

2nd Festival of Science hosted by Minsk's Botanical Garden, with thousands of Minsk and guests coming to the capital to enjoy it



6

There are many amazing legends in Minsk, we look at some of the most notable



10

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 36 (802) ● THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2019 ● WWW.SB.BY



Exhibition of fresh ideas

Belarusian Industrial and Investment Forum — a major exhibition project in the CIS uniting several international specialised exhibitions in the field of sci-tech development and modern technologies — was hosted by Minsk's Football Arena last week → 5



Belarus-USA: dialogue continues

At a meeting at the Palace of Independence, Aleksandr Lukashenko and the United States Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs — David Hale — discussed bilateral Belarusian-American relations, regional security issues and the situation in Ukraine, among other topics. A further important outcome of the meeting was the agreement to renew diplomatic mission representations at ambassadorial level. The Head of State noted with satisfaction that the guest's visit was evidence that the USA paid attention not only to Europe but also to Belarus.

By Yevgeny Kononovich

Steps towards each other

Belarus has always declared its readiness to restart Belarusian-American relations.

Aleksandr Lukashenko clearly outlined Belarus' position, "As for our relations with you, you are aware that this is not the only signal we are sending to the US leadership regarding normalisation of our relations. It is not normal that, in the modern world, two states who once fought on the same side against the enemy — have such, shall we say, poor relations now. Of course, we will do everything possible to ensure our relations develop."

We must admit that, in recent years, political dialogue between Minsk and Washington has significantly intensified. American diplomats are visiting Minsk more often. For example, in 2017, Belarus was attended by a delegation of members of the US Congress led by Senator Roger Wicker, to participate in a session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. A year later, the Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Wess Mitchell, visited our country and, this March, the USA was informed about the lifting of restrictions on the number of employees of the US Embassy. This was followed by visits to Minsk by the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the European and Eurasian Bureau at the US Department of State, George Kent. Most recently, in

late August, Belarus welcomed the US President's National Security Adviser, John Bolton, amongst other high-ranking American officials.

Welcoming the United States Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs — David Hale, Mr. Lukashenko said, "It's nice to see you here, not only in



Belarus, but also in Eastern Europe. I am pleased to note that this is evidence that the United States has finally paid attention not only to Europe as a whole but also to Belarus. At this difficult time, your interest in the region is encouraging."

One of the burning issues of our time is the fate of the Treaty for the Elimination of Intermediate and Shorter-Range Missiles. With its dismantling,

the world was on the brink of a new arms race with unpredictable consequences. However, according to the President, encouraging information has recently appeared.

"The agreement is now practically destroyed. However, statements have appeared that neither NATO nor Russia are going to place these missiles in Europe. In turn, I also said recently that we will never be the initiators of anything that would destroy this treaty. Moreover, we will never place such missiles in the territory of Belarus to complicate the situation (if this does not threaten our security)," Mr. Lukashenko said, adding, "But these two

statements — made from left and right, from the West and from the East — convince me that we will not have to resort to these extreme measures in Belarus. We have neither a desire nor the money for this."

It's true that, from a historical perspective, hardly anyone in our country would wish to make an issue of it. The Head of State recalled that, during the last world war, Belarus

fought against fascism alongside the USA, "We lost a third of our population. We would not like to see anything similar on Belarusian territory again."

As for the situation in Ukraine, Mr. Lukashenko once again stressed that, without the participation of the United States, this conflict will not be resolved. "This is a diplomatic matter. If negotiations fail, then it will be necessary to involve new support. New ideas must appear. I think the United States could contribute to the settlement of this conflict," he emphasised.

Historical moment

David Hale agreed that Belarusian-American relations

need to be normalised and the countries should make up for lost time. He took the opportunity to convey greetings to Mr. Lukashenko from the US Secretary of State, Michael R. Pompeo. "He asked me to be present at an important historical moment of our bilateral relations. After our meeting, we will make an announcement that we will exchange ambassadors, after so many years without. We

agree that the current state of affairs is unnatural, abnormal, and we are glad that this chapter is close to its end because of the steps your country and you personally have taken. We also note the vision that you have adopted: greater diversity — both in internal affairs and in relations with the outside world. We support this and will do our best to help you along the way," said the American guest.

David Hale noted that the US is doing this not to compete with any other country but to ensure that the potential of Belarus-American relations is fully realised. "This region is very dear to us, and we are attentive to security threats. In addition, we strongly support the sovereignty and independence of Belarus," he added.

David Hale called the decision to restore diplomatic missions between Belarus and the United States at the level of ambassadors a historic moment in bilateral relations. Most importantly, he emphasised, "While normalising our relations, we do not ask Belarus to make a choice between the East and the West. The USA respects Belarus' desire to determine its own path and contribute to peace and stability in the region."

There is a certain regularity in the fact that against the backdrop of warming political relations, economic co-operation between our countries has also revived. Last year, trade turnover reached \$711.6m (117.6 percent compared to 2017). This year, growth continues and, from January-July, trade turnover amounted to \$532.5m — 43 percent more than in the same period of 2018. The embassies of the two countries can work more effectively to promote this dynamic. Therefore, the decision of Minsk and Washington to restore diplomatic representation at the level of ambassadors could not be more opportune.

New stage of co-operation with UEFA

By Svetlana Savelieva

Belarus is ready to host top level European football championships — including the 2022 UEFA Super Cup, as noted by the Head of State during his meeting with the President of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), Aleksander Ceferin

Aleksandr Lukashenko reminded his guest that the venue of the UEFA Super Cup is currently being discussed and stressed that, if it is Minsk, the country will do everything possible for the event to be held at the highest level.

The President thanked UEFA for the assistance they have provided to the most popular sport in Belarus — football. "We hope that with the election of you as the Head of the Union, our relations and contacts will increase, and we will have a full understanding on all issues — although I cannot complain about the past. UEFA has always responded to

our requests and always helped us, especially rendering assistance to children's sports. We've never heard any reproach from the Union that we wasted the money given for football projects," he said.

Mr. Lukashenko assured those present that this will continue. The Head of State also noted, "You have never brought a major football event to us. If the Union of European Football Associations thinks of holding an event in this direction, you should know that we are ready to host any competition, at any level, as far as our continent is concerned."

Mr. Lukashenko added that he is pleased to meet with the Head of UEFA also because he is a big fan of football. "In my childhood, I played football. It's my sport. I played football for a long time until I got injured. It's always nice to talk to people who know what football is all about," the Belarusian President said.

In turn, the guest stressed that UEFA is aimed at further active co-operation

with their Belarusian colleagues. "The Belarusian Football Federation and UEFA co-operate very well, but even good co-operation can be improved. We have good professional relations with the federation. We're also friends, which is important. I am glad to see that sport



Aleksander Ceferin

receives such support in Belarus. I'm especially happy for football, of course. Tomorrow we will start a new stage of our liaisons," he said.

According to Mr. Ceferin, UEFA has long supported Belarus by assisting with

the development of infrastructure, purchase of necessary sports equipment and inventory. "We plan to provide support in terms of training coaches. It is important that there is support from the Minister [Sports Minister] and his understanding: in football, progress is quite slow, you need to start from a young age and develop from there. You can't become a champion in one day," the guest stressed.

Mr. Ceferin also commented on the President's proposal to organise the Super Cup in Minsk, saying, "As the Head of UEFA, a transparent organisation, I can't make any statements because it [the choice of the UEFA Super Cup venue] is a matter for voting. If I start drawing any conclusions now or voice any decisions, it would be inappropriate. I do not yet know where and when the next competition will be held, but I'm convinced that the Belarusian Football Federation is quite capable of applying and of organising a tournament at a high level."

Stretching the connecting thread

The harvesting campaign, flax processing, the future prospects of the Grodno Region and the upcoming parliamentary elections were the issues high on the agenda during the President's working trip to the Korelichi District. Aleksandr Lukashenko made a number of important announcements concerning the future of the flax industry, as well as commenting on the progress of harvesting works. Also, on that day, the Grodno Region was celebrating the 75th anniversary of its formation.

By Svetlana Yevgenieva

During his working visit, the Head of State went to Korelichi-Len JSC to find out about the technological processes of flax processing and look at samples of the local manufacturing process. Mr. Lukashenko noted that he considers the organisation of flax growing in the Grodno Region an example to other areas. The harvest of 7,000 hectares of flax is being processed by two plants.

"These are now fully modernised and are capable of completely processing almost all the raw flax they receive. This means that the Grodno Region's Governor does not need to implement any industry-related modernisation to sow and harvest flax. The system here is ideal," said the President.

However, not all the regions can boast similar conditions and the President demanded that the Minister of Agriculture and Food and members of the Government investigate the matter — especially taking into account that optimisation of the linen industry and modernisation of businesses have been under discussion for several years.

The Head of State was also shown Korelichi-Len's final products. He tasted linseed oil and appreciated its quality, paying special attention to its useful properties. Pellets made from linen waste were also on show. "It's a super fuel!" noted the President, stressing the environmental friendliness of this product. It was particularly noted that the company has established waste-free production.

"It is important to process

everything as you do: to make pellets from waste, as well as hard thread, ropes and flax oil. All these must be revived as it was in the past — in Korelichi and at all flax plants across the country," said the Head of State, promising to support flax processing plants, if necessary, with re-equipment, including rendering financial support, noting, "We will copy this system, if necessary, in other areas."

As for equipment for flax sowing and harvesting, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food should work with experts to decide what is required and work on how to solve the problem. Overall, according to Mr. Lukashenko, it is important to determine how much, where and how to sow flax, as well as how many flax plants the country needs. 50-52,000 tonnes of flax fibre are needed to supply Orsha Linen Mill. This volume can be harvested in our own country.

"We'll receive this amount this year and it will be of good quality. This is the bar below



which we should not fall in the future. Flax is part of our culture. It was not me who put it on the Belarusian coat of arms. There-

fore, we cannot ruin its production. We must seriously deal with any issues and intensify the processes," said Mr. Lukashenko.

As for prospects for the development of the Grodno Region, the President said, "I see very good prospects. The Grodno Region was the best in the Soviet Union and so it is today, if we speak of the whole post-Soviet space."

However, according to the Belarusian leader, the region has much to strive for: for example, in agriculture, it could significantly increase its grain yields. "I told the Governor that 1.2m tonnes are more than last year but this is not the best level. We could have 1.5-1.7m tonnes of spiked cereals and 300,000 tonnes of corn — or 2m tonnes of grain," he said.

The President believes it's necessary to intensify and make significant progress, including through technology, "We should have the best technologies — like the farmers in Poland, Germany and France. We've toured

the world and have learnt how to do this. The entire Grodno Region could use all these new ideas. We simply need to make

progress. If tasks are set in the same way for Grodno residents, then a 15-20 percent rise is possible; then you'll be heroes," Mr. Lukashenko said.

He also commented on the upcoming parliamentary elections. According to him, some — including in the West — believe that if an election campaign is made with a great deal of fuss, then it is democratic. "However, I believe that the country should not be disturbed. We must continue to work. As President, I don't want to do anything detrimental to the country," he stressed.

Mr. Lukashenko also noted that, although local authorities support and propose certain candidates, the latter will be elected by the people. No pressure should be made in this regard. He emphasised that he supports the preservation of the country's majority system of parliamentary elections. MPs must represent their constituencies and engage in dialogue with their voters. "People should be the focus. Go to working teams, promote, ask them to vote for you... A deputy should be attached to their voter and district."

As for the current election campaign, he said, "We will conduct this campaign in our own way. It's a rehearsal for the future Presidential campaign. We should continue quietly — as is natural for Belarusians — do what we, rather than those in the West, East, South or North, need. We must do everything for our country to preserve it and ensure you — and not only you — live well. Our children should know that they have their own piece of land, and no one will be in control of them."



Preparations for parliamentary elections continue

There are 5,831 precincts for voting in the elections of deputies of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the seventh convocation.

"In the Brest Region, 911 precincts have been established. There are 768 in the Vitebsk Region and 1,009 in the Gomel Region. In the Grodno Region, there are 669, in the Minsk Region — 982, in the Mogilev Region — 739, and in the city of Minsk — 707. When abroad, Belarusians will be able to vote at 46 polling stations," noted the Central Election Commission.

Of the more than 5,800 polling stations, 234 will operate in sanatoriums, spa hotels, rest homes, hospitals and other health care organisations that provide medical care in stationary conditions, as well as in military units — 17.

As of September 16th, 423 national observers had been accredited by the central, territorial and district electoral commissions. To date, five political parties have sent observers to the elections. A total of 26 people are accredited. Public associations are more active in this regard, with 357 people already being accredited. The leaders are the Republican Belaya Rus Public Association, the Belarusian Union of Women and the Belarusian Republican Youth Union. 39 observers have been sent from citizens by submitting applications.

Those accredited to district election commissions have the right to be present in these commissions when receiving protocols on the results of voting at polling stations. An observer — sent to a precinct electoral commission — among other things, can observe the relevant polling station. During early voting and on election day, observers have the right to receive information on the number of voters included in the lists and on the actual number of voters who took part.

As for international observers, 34 have been accredited so far, all from the CIS. Foreign experts have the right to attend meetings of election commissions, to meet with candidates and their proxies, to observe the issuance of ballots, the voting process.

Elections to the House of Representatives are scheduled for November 17th and to the Council of the Republic — for November 7th.

Economic results must be tangible

By Pavel Filatov

People must feel the positive results of economic activity — noted by Belarus' President Aleksandr Lukashenko during the governmental meeting to discuss economic performance in 2019, the results of the year and the five-year period, draft forecasts, budget and main monetary guidelines for 2020

"It's not just about the indexes, which we will certainly discuss today. People should feel the positive results. The economy must continuously improve well-being and quality of life," the President said. Without economic growth this cannot be achieved. He noted, "I am concerned that it is not

only modest but also extremely unstable. This trend needs to be reversed."

The President asked the participants of the meeting what had been done and what needs to be done to keep the economy strong and cancel out any factors that may lead to economic disparity. "We cannot be passive onlookers and feel complacent about the balanced state. People who demonstrate their trust, including during various political campaigns, did not vote for this," Mr. Lukashenko said.

The President asked speakers to focus on ways to fulfil all the promises given to people, from decisions by local executive bodies to goals and tasks of the five-year period.

Prime Minister Sergei Rumas reported that four out

of seven forecast indicators approved for 2019 are being fulfilled. Targets for exports, labour productivity and gross domestic product have not yet been met. "By region, only the Minsk Region is within the GDP growth forecast," he said.

Mr. Lukashenko reiterated that deputy prime ministers are personally responsible for the export of goods and services and demanded reports on every shortcoming. "Deputy prime ministers should not run for ministers and the latter should not run for governors — if, for example, agriculture is in focus; they should focus on technologies only. The Agriculture and Food Minister oversees technologies and new and promising ideas. Governors, chairpersons of district executive committees and farm

managers should keep sowing and harvesting campaigns and so on under control. A deputy prime minister should deal with the key issue: in relation to agriculture, it's exports of produce," the President stressed.

After the meeting, the Prime Minister talked to journalists. Sergei Rumas said that, during the meeting, it was repeatedly stressed that the governmental plans approved last year must be implemented. He explained, "Therefore, in the remaining four months, the Government will make every effort to make up for what we have not done this year."

As for 2020, the Head of State considered the Government's plans insufficiently focused and instructed officials to finalise the package of forecast documents.

FOCUS

The Minsk Times
Thursday
September 26
2019

3

Right-hand electric bus goes to the United Kingdom

Belkommunmash develops first CIS right-hand electric bus

By Irina Sergeeva

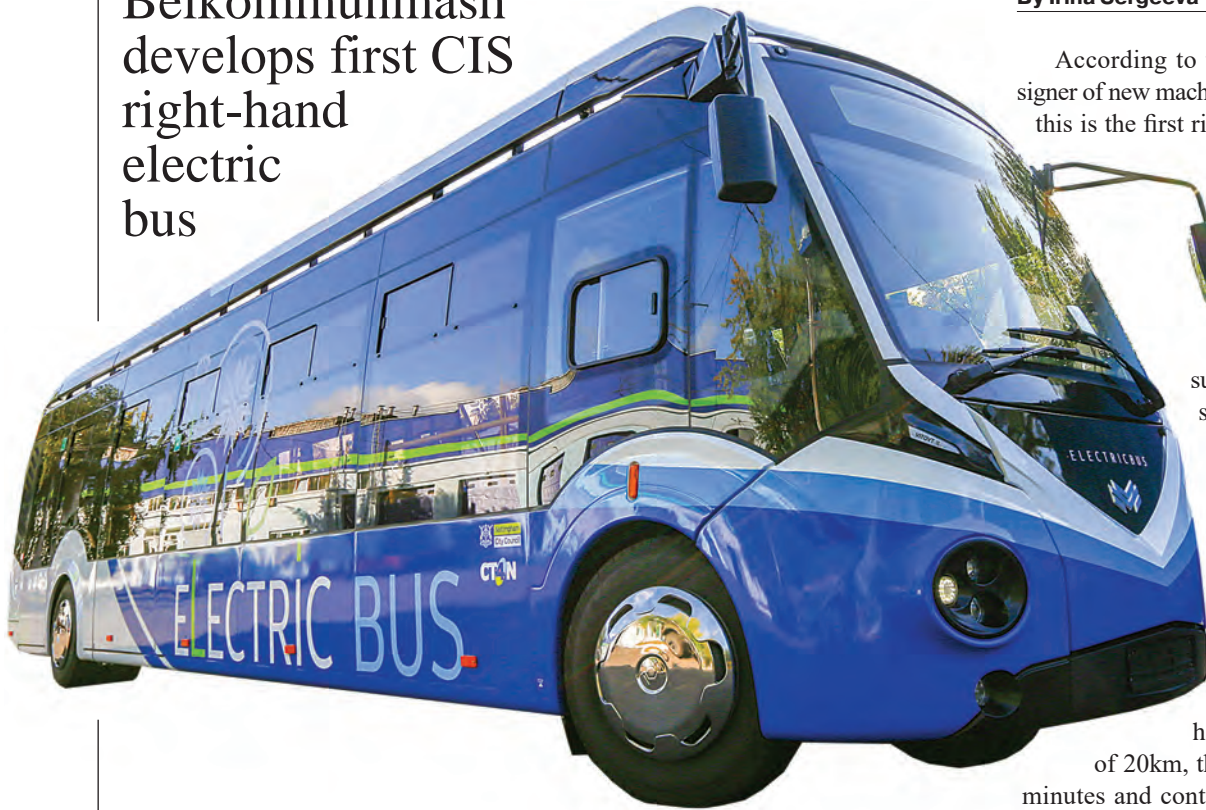
According to the deputy chief designer of new machinery, Sergey Chistov, this is the first right-hand electric bus in the CIS. It was developed under the state scientific and technical programme. The body is as adaptable as possible for subsequent production, so that customers can configure right or left steering according to their requirements. The concept is similar to the Minsk electric buses with fast charging at final stopping points. The 12-metre vehicle runs an average of 20km, then it is charged in 8 minutes and continues operation. The

concept makes it possible to flexibly form an infrastructure of charging stations even in old cities.

The electric bus will be presented at the Coach & Bus Live 2019 exhibition for buses, commercial transport and logistics, to be held in early October in Birmingham. The UK has not been chosen randomly: the country supports the concept of freeing cities from internal combustion engines and, by 2040, plans to remove vehicles with such engines from city streets.

“We had a positive response to our proposals from the cities. We held talks in Manchester and Nottingham and saw the interest of carriers and city officials in electric transport. In the future, we plan to operate this electric bus in the city of Nottingham,” added Mr. Chistov.

Belkommunmash is also now negotiating with a British manufacturer of vehicles for joint localisation of production facilities and further promotion of electric buses to other states of the Commonwealth of Nations, such as Barbados, Malta and Cyprus.



Visas to become cheaper



By Igor Platonov

President approves draft agreements on visas and readmission with EU

Anatoly Glaz, the Head of the Information and Digital Diplomacy Office and Press Secretary of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, explained, “The Head of State has made a decision on signing visa facilitation and readmission agreements with the European Union. This was not an easy decision. The President of Belarus made it realising the great importance of mobility for Belarusian citizens, after a thorough assessment of all the possible risks and consequences. He stressed that Belarus has always been in favour of facilitating human and business contacts, and the decision by the Head of State reaffirms it.

“This measure was preceded by a complicated and time-con-

suming negotiation process with the European Union which resulted in the development of a mutually acceptable agreement taking into account the interests of both sides in the most comprehensive way,” said the official. Mr. Glaz added that these agreements will be concluded in a package and will enter into force on the same day. However, the documents must first be ratified by the National Assembly of Belarus and approved by the European Parliament. After the exchange of notifications the agreements will become operational,” he explained.

The visa facilitation agreement envisages the mutual simplification of visa procedures for various categories of citizens and lower visa fees. Citizens will be able to apply for visas to the embassies of European countries and visa centres.

The readmission agreement provides for a two-year transition period for Belarus in relation to the readmission of citizens of third countries. In accordance with the joint declaration accompanying the agreement, the European Un-

ion will be obliged to provide technical and financial assistance in this field.

Mr. Glaz also noted that the Belarusian President had made important decisions on simplifying entry to Belarus for citizens of foreign countries, including member states of the European Union, in the past couple of years, to assist the development of tourism, economic and investment co-operation. “The number of tourists coming to Belarus is the best testimony to the efficiency of such unilateral steps demonstrating the openness of our country. About 500,000 foreigners used the opportunity to travel to Belarus without a visa after the introduction of the visa-free regime. The majority of them are from the European Union,” he stressed.

In accordance with the visa facilitation agreement between Belarus and the EU, the Schengen visa fees will be reduced from 60 Euros to 35 Euros, and the decision to issue the visa will be made within 10 days (the period may be increased to 30 days if additional checks are required).

Demonstrating products to their full



By Svetlana Savelieva

Belarus. The Taste of Nature exposition on display at CNR Food Istanbul — a food and beverage, food processing, storage, cooling technologies, logistics and store equipment fair

Belarus took part in the exhibition for the first time. Krasny Pishchevik and Minsk Baking Factory have showcased their confectionary, bakery, cereal and macaroni products. New products included fruit candies with celery, corn, pumpkin and carrot, and macaroni for children.

Heads of the Belarusian companies, together with business representatives from Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina,

Greece, Iraq and other countries, took part in a B2B event to establish business contacts, also visiting a major Turkish facility producing ingredients for the baking and flour-milling industry.

CNR Food Istanbul showcased over 2,000 brands from 18 countries, including Bulgaria, the UK, Germany, Greece, India, Spain, Italy, China, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. More than 50,000 people visited the fair. The *Belarus. The Taste of Nature* exposition has been organised by Belinterexpo Exhibition Unitary Company of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in co-operation with the Belarusian Agriculture and Food Ministry and the Belarusian Embassy in Turkey.

Historical maximum for golden reserves

By Natalia Yemelyanova

According to the preliminary data, Belarus' gold and foreign currency reserves reached a record total of \$8,891bn (equivalent) as of early September 2019 — according to a report from the Information and PR Department of the National Bank of Belarus

Since early 2019, the gold and foreign currency reserves have increased by \$1.7bn. According to the spokesman for the National Bank, Aleksandr Timoshenko, this growth, along with other factors, was due primarily to the favourable situation on the domestic foreign exchange market and growth in gold prices on the international

market. In August, the National Bank and the Government honoured the foreign and domestic obligations in foreign currency to the amount of about \$550m.



The National Bank predicts a slight decrease in the level of gold and foreign currency reserves by the end of 2019. “If we speak about forecasts for the remainder of 2019, given the amount of liabilities in foreign currency which the Government and National Bank are to fulfil in September-December (\$1.5bn)

and the projected volume of revenues in foreign currency, we expect a slight decrease in international reserve assets by the end of the year,” the official explained.

According to the country's main monetary guidelines for 2019, the volume of international reserve assets is expected to reach at least \$7.1bn as of January 1st, 2020.

On the fringes of the forum

Minsk has recently hosted the Belarusian Industrial and Investment Forum. Belarus' Deputy Industry Minister, Sergey Gunko, said, "This year, we suggested a slightly different concept for the industrial forum — combining it with the industrial and investment event, also adding an economy sector and the oil-gas, chemical and plastic industries. The fact that we are about to finish the five-year term (2016-2020) is the focus. We intend to study growth points and discuss what plans, products, and technologies we will begin the new term with."

Taking part in the forum were delegations from Germany, Hungary, India, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Ukraine and Russia. They aimed to learn about Belarus' export potential and opportunities for expanding co-operation. During the event, Belarusian-Japanese and Belarusian-Slovak economic forums, as well as Indian-Belarusian and technological events were organised.



On the digital future of the real sector

By Arina Norikova

The forum began with a panel discussion: *Investing in the Future*. It was lively and set the tone for the whole event. Officials, representatives of the real sector of the economy and experts discussed the forecasts and prospects for the digitalisation of the economy, argued and sought compromises.

The Industry Minister, Pavel Utyupin, stressed that the necessity of digitalisation for industry is not a matter of debate but grounds for activity. He noted, "Organisations of the Industry Ministry have a significant impact on the economy. We export over 65 percent of our products to more than 120 countries.

Enterprises play an important role in the regional economy, primarily in terms of employment, in many cases forming entire cities based on the industry. Therefore, the problems of modernisation of the machine-building complex are particularly relevant, and the topic of the panel discussion is investing in the future."

According to Mr. Utyupin, a strategic priority of the country is the building of a smart economy focused not only on resource advantages, but also on high-tech industry and innovative development. "Success in the implementation of these tasks is largely determined by the efficiency of the relevant system, which

makes it possible, on the one hand, to generate the necessary knowledge and, on the other hand, to implement it as efficiently as possible," he said.

The Industry Ministry understands this and is now preparing to implement a pilot project to create digital production in the country. "In the near future, we are

ready to start the project to create so-called 'digital production' at two selected sites. Within two and a half years, such plans are expected to be realised," the Deputy Industry Minister, Sergey Gunko, added.

After testing the business processes in practice, taking into account Belarusian conditions, it is planned to scale them to the entire industrial complex of the country.

The Economy Ministry is also actively engaged in issues of digitalisation and innovation. For example, a joint project with UNIDO is being considered, which involves the creation of certain competence centres based at techno-parks, where representatives of small and medium-sized businesses will be able to test the introduction of technologies for the digital transformation of their business processes. 2-3 techno-parks are planned to be used for these 'pilots' in the regions.

"At present, the Economy Ministry is preparing a report analysing the readiness of the Belarusian industry for this process. The 'Smart Industry of Belarus' plat-

form — based on the knowledge exchange programme with South Korea — has been presented. It aims to combine the organisational and intellectual potential of legal entities and individuals interested in using the key elements of the 'Industry 4.0' concept and new management principles," said the Deputy Economy Minister, Yuri Chebotar.



From start-up to launch

By Svetlana Mikhovich

Edible food films, reagents for water purification, composite materials and biological preparations for organic farming: a fair of innovative developments was held as part of the Belarusian Industrial and Investment Forum

Last year, the same fair resulted in signing 11 contracts by developers and industrial enterprises. This is the result which everyone hopes for, believes the Deputy Chairman of the State Committee on Science and Technology, Sergey Shcherbakov. "We try to bring together developers and innovators. At the fair, developers have an opportunity to communicate with potential investors, talk about their projects and answer questions. We try



to attract investors not only from Belarus, but also from other countries," he said.

The fair is the first step to implementation of a development, but this stage is very important. For example, last year, the development of edible film for food found an investor.

This year, the State Committee on Science and Technology had one of the central stands at the forum: 25 Belarusian scientific and innovative organisations presented over 150 developments. Among

them were the organisations of the Education Ministry, representatives of the National Academy of Sciences and private companies. It's the Committee's strategy to support all developers.

Mr. Shcherbakov demonstrated the most interesting developments. Among them was an interesting sample from the Belarusian State University: a designer programmable Squares Board LED screen. It has already attracted the attention of advertisers and its price is compet-

itive. The developers have already sold about a dozen such screens to commercial enterprises; two deals have been concluded with Russian enterprises. Another representative of the education system -- the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radio-electronics -- presented its system of cold plasma generation at the forum. The device makes it possible to treat surfaces with low-temperature plasma which can be used, in particular, in medicine: with its help, tools can undergo sterilisation and open wounds can be treated. Similar developments are now underway at the National Academy of Sciences.

A curious technology was presented by the EnergoTech Scientific and Engineering Centre. Its turbo-sphere is an energy-saving installation that uses gas pressure differences in the gas transmission system to produce electricity. A pilot project is being implemented in a boiler of Minskkommunteploseti. The technology is innovative and energy-saving; it has no direct analogues in the world.



Electric scooters, robot wars and intelligent quests

2nd Festival of Science — drawing attention to striking achievements of modern science — hosted by Minsk’s Botanical Garden, with thousands of guests coming to enjoy it

By Irina Sergeeva

Scientists of Belarus’ Academy of Sciences organised the festival for the first time last year, with the aim of drawing attention to the most striking and interesting achievements of modern science and showing how exciting and unforgettable research can be. This year, the 2nd Festival of Science was held.

The Botanical Garden was crowded: whole families came to the event. For everyone to have an interest, the area was divided into diverse sites. Those attending were able to have a go at being designers, space explorers and investigate the depths of the ocean, as well as trying archaeology, chemistry, biology and genetics. Even small children could take part in scientific experiments and master classes.

The Chairman of the Presidium of National Academy of Sciences, Vladimir Gusakov, noted that his establishment aims to become a platform for discussion of various ideas and issues. “To be popular, science must be open and accessible to everyone — both adults and children. We need to show what scientists are doing, to demonstrate the results of our work in various fields — such as physics, agricultural, medical or biological sciences. This helps attract people to science so that they continue moving along this path,” he said.

Institutes of the National Academy of Sciences presented an extensive exhibition to



show the public the most interesting developments and findings. Samples of modern breeding and micro-clones of trees, rare plants and fungi, an archaeological museum, DNA portrait making, an art therapy laboratory and a book café were offered to guests of the Botanical Garden. Anyone could learn about their health, brain activity, take a cardiogram or check blood oxygen saturation. Children watched the process of magnetorheological polishing and the life of cells under a microscope, learnt about medical technologies and listened to stories about space.

On the day, everyone could try Belarusian electric scooters developed by the NAS’ Optron Instrument Making Plant — riding alone or with others.



Guests to the festival were shown electric bicycles and electric scooters developed by Belarusian scientists. The main advantage of small electric transport lies in its environmental friendliness.

At the ‘Robots and Technologies’ platform, leading robotics schools held master classes and demonstrations on engineering, programming and robot creation; various technological companies

and start-ups presented their developments. 3D printers and the process of 3D robot making, a museum of retro-computers, laser tag competitions with robot-vehicles and virtual reality contests attracted attention.

The entertainment area of the festival welcomed visitors with scientific shows, exhibitions and master classes from science museums. In turn, the Information Centre for Atomic Energy organised an interactive performance — *Sounds of Construction*, also telling the festival guests about the nuclear industry in science.

Leading universities demonstrated students’ scientific developments and presented their most interesting specialties, while children and adults were invited to watch videos in the open air, play environmental games and visit a photo zone. The APB-BirdLife Belarus public organisation showed how to become a friend to birds, offering a live photoshoot.

The festival also attracted foreign visitors. The All-Russian NAUKA 0+ Science Festival arrived for the second time, presenting a platform dedicated to the 150th anniversary of the periodic table. The ‘Chemical Bar’ and different variants of the famous table were demonstrated. Russian guests are expecting a return visit from their Belarusian colleagues: the NAS scientists were invited to present their achievements at a science festival in Russia.

INSIDE



By Olga Korneeva

From January-July 2019, about 174,000 travellers came to Belarus under the visa free regime, 62 percent more than in the seven months of 2018. The figures were announced by Vitaly Gritsevich, the Deputy Direc-

tor of the Tourism Department at the Sports and Tourism Ministry.

The Ministry expects the number of international arrivals to keep growing. A decree was signed to combine the visa-free zones around Brest and Grodno. It will come into force in the coming future; therefore, the country

Effects evident

The number of foreigners taking advantage of Belarus’ visa waiver has exceeded 50 percent

is most likely to reap the benefits of this change next year.

“The most important goal for the Sports and Tourism Ministry is to encourage tourists to stay longer in Belarus. The regions will earn more profit as a result. At present, a foreigner spends on average 2.5 days in visa-free zones. After merging the latter, the duration of their stay is expected to increase to 3.5-4 days,” Mr. Gritsevich said.

In line with the decree, the current separate visa-free travel areas around Brest and Grodno will become a sin-

gle zone, to also include five districts in Grodno: Berestovitsa, Volkovysk, Voronovo, Lida and Shchuchin. Citizens from 73 countries will be allowed to stay without visas in the specified areas for up to 15 days. The new regulations will come into effect on November 10th and, at the moment, a ten-day visa-free regime operates in these areas.

Meanwhile, visitors do not need visas to enter Belarus and can stay in the country for up to 30 days, provided that they arrive in the country via the Minsk National Airport.

Walk with us

76 Belarusian cities and towns join European Mobility Week — a record high since the country started participating in the campaign

“The event debuted in Minsk in 2008 and since then our cities have taken an active part in the event. A record high number of 76 Belarusian cities and towns have registered on the European Mobility Week website this year. Last year, the number was 66. The campaign gains popularity with each year,” said Oksana Yuchkovich, a consultant with the department for regulation of impacts on air, climate change and examination at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection.

According to her, the country needs to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads as 63 percent of air polluting emissions are due to motor vehicles. In Minsk, this share is even higher — at 88 percent. Therefore, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection urges citizens

not to use personal transport and opt for public transport, cycling and walking. The country also popularises segways, monowheels and scooters.

On Car Free Day, drivers were traditionally offered free travel on presentation of a driver's license — not only in Minsk, but also in other cities around Belarus. Moreover, in Rechitsa, for example, the local authorities decided to offer drivers tickets to the Ecological-Biological Museum.

It is clear that people are not able to completely give up personal transport during Mobility Week and Car Free Day. However, throughout the campaign, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection is trying to raise awareness and encourage everyone to do something to improve the quality of urban life.



By Natalia Yemelyanova

European Mobility Week is an annual international campaign which runs from 16th to 22nd September to raise public awareness of the excessive use of private vehicles. The campaign has a new theme

every year and, in 2019, it is about promoting cycling and walking in urban areas with the spotlight on pedestrians. The 2019 slogan reads: ‘Walk with Us!’ European Mobility Week traditionally begins on September 22nd, with the now traditional urban environmental Car Free Day.

Bird of 2020 in Belarus



By Svetlana Savelieva

APB-BirdLife Belarus announces that the wood grouse has been declared the bird of 2020

Next year, Belarus will host events dedicated to this bird. “In most places where it lives, this is a rare bird in Belarus. Among its main threats are the disappearance of its habitats due to deforestation, extraction of resin on lekking grounds and predators, including the raccoon dog,” said Semen Levy, from APB-BirdLife.

Wood grouse is a fowl-like bird. This species is not consistent throughout Belarus and is more common in northern regions and in the east. There are two subspecies in the country: Western European and Central Russian. Previously, there were about 8,000-9,000 such birds in Belarus. However, wood grouse is a taiga, northern bird and, due to climate change, its population in Belarus is decreasing.

The national *Bird of the Year* campaign has been conducted by APB since 2000. The bird of 2019 in Belarus is the big spotted eagle. The main goal of the campaign is to draw attention to the beauty of nature and birds and the need to preserve them.

Smart stop for passengers

The first Minsk interactive multifunctional stop for public transport passengers launched near the Nemiga metro station exit, in the Upper Town

By Arina Novikova

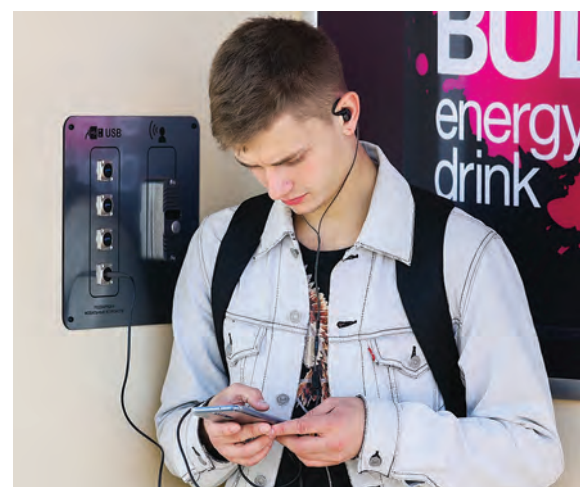
The two wings of the bus stop cover 40 sq.m; each is equipped with four USB ports for charging devices, an emergency and police call button, a screen to call a taxi, an ATM, a self-service terminal and vending machines with small items. Wi-Fi is also available. A touch screen displays the transport schedule and anyone can plan a route. The station is later to be supplemented with charging for electric scooters and segways.

“These are multimedia systems providing information for not only

advertising but also about the city, its infrastructure and transport,” said Andrey Sushchenya — who heads the *City Code* project (from the GIG Invest company).

The *City Code* project aims to increase the level of comfort and safety on Minsk's streets with help of information technologies. In total, about a hundred such interactive stops are planned to be installed in the capital.

The first Belarusian smart bus stop was unveiled in Gomel, in 2016. It was a prototype stop which uses solar panels.





Welcoming world leaders and diplomats as GA kicked off

On September 17th, the 74th regular session of the United Nations General Assembly (UN GA 74) convened at the United Nations headquarters in New York, USA

The UN General Assembly is the forum to a world parliament at which all countries discuss global, regional and national issues. This year's theme focuses on strengthening multilateral efforts to address climate action, poverty, sustainable development, and more.

The new President of the 74th session of the General Assembly brings to his role 'years

of United Nations experience', the UN Chief said, as Tijjani Muhammad-Bande banged the gavel to open his year in office

"He also brings valuable insights into some of the pressing peace and security, human rights and sustainable development challenges facing this body, from the spread of violent extremism to the threat of the global climate crisis," Secretary-General António Guterres said of Nigeria's former UN Representative.

He commended President Muhammad-Bande on prioritising peace and security, poverty

eradication, zero hunger, quality education, climate action and inclusion, all of which the UN chief called 'central to the sustainable development agenda'.

Pointing to the 'five critical summits' on climate action, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), financing for development, universal health care and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Mr. Guterres underscored that 'multi-stakeholder engagement will be essential'.

During the 74th session of the UN GA, the Belarusian delegation, headed by Belarus' Foreign Minister Vladimir

Makei, promotes its priorities in accordance with relevant national initiatives pertaining to peace, multilateralism, security and disarmament, sustainable development, human rights, partnership and the UN betterment. Mr. Makei has taken in a number of high-level events, including the Political Forum on Sustainable Development, a meeting on the elimination of nuclear weapons and a high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

City of Paris tests its 'flying taxi'

With pollution a major issue for Paris and the city's public transport bursting at the seams, one start-up has a solution involving the River Seine

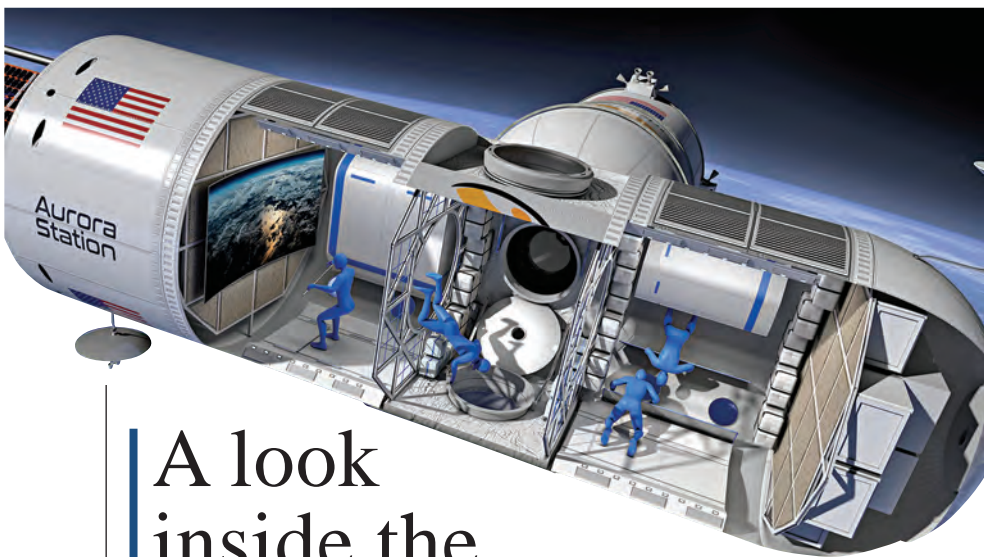
The Bubble, a 'flying taxi', is powered by electricity and lifts out of the water on 'wings' — and boasts green credentials such as being noise and pollution-free. It costs around 200,000 Euros to build and can reach speeds of up to 20.7mph. Test voyages in Paris are limited to a maximum speed of 18.6mph.

The service could launch as early as spring next year, according to a press release from the Paris Mayor's Office. The Seabubbles start-up launched a four-day test run on the Seine.

However, the company says its journey has not all been plain sailing. During a preview before the official tests launched, Paris river police ordered the Bubble to stop its activity.

Co-founder Alain Thebault said regulatory issues from the city of Paris have stymied progress, leading the company to pursue projects in Switzerland and the US rather than solely in France.

"We are waiting for the authorisation to have a commercial line between east and west... but have a look, there is absolutely nobody on the river," he said, adding that France is becoming 'like a museum' where tech innovation is too highly regulated.



A look inside the space hotel experience

For many people, getting away from it all means decamping to a cabin in the woods or a house by the beach. Soon there may be another option: lifting off to a hotel serenely orbiting high above the planet.

Though space hotels have long belonged only to the world of make-believe, that's about to change. NASA says it will open the International Space Station (ISS) to tourists as early as 2020. A Houston-based startup called Orion Span has proposed a four-guest space hotel called Aurora Station that would open in 2022.

And now the Gateway Foundation, a start-up in Alta Loma, California, is plan-

ning what may be the most ambitious space hotel project of all: a sort of space-based cruise ship big enough to hold a pair of hotels that would accommodate 100 guests and perhaps three times as many crew members. The facility would feature artificial gravity and have restaurants, gyms, sports arenas and concert venues as well as spaceplanes ready to whisk guests back to Earth in case of an emergency.

The foundation aims to assemble the facility in orbit by 2025 and open it to visitors in 2027 or soon after, says Tim Alatorre, the foundation's senior design architect. "In a few years, we're all going to be just thinking of space as a normal vacation option," he notes.

Healthy selection of amazing machines

They may look like something out of a sci-fi movie, but these motors could be on our roads a lot sooner than you think

From a hybrid Lamborghini capable of 217mph to a futuristic off-roader that can tackle any terrain, motoring enthusiasts have plenty to look forward to in the near future.

Some of the world's biggest automakers have descended on Frankfurt to show off their latest motors and designs. Recognised as the world's largest motor show, Frankfurt also sees car manufacturers present some bizarre ideas for the future. But they're a certainty to get plenty of interest when they eventually hit the road.

Leading the way is the new limited edition hybrid Lamborghini Sian which combines the 6.5-litre V12 engine from the Aventador with a 48-volt electric motor. The Sian is powered by a supercapacitor that Lamborghini claims is three times more powerful than a conventional battery of the same weight, making it the fastest Lamborghini road car ever produced.

Audi also turned heads with its newest concept vehicle, the AI:TRAIL quattro. The four-seater is an all terrain concept vehicle which gives a glimpse into what future Audi SUVs could look like.



But arguably the biggest reveal came from British automaker Land Rover, with its latest Defender. The 21st century edition pays tribute to the iconic 71-year-old Defender 4X4, which has been most notably driven by the Queen. And it also includes plenty of hi-tech features, including an X-ray vision mode that allows drivers to view underneath the vehicle.

Nevertheless, electric cars were the big news at this year's show, with the Volkswagen ID 3 having made its global debut, along with the Honda E, Porsche Taycan, Peugeot e-2008 and more all making an appearance.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Aleksandr Kishchenko's space

National Art Museum hosts exhibition of famous Belarusian painter Aleksandr Kishchenko — *Space Pilgrim* — showcasing more than fifty picturesque works by the artist. Some of the pieces, kept in the collection of the artist's family, are on display for the first time.

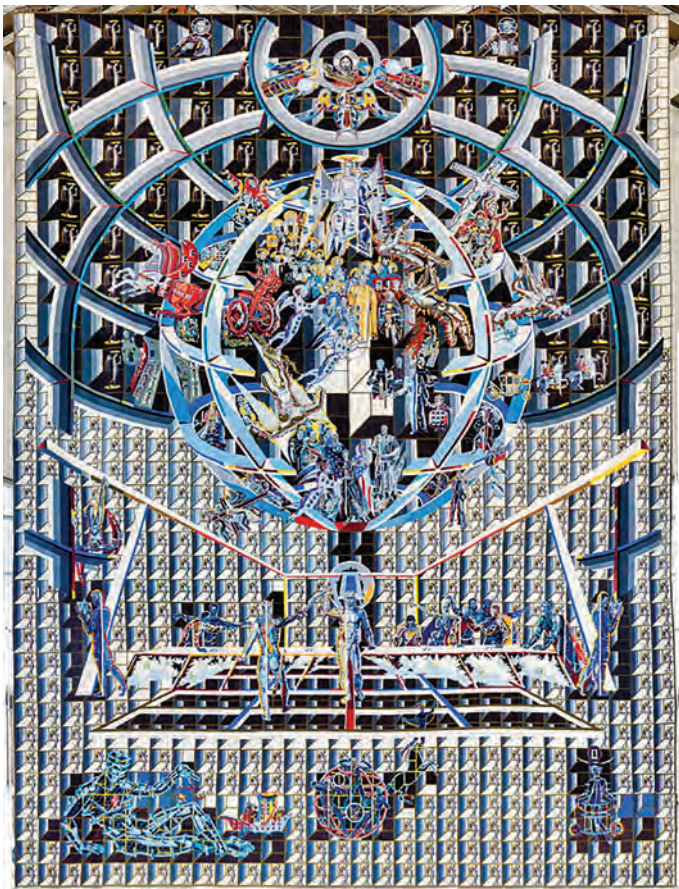


By Vladimir Stepan

The People's Artist of Belarus, Aleksandr Kishchenko, does not need a special introduction. He worked so hard that, over three decades of active creativity, he managed to produce an incredible amount in all areas of art. It is largely due to his stormy nature that Belarusian painting has become brighter and richer.

All Minsk and visitors to the city are familiar with his monumental works. Famous mosaics on the ends of the houses opposite the library greet everyone who enters Minsk from the east. Even if the artist had created only four of these mosaic panels, it would have been more than enough for his name to be revered. However, alongside the famous mosaics in different parts of the city, the largest ever tapestry was created according to the artist's sketches. It was hand-woven at the Borisov Factory of Applied Arts, which today bears the name of Aleksandr Kishchenko. The weight of the tapestry, reflecting all the significant events of the 20th century, is almost 300kg, and its size is 19m x 14m, which can be compared to the height of a six-story building. Since the moment of its creation in 1994, it has been exhibited only six times. Naturally, to show such a large-scale work, a special pavilion is needed. If a similar one had been built, then this could have become one of the features that attract fine art lovers to Minsk. After all, *The Tapestry of the Century* is well-known and is included in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest in the world.

Aleksandr Kishchenko was and remains one of the most famous and significant monu-



The Tapestry of the Century

mental painters of Belarus. Arriving in Minsk in 1963 at the invitation of Gavriil Vashchenko to teach at the Department of Decorative and Applied Arts of the current Academy, he immediately began to work and exhibit. His role in our art can be compared with the role of Vladimir Mulyavin in music. They both arrived in Belarus from Russia, they both accepted it, fell in love with it, and made everyone talk about our art with admiration.

Under the influence of Mr. Kishchenko, it is not only monumental art that developed. Being a man endowed with tremendous energy, he influenced other genres as well. There was not a single large exhibition at which Mr. Kishchenko would not show his paintings: thematic canvases, portraits,

still-lives and landscapes. The *Space Pilgrim* exhibition is a vivid confirmation of the thesis that if an artist is talented, then he is talented in everything.

When walking beside the paintings, it's as if one finds oneself in the past, in those years when Belarusian art was on an incredible rise, when a galaxy of brilliant artists worked in it. This applies to literature, theatre, cinema and painting.

Although most of the works were created several decades ago, they look so bright and have such a modern feel that they seem to have been made very recently, literally on the evening before.

A small canvas, created in 1966, which, in fact, launched a unique and real artist, is *The Circus Boy* — restrained in painting, it already shows



what the artist will become in a few years. It's an incredibly expressive work, reminiscent of the great artists of the beginning of the last century, those who made a revolution in painting.

Another painting is *The Portrait of a Mother* — a simple and straightforward story that everyone has seen many times. An elderly woman peels potatoes. She is depicted facing the viewer. A golden face, the same golden hands, a knife, a potato and a thin, spiralling golden peel... What could be simpler than this everyday routine? But the image turned

out to be sublime and majestic while the action itself is wonderful, and almost cosmic. One looks and understands much has already changed, will change, but this will remain the same for a long time, most likely, forever. In the same way the images of reapers with sickles, farmers with ploughs, lace-makers and embroiderers, as well as bakers with bread remain in the history of art...

The space of Belarusian artist Aleksandr Kishchenko will offer new and unique images to the viewer, and the *Space Pilgrim* painting exhibition is confirmation of this.

CULTURE

The Minsk Times
Thursday
September 26
2019

9

Legends from our favourite city



By Lyudmila Rublevskaya

Minsk's icon of the Mother of God

It was August 26th, 1500. Minsk dwellers living in the area of the Troitsky Suburb saw a wonderful light over the river. When they approached, they found an icon near the bank of the River Svisloch, from which the unearthly light emanated. It turned out to be the miraculous icon of the Mother of God by the Apostle Luke. From Byzantium, it had found its way to Korsun, and then to Kiev. During the invasion by the Tatar Khan, Mengli Giray, one of the invaders tore off its precious cover and threw the relic into the River Dnieper. Miraculously, the icon then floated against the current to the Svisloch. The shrine can now be seen in Minsk's Holy Spirit Cathedral, and there is a memorial plaque at the place it was found.

Ghost of Minsk Town Hall

Minsk Town Hall — evidence that the city was granted the Magdeburg Right — was built at the beginning of the 16th century and, in the middle of the 18th century, it acquired its ghost. Nobleman Michal Volodkovich, close friend of the legendary Radziwill Panie Kochanku, was distinguished by his exuberant character and extraordinary physical strength. His jokes were often very cruel: he could order a passer-by to take one hundred and one lashes. When, the battered nobleman Yatsyna summoned the tyrant to a court held in the same Minsk Town Hall, Volodkovich appeared drunk, shot at the ceiling, wounded one of the deputies with a sabre and... left. Once, when he saw a funeral procession, he took the musicians and led them to the guardhouse, to entertain a friend. Minsk residents were especially indignant when Volodkovich disturbed a mass by the respected priest, Oblachinsky, in the cathedral, which now stands opposite the Town Hall. To take revenge on the priest, who'd criticised him, the nobleman brought musicians, gypsies with bears and even camels, to the square, and rolled out barrels with free drinks... everyone stampeded out of the church. Volodkovich was somehow elected to the administration of the city; helped by Panie Kochanku sending his soldiers to the meeting of the magistrates. In the end, the townspeople conspired against him, seized Volodkovich and sentenced him to death. Michal refused to run, although he was warned about

The Romans believed there was such a thing as a genius loci — the spirit of a place. It makes each city unique and creates a special atmosphere. This could be through old temples and mysterious squares, city sculptures and narrow streets and, most importantly, the legends and traditions are associated with them. There are many amazing stories in Minsk, we look at some of the most notable.

the plot. It is known that when he was dragged out of the courtroom, he could only be removed along with the doorjamb, which he had seized onto. Volodkovich was shot right there, in the basement of the Town Hall, and afterwards his ghost began to peer out of the windows of the building.

The spirit of giants

According to the legends, once stones grew and giants lived in Belarus; it's not without reason that



our great-grandfathers called the mounds 'volotovki' — meaning graves of the giants. One of these strongmen, Menesk, lived on the banks of the River Svisloch. He built a watermill with seven wheels and milled stones on it rather than grains. Menesk had a beautiful daughter, Menka; many soldiers fell in love with her and went to serve with her father. Menesk was not just a miller, he had his own squad and travelled at night to protect his land. People came under his protection and settled there. In this way the city of Mensk originated, and the saying remained in Belarusian folklore: 'I won't go to Mensk from Vilnya, but I'll go along the Vilnya road to Mensk'.

Svisloch dragons

Dragons, or 'tsmoki', of two kinds lived in Minsk. One is the classic, fire-breathing, requiring the sacrifice of beautiful girls type. It had its cave on the Vysokaya Gora, in the area of today's Yubileinaya Square. However,

a groom of one the doomed beauties killed the dragon and was mortally wounded. They say that at the bottom of the River Svisloch, opposite the Yubileinaya Hotel, for a long time it was possible to see a crystal coffin with the remains



of a knight and the rib of the defeated dragon.

Not so long ago, the riverbed was dredged, but the remains of the dragon were not found. It's said however that somewhere, perhaps, other small dragons live under the fabled Nemiga River. A 16th century traveller, Baron Siegmund (Sigismund) Herberstein, drove through Minsk on his way from Rome to Moscow and made a note that the citizens kept large



Red Catholic Church

A beautiful but sad legend is connected with one of the most remarkable architectural monuments of the capital, the Red Roman Catholic Church. Its official name is the Church of St. Simeon and St. Helen. The building was erected at the beginning of the last century by the philanthropist and public figure, Edward Voinilovich, in memory of his dead children. The first to die was fourteen year old Simeon and, a few years later, the hope of her parents became mortally ill — the talented, beautiful and kind Helen. According to legend, before her death, the Virgin appeared to her, holding a model of the church in her hands. Helen drew it from memory and told her father that when he built this temple, he would be able to visit it to calm his grief. Construction was difficult, as there was not enough money, but Voinilovich did not want to compromise. On November 21st, 1910, a special red brick church was consecrated. The square behind the church building today still bears the name of Edward Voinilovich.



black fat lizards with dense scales which were caught in the local river, instead of cats and dogs. Such tales are not unique. In the office of Ivan Samoilo, director of the Minsk nonclassical secondary school, at the beginning of the last century there was a stuffed example of such a lizard. The director said that the lizard was not alone: the Tatar children brought them to him, catching them in the Nemiga River.

Belarusians beautify Baku

By Igor Svetlov

Belarusian gymnasts win team bronze at 2019 Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships and gain Olympic qualification to Tokyo

The 37th Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships have completed in Baku. The worldwide forum proved to be well represented, gathering about 300 gymnasts from 61 countries.

The participants competed for 9 sets of medals, including the team competition which also took into account the results of the individual performance. In this category, Belarusian Yekaterina Galkina, Anastasia Salos and Alina Gornosko took bronze. Belarus has waited for a medal in the team tournament for 4 years. The Belarusian team now boasts 168,550 points. Gold went to Russians, Dina Averina and Arina Averina, as well as Yekaterina Selezneva: they earned 186,500 points as a result of the qualification in four individual events. Silver was awarded to Israeli Linoy Ashram, Yuliana Telegina, Nicol Voronkov, and Nicol Zelikman who earned 174,750 points.

In the all-round competition, Yekaterina Galkina and Anastasia Salos failed to win a medal but qualified for the Olympic Games 2020 in Tokyo. 24 of the strongest gymnasts performed; they won the right to participate in the final of the all-round competition following qualification



round. To join the list of the Games' participants, the sports-women needed to reach the top 16. The Belarusians managed the task admirably. Anastasia was placed 14th (79,300 points) and Yekaterina — 15th (79,000 points) in the final standings.

On the next competitive day, Yekaterina and Anastasia were joined by our team in the group exercises; the girls also won the right to go to Tokyo. Olympic qualifications went to the top five teams, without taking into account the results of the Russian, Bulgarian and Italian teams, as they were already through to the Games. Arina Tsitsilina, Anastasia Rybakova, Karina Yermolenko, Anna Shvaiba, Anna Gaidukevich and Arina Sushchinskaya eventually took 4th place out of 24 teams. In their first performance (with clubs and hoops), the Belarusians received 28 points. The event with 5 balls was judged at 28,400.

In the group exercises, the

national team of Belarus remained without a medal. Arina Tsitsilina, Anastasia Rybakova, Karina Yermolenko, Anna Shvaiba and Anna Gaidukevich were close to winning in the final event with clubs and hoop; the judges awarded 29,100 points. The Italians (29,200) and Japanese (29,400) pushed the Belarusians to 4th position in the final scores. Gold predictably went to the Russians (29,450).

In the competition with 5 balls, the Belarusians earned 25,800 points to occupy 7th place. Japan (29,550) won, followed by Bulgaria (29,350). The Russians were placed third, with 28,150 points.

The level of competition at the 2019 Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships in Baku was extremely high. Against the increasing competition, the Belarusian gymnasts now need to work on their mistakes and prepare for a Tokyo rematch next year.

Dinamo's third victory in a row

Dinamo Minsk hockey players beat Finnish Jokerit in home match of Continental Hockey League



By Arina Novikova

The sportsmen played in an equal struggle during the first half. In the 27th minute, the defender of our 'bisons', Kirill Gotovets, scored to make it 1:0. His initiative was supported by team forward Teemu Pulkkinen, with the score turning to 2:0. The

Minsk team then consolidated their success with three more goals. The match ended in favour of Dinamo Minsk — 5:0. This was the third victory of the Belarusian team in a row.

The Belarusians will play the next match as part of the Continental Hockey League away, against Torpedo (Nizhny Novgorod).



Silver jumps from trampoliners

By Irina Sergeeva

Belarusian athletes win two silver medals at the Trampoline Gymnastics World Cup in Khabarovsk, Russia

Vladislav Goncharov won the first silver medal for the Belarusian national team with a score of 61,860 points in the men's individual competitions. Gold went to China's Gao Lei (61,895) and bronze was won by Russian Nikita Fedorenko (61,020).

Another Belarusian silver was taken in the synchronised trampolining, when

Vladislav Goncharov and Oleg Rubtsov scored 52,070 points. Gold then went to the American duo of Jeffrey Gluckstein and Alexi Shostak (52,540) and bronze was awarded to Japanese Daiki Kishi and Ryosuke Sakai (50,790).



Medal and Olympic qualification

At the World Wrestling Championships, held in Nur-Sultan, Irina Kurochkina (57kg) won bronze and Olympic qualification

In the battle for third place, Irina Kurochkina, who previously defeated Russian Marina Simonyan (19: 8) in the play-off fight, left nothing to chance to the Polish athlete, Jovite Wrzeseni (4:0). That was the only medal earned by the Belarusians at the World Wrestling Championships.

Having been defeated, Kristina Fedorashko (62kg) and Maria Mamashuk (68kg) finished the tournament. Kristina Fedorashko lost to Henna Katarina Johansson from Sweden (0:3), while Maria Mamashuk could not compete with German Anna Carmen Schell (6:8).



ARENA

• Olympic Channel dedicated a story to Belarusian gymnast Yekaterina Galkina



Belarusian gymnast Yekaterina Galkina became a character in the plot of a film on the Olympic Channel. The programme is dedicated to the return of Yekaterina Galkina to the big sport after heart surgery, which the titled gymnast suffered during adolescence. The young girl was able to recover from the sur-

gery and become a multiple world and European champion, as well as a silver and bronze medallist of the 2nd European Games.

• Organising Committee of 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing officially presents the competition's mascot



It's the Chinese' favourite animal — a Panda named Bing Dwen Dwen. "With a suit of ice, a heart of gold and love for all winter sports, this Panda is ready to share the true spirit of the Olympics with the world," said the press service of the Organising Committee. The Olympics are scheduled to be

held in Beijing, from 4th-20th February, 2022.

• Belarusian athletes took first place in the team event at the World Modern Pentathlon Championship, hosted by Hungarian Budapest



Winning a total of three awards, Olga Silkina took gold in the individual championship. In addition, along with Anastasia Prokopenko and Irina Prosentsova, they became champions in the women's

team competition. The Belarusian athletes also claimed bronze in the mixed relay with the duo of Anastasia Prokopenko and Ilya Polozkov.

The 2020 World Modern Pentathlon Championships will be held in Xiamen, China. In 2021, Minsk will host the world forum for the first time.

• Darya Domracheva and her husband — Ole Einar Bjoerndalen — sign contract with China's National Olympic Committee to train its national team for 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing

"We are pleased to announce the start of co-operation with the Chinese national biathlon team. This is a young



team with great development potential. We are starting the training process and are ready to share our many years of experience with Chinese athletes," the eight-time Olympic champion noted.

"We are glad that we have every chance of success," said the four-time Olympic champion. Darya Domracheva will train the women's team, and Ole-Einar Bjoerndalen took the post of head coach of the Chinese team.



Fest of the week

Dozhinki — the holiday marking the end of harvesting and honouring best grain growers — held in the Krupitsa agro-town of the Minsk District

EXHIBITIONS

NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM

12 Karl Marks Street
Until 29th September. *City Dear to My Heart*

Until 15th October. *Moisey Nappelbaum: Portrait of the Epoch*
Until 6th November. *Old and New: 18th Century Russian Jewellery Art*

NATIONAL ART MUSEUM

20 Lenin Street
Until 20th October. *Space Pilgrim*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN CINEMA HISTORY

4 Sverdlov Street
Until 6th October. *Exhibition of Sergey Mikhalevich's photos: Melancholy*

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF BELARUS

116 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 5th October. *City Contrasts*
Until 17th October. *City and Time*
Until 7th November. *September 17th 1939: You Are From Western and I'm From Eastern Belarus*
Until 10th November. *Doll Stories*

LIBRA

37 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 21st November. *Not Only Banksy: street art from private collections*

NATIONAL CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

47 Nezavisimosti Avenue
Until 29th September. *Polesie Elegy. Lost Land*
Until 29th September. *Collection by Irina Shchastnaya*

MUSEUM OF BELARUSIAN LITERATURE HISTORY

13 M. Bogdanovich Street
Until 24th October. *Caucasus Works by Lev Tolstoy*

YANKA KUPALA LITERARY MUSEUM

4 Yanka Kupala Street
Until 12th October. *Border Crossed Near Minsk: 1921-1941*

ZAIR AZGUR MUSEUM-WORKSHOP

3 Zair Azgur Street
Until 19th October. Exhibition of vernacular photography: *Silk Velvet Season*

EXPIRIMENTUS

9-517 Pobediteley Avenue
Until 31st December. *Organismus*

HOUSE OF NATURE

9A M. Bogdanovich Street
Until 12th October. *Best Toys from USSR*

THEATRES

BOLSHOI OPERA AND BALLET THEATRE OF BELARUS

1 Parizhskoy Kommuny Square
26.09. Spartacus
27.09. Figaro's Wedding
29.09. Little Prince / With Song in Life
30.09. Tosca
01.10. Artistic meeting with Tatiana Shemetovets / Carmina Burana. Carmen Suita
02.10. La Traviata
03.10. Romeo and Juliet

MAXIM GORKY NATIONAL ACADEMIC DRAMA THEATRE

5 Volodarsky Street
26.09. Oscar and Pink Lady
27.09. Edip
29.09. Twelfth Night
01.10. He and She
02.10. How to Become Rich
03.10. Dangerous Ties

BELARUSIAN DRAMA THEATRE

44 Kropotkin Street
27.09. A Crazy Woman
01.10. Suffering from Common Sense
02.10. Doctor Raus' Career
03.10. Grandfather

CONTEMPORARY ART THEATRE

5 Oktyabrskaya Street
27.09. I Do Not Understand You!
28.09. Dragon
29.09. Memorial Prayer. Tevye and Golda

YANKA KUPALA THEATRE

7 Engels Street
26.09. Harvest / School of Taxpayers
27.09 and 03.10. Inspector
28.09. ART
29.09. Tolerance
30.09. Musical Night at Kupala Theatre: Ales Kamotsky
01.10. Hangdogs

THEATRE-STUDIO OF CINEMA ACTORS

33 Masharov Avenue
26.09. Midnight Robbery
27.09. Who Laughs Last
28.09. Abduction of Yelena
30.09, 01.10 and 02.10. In Search of True Self
03.10. False Note

MINSK CONCERT HALL

5 Oktyabrskaya Street
30.09. Sacred Family
02.10. What Men Are Talking About

MUSICAL THEATRE

44 Myasnikov Street
26.09. Ball at Savoy
27.09. Jane Eire
28.09. Wedding in Malinovka / Swan Lake
29.09. Hello, I'm Charlie's Aunt
30.09. Dubrovsky
01.10. A Stranger's Letter
02.10. Grooms
03.10. Kupala: Life Amidst Lightening