemistry Institute.

October 12th. In 1865, Mikhail Antsev was born. This Belarusian composer, choir conductor and teacher was among the organisers and lecturers of the Folk Conservatoire, also heading the State Choir.

October 13th. In 1800, a folklorist, an ethnographer and a literary man — Dominik Tsezary Khodzko — was born

in the former mansion of Yavorovo, of the Vileika District. He collected and processed Belarusian folk art, also writing papers on Belarusian and Lithuanian rivers.

October 13th. In 1950, Horizont Production Association was set up — becoming the major producer of TV sets which worthily rival foreign analogues.



October 14th. In 1940, a conductor, a teacher, an Honoured Teacher and a People's Artiste — Leonid Ivanov — was born in Mogilev. Since 1990, he headed the Belarusian Music Academy's Pedagogical Department, also heading the Academy's amateur and student or-

chestras of folk instruments.

October 15th. In 1950, Anatoly Kasheparov — a singer and an Honoured Artiste — was born in Minsk. From 1972-1989, he performed as part of the Pesnyary band.

October 9th. In 1925, the 1st Belarusian Championship on Classical (French) Fighting began, with Vitebsk's Popov becoming an absolute champion.

October 9th. In 1958, Shchetovka, Zatishie, Malaya Slepnyanka, Drazhnyya, Yakhimovo, Budilovo and Medvezhino joined Minsk's territory.

October 9th. In 1967, the Belbyttechproekt State Design-and-Production Technical Enterprise was established.

October 10th. In 1887, engineers Zalkind and Vilbushевич established an engineering-mechanical workshop in Minsk's Igumensky Trakt (now near Mayakovskiy Street). In the course of time, it transformed into Tekhnolog Plant producing wood processing tools, mills, butter makers and offering boiler and repair works.

October 11th. In 1973, a 1.5m thermometer was installed on the Hydro-Meteo Centre's facade — resembling a clock face, with red and blue semicircles; a 75cm pointer indicated air temperature.

October 11th. In 2007, a new exposition of the Petrus Brovka Literary Museum opened, featuring documents of this People's Poet of Belarus and Honorary Citizen of Minsk.

October 12th. In 1847, a stone church — named after Maria Magdalena — was built in Minsk's Storozhevskoe cemetery.

October 13th. In 1840, the Kossovo Palace was born. This silver architectural monument of the 19th century is a central part of Kossovo emblem — being included into Belarus' Matricula.