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BELARUS

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PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS

JANUARY 26, 2025

THE MAIN EVENT OF THE COUNTRY

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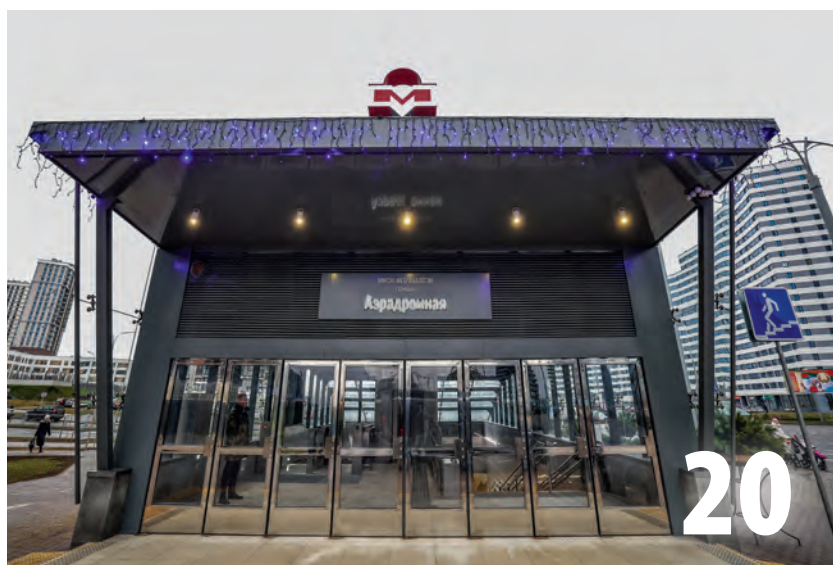
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IN THE ISSUE



04 THE MAIN EVENT OF THE COUNTRY

10 SERVING HIGH IDEALS



14 PERSEVERANCE WILL HELP TO OVERCOME ALL DIFFICULTIES

Traditionally, the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko celebrates the holiday of the Nativity of Christ together with believers in the church

"MINSK RESIDENTS WILL BE GRATEFUL TO US"

THE HEAD OF STATE TOOK PART IN THE CEREMONIAL LAUNCH OF ARTESIAN WATER FROM UNDERGROUND SOURCES FOR WATER SUPPLY OF THE CAPITAL

26

IN THE ISSUE



37 Moving along a well-trodden path

While visiting the Minsk Technopark, the President made a number of important statements in which, among other things, he outlined the main directions for the development of domestic industry



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IN THE ISSUE

52 'I am his mirror image' Nikolai Lukashenko on father's advice, family traditions, social media

The entry where the president's son Nikolai Lukashenko and his teacher Yelena Ostashkina-Myslivchik played the piano became one of the highlights of the 'Time Chose Us' concert that usually concludes the Marathon of Unity national social and cultural event that is running in various cities and towns across Belarus.

58 On a wave of warmth, kindness and beauty

Charity events Our Children, From the Bottom of Our Hearts, Unity Marathon, Christmas balls and other pleasant attributes of the holidays lasted in Belarus from mid-December to mid-January. Once again, these projects and their new formats confirmed how great is the traditional desire of Belarusians to give each other joy, to surround with attention and care not only their relatives and friends, but also all those who especially need it.



70 FIND CHILDREN

Uniting thousands of people with one competition, tearing young people away from gadgets, launching a breakthrough project — for many, this is impossible. But not for the Presidential Sports Club. The projects of this organisation unite thousands of people. The Snow Sniper biathlon competition, the Golden Puck hockey tournament, and the Golden Racket tennis tournament have become a good start for many athletes.

THE MAIN EVENT OF THE COUNTRY



The schedule of the January issue of the magazine does not allow us to reflect the results of the elections of the President of the Republic of Belarus promptly. But, of course, it is impossible to pass by this most important electoral event. We will nevertheless recall a certain chronology of preparation for it.



Among the priorities

So, back in December, the President discussed the holding of the election and a number of pressing issues with the chairmen of regional executive committees and the chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee. As Aleksandr Lukashenko noted, December and January are traditionally difficult months for the authorities. As the President noted, the New Year holidays passed without incident. But this January is especially difficult, as the country is going through presidential election. The active phase, campaigning, began on January 1st. "I have already told my trusted persons that this is a difficult time. We must go through this time with dignity, without violating the law," said the Head of State.

Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised that he invited the governors and the mayor of Minsk to discuss the organisation of the election. "I know that you are experienced people, governors, the Presidential Administration knows how to conduct these elections, what needs to be done. But we cannot violate the electoral legislation. Frankly, we do not need this at all. We must go through this time with dignity,

so that all sorts of mess from abroad does not fall on us, first of all, and so that people's mood is not spoiled," he said. The President repeated what he had said to his trusted persons, "I will not have time to organise, control the election campaign. I ask you very much to organise everything with dignity," said the Head of State.

The President emphasised that the main work on organising the election is carried out by the Central Election Commission. "But the Presidential Administration and governors have always been the driving belts. Therefore, I will ask you to organise these days of election campaigning with as much dignity as the New Year holidays," he said. The Head of State noted that the work of enterprises cannot be hindered. "January is a very important month for the economy. If we lose January, we will not make up for it during the year. Therefore, we must not interfere with the work under any circumstances. So that our candidates can meet where they want, and you will support them," he said. Aleksandr Lukashenko set the task: to hold the elections as a holiday, but not as a show. "We do not need an American show where they shoot in the ear or in the head. We need



this election to be held with dignity and not to expose ourselves to unnecessary criticism,” he explained. The President drew attention to the fact that for the first time, election is being held in winter, so local authorities must provide for everything so that people can get to the polling stations, and if necessary, drive up to the voters. Help the election commissions at the polling stations. It is clear that these scoundrels (opponents from abroad) are already putting pressure on our commission members, especially the leadership,” noted the Head of State. “I am very glad that no one is afraid of them. People openly declare that they are members of the commissions and they will conduct and organise elections! But we need to get involved. Where necessary, the police, where necessary, the military, feel free to involve. So that there is order.”

What is important for life

Aleksandr Lukashenko advised governors not to forget about something else. Although election is a very important stage in the life of the country, there are many other concerns

besides them. And after the election, everyday life will begin. “We need to prepare for the sowing campaign, sow as expected, so that people have a piece of bread on the table. Then no election will be scary for us. That is, the economy first of all. And the tasks that were set before this day, they are relevant for us, starting from agriculture, industry, transport and so on,” said the President. He invited the meeting participants to outline issues if any help is needed somewhere on narrow problems. “We will decide together with you in order to respond, including to criticism and appeals from our people,” he said, referring to the appeals during the collection of signatures.

People must make a choice

Chairman of the Vitebsk Region Executive Committee Aleksandr Subbotin told journalists that the situation in his region during the election campaign remains operational. There are minor problems, as usual, but they are being resolved calmly and in a working order at all levels. “The electoral cycle is an exam for all government

bodies, it reveals the most pressing problems. These are, as a rule, housing and communal services, roads, transport communications. This is a reason for government bodies to more intensively solve and improve all processes where problems are revealed,” said the Chairman of the Vitebsk Region Executive Committee. Aleksandr Subbotin noted that local government bodies are not taking such an exam for the first time and, in general, the system has been worked out. “The main thing is to organise everything efficiently, according to the law, and for the election to become a holiday for those who come to vote. So that you can come with your children, so that it is safe, beautiful, cosy,” he said. The Chairman of the Vitebsk Region Executive Committee emphasised that the region has worked on the mistakes made after the previous election, so there are no global problems during the current election campaign.

The Chairman of the Grodno Region Executive Committee Vladimir Karanik emphasised that during the current election campaign, the consolidation of society is obvious to everyone. “We see that the technical preparation stage was successful and, in general, the system is ready to provide people with the opportunity to exercise their electoral right in comfortable, safe conditions. This is the main task of the authorities is to create conditions. People must make the choice,” he noted.

Vladimir Karanik said that the meeting with the President also discussed how to further intensify work on landscaping, improving the street and road network, and simplifying the paperwork for legal entities in the field of land relations. “This was a working meeting to discuss how, without any hesitation, without resting on the laurels of a successful 2024, to smoothly roll into January, February and March, so that the first quarter maintains the positive dynamics of the country’s development and so that we continue to create a solid foundation on which the next five-year plan will be based,” noted the governor.

There are five candidates

Yes, today it is well known that the Central Election Commission has registered five presidential candidates. Among them are the current Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus Sergei Syrenkov, the Chairman of the Republican Party of Labour and Justice Aleksandr Khizhnyak, the Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus Oleg Gaidukevich, and individual entrepreneur Anna Kanopatskaya. The registered presidential candidates, as well as their representatives, were presented with the corresponding certificates.

Based on the results of checking the authenticity of the signatures on the signature sheets, based on the minutes of

THE MINSK CITY COMMISSION FOR THE ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS CEC OF BELARUS HAS ESTABLISHED THE NUMBER OF VOTERS IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS



2,518,145
people signed for
Alexander Lukashenko



134,472
people signed for
Oleg Gaidukevich



125,577
people signed for
Sergei Syrenkov



121,077
people signed for
Anna Kanopatskaya



112,779
people signed for
Alexander Khizhnyak





the regional, Minsk city commissions for the election of the President of the Republic of Belarus, the Central Election Commission of Belarus established the number of voters in the Republic of Belarus who signed in support of the nomination of candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus.

2,518,145 people signed for Aleksandr Lukashenko, 125,577 for Sergei Syrenkov, 112,779 for Aleksandr Khizhnyak, 134,472 for Oleg Gaidukevich, and 121,077 for Anna Kanopatskaya.

5,325 polling stations

As the Chairman of the Central Election Commission Igor Karpenko noted during the meeting of the Central Election Commission, at that time the campaign for the election of the President of the Republic of Belarus was conducted in accordance with the deadlines established by law. “The stage of nominating presidential candidates has ended,” he stated. “According to information from territorial commissions, signatures were collected in accordance with the procedure established by law. The CEC did not receive any complaints. Voters contacted the information and reference centre of the Central Election Commission with questions about the location of pickets to collect signatures, documents confirming the authority of members of initiative groups, and the possibility of signing upon presentation of a document other than a passport or identification card.”

According to the Chairman of the Central Election Commission, 5,325 polling stations were formed within the timeframe established by law. The same number of precinct commissions were formed. A service for finding a polling station was launched on the CEC website.

These figures were also announced at the same time. “951 National Observers have already been accredited with territorial commissions,” noted Igor Karpenko. “93 foreign (international) observers have already been accredited to monitor the election in the country, including observers from the CIS mission, parliamentarians, representatives of the youth organisation of the Non-Aligned Movement, electoral bodies of foreign states, and independent observers.”

Let us recall that in the second half of December, the Chairman of the Central Election Commission met with the Head of the CIS Observer Mission, Sergei Lebedev. “Sergei Nikolayevich reported that the mission headquarters has begun operating in the CIS Executive Committee in Minsk, where more than 50 long-term observers will work,” noted Igor Karpenko. “A day or two before the elections, about 150 more observers will arrive in Belarus. The total number of the mission is about 200 people.”

The Central Election Commission continued accrediting foreign (international) observers.

Ballot format and airtime

In addition to registering candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus, the CEC meeting considered the issue of establishing the form and text of the voting ballot. It will contain the last name, first name and patronymic in alphabetical order, and other data of all candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus. In addition, the ballot includes explanatory information on the procedure for filling it out. Voters will also be reminded that it is prohibited to take the issued ballot outside the voting premises, and it



is prohibited to take photos and videos of the completed ballot. It was approved that the text of the ballot will be in Belarusian.

The CEC meeting also considered the issue of organising the voting of certain categories of citizens. We are talking about Belarusians living abroad. They were also able to exercise their constitutional right, but only on the territory of our country — the corresponding polling stations were organized in Minsk and each regional centre (the addresses of these polling stations were posted on the website and telegram channel of the Central Election Commission, published in the media). As the CEC reminded, the ballot paper had to be issued at one of the specified polling stations upon presentation of a passport, identification card, biometric passport of a citizen of the Republic of Belarus.

The dates and times of the pre-election speeches of the candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus on television and radio were determined — the corresponding

draw was held during the meeting of the CEC. Aleksandr Lukashenko refused to make pre-election speeches on television and radio.

In a conversation with journalists, Igor Karpenko expressed gratitude to the people who worked in the initiative groups of potential presidential candidates. “The result of the signature verification and the process as a whole were of sufficient quality,” he summed up. “All candidates collected the number of signatures required by law for nomination and submitted all documents. All five candidates meet the legal requirements for candidates for President of the Republic of Belarus.”

The election campaign was held from January 1st to January 25th, 2025. The presidential election in Belarus was scheduled for January 26th, 2025. Citizens who would vote for the first time were given a gift from the Central Election Commission.

Aleksandr Pimenov
Photo by BELTA

AWARDS AND LAUREATES

SERVING HIGH IDEALS



The solemn, beautiful and touching tradition continues. During the festive Christmas days, the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko presented special Spiritual Revival awards, special prizes to cultural and artistic figures and the special Belarusian Sports Olympus prize.

Loyalty to the calling and love for the native land

“Christmas days create a special atmosphere and inspire good deeds. This has been the case since ancient times. This is how we understand this bright holiday today,” the Head of State noted during the awards ceremony. “It is the origin of our ceremony of honouring the winners of the Spiritual Revival award and special Presidential awards in the first days of the New Year. And the event itself has already become a tradition of sovereign Belarus. And we cannot imagine these magical days without a wonderful solemn moment — a moment of deserved glory of worthy people.” Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised that the laureates of the award are true devotees, creators of real art, keepers of the soul of the people. This award recognises the merits of cultural figures who preserve and enrich the national treasury, awaken interest in folk crafts, and foster respect for our traditions. The President drew attention to the fact that among the awardees are also priests, doctors, social workers — caring people who have extended a helping hand to those who have encountered difficulties. He emphasised that they selflessly and at the call of their hearts take care of children who have found themselves in a difficult situation in life. The Belarusian leader noted that the country is proud of the successes of our famous athletes and coaches at the largest world tournaments, who have been awarded the Belarusian Sports Olympus award.

“All the achievements of the laureates and their activities have a high spiritual and patriotic resonance. This is especially important now, when the country is preparing to celebrate a sacred date — the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory. We carefully preserve the memory of the past,

confidently move forward and boldly look to the future,” said the President.

Aleksandr Lukashenko thanked the heroes of the day for their achievements and victories. But, according to him, something else is also important. “The significance of your work is much greater than you may realise. Each of your successes inspires many Belarusians to new deeds, just as kind, humane and very necessary. Therefore, from year to year, we meet on this stage with people who are driven by the sincerest feelings — loyalty to their calling and love for their native land,” the Head of State addressed the laureates. According to him, thanks to the fact that they serve high ideals, we successfully confront the challenges that our time poses to us. A time of chaos, wars, devaluation of true values. “And the truth is simple: any human activity is based on spirituality and morality, justice, which is a blessed elixir for culture, a strong connection between generations and traditions. They are the basis of the unity of a nation that knows its history, values the heritage of its ancestors and cares about the future. The basis of what determines the character of the people. Spirituality and morality are the foundation of a strong, independent state,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko.

The President congratulated the winners of the Spiritual Revival award, special prizes for culture and art luminaries, and the Belarusian Sports Olympus prize. “Thanks to people like you, patriots and creators, our native Belarus remains an island of peace, tranquillity, humanity, and mercy,” he said. “No matter how hard anyone tries to undermine us today, nothing will work. Nothing will work. We will preserve our country. It already belongs to our children and grandchildren. Therefore, we should think about their future. And we are thinking.”





Save peace for Belarus

Aleksandr Lukashenko assured that in the next five years everything will be done to ensure that our country forever forgets the problem of preserving its statehood. “Our country will always be a state, despite any trends and tenders in the international arena,” said the Belarusian leader. Once again, Aleksandr Lukashenko warned a wide audience that the next year would not be easy, “We will have to strain ourselves twice as much as last year. But we will overcome all difficulties. And not because, I want to say, we are united, we are inspired, and so on. We have learned to work in difficult conditions, when we are pressured from all sides.” The President reminded that there is no point in complaining. “There are no sanctions,” he said once again. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, if Belarusians, emotional people, were to plunge into discussions about the sanctions policy, they would collapse the economy, and then their lives and their state. “Therefore, sanctions are not sanctions, it is just that life is developing in such a way that in any situation we will have to survive, withstand this pressure. We will endure it,” he assured. The Head of State emphasised that the New Year and the next five-year plan will be held under the slogan of peace and security. “If there is peace, everything else will follow. We must preserve peace for Belarus, and we will do it together with you,” he said.

And another thesis that Aleksandr Lukashenko has repeatedly voiced: continuity, a new generation. “We are handing over our country to a new generation,” he said. “Why am I telling you this? I talked about it in church and so on, so that people would hear. And I am telling you, because you and I will have to form this generation and you and I will have to put them in their chairs — creative workers, cultural workers... And in power. Hard work, but we are determined to organise and carry it out.”

The Head of State noted that there are still many holidays ahead. And he wished for people, if it is possible, to smile and rejoice, to do so. “Happiness, well-being and success to you,” he wished.

Victory cannot be separated from spiritual values

Rector of the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts Natalia Karchevskaya (the university was awarded the Spiritual Revival award for active work in patriotic education of youth and implementation of the project Line of Memory. Code of War) in her response on behalf of all the laureates thanked the President and everyone who ensures peace and harmony on Belarusian soil. “Only in conditions of peace can we create what the Belarusian state really needs. All our victories cannot be separated from national and spiritual values, the historical memory of our



people, from the state policy pursued by our President,” she said. Natalia Karchevskaya noted that in 2025 everyone is taking a test: a test in front of their ancestors, in front of their children, a test of patriotism, devotion to national interests, and the steadfastness of state positions. “We will do everything to pass this test with flying colours,” she assured.

“There is a lot of work behind this award”

Director of the Minsk Scientific and Practical Centre for Surgery, Transplantology and Haematology Oleg Rummo noted that the centre has many awards. But the Spiritual Revival award (the centre’s staff received it for outstanding achievements in improving the quality of medical care, developing science and popularising the ideas of charity and mercy) is special. “This award is a tribute to the enormous work of a highly qualified team united by a common goal — to save people’s lives,” noted Oleg Rummo. “This team has been working for almost 50 years, saving people, annually providing medical and inpatient care to more than 30 thousand people from Minsk and all of Belarus.”

Oleg Rummo recalled that the Centre’s team was the first in the country to perform bone marrow transplant operations in 1994, which were performed on both adults and children. The Minsk Scientific and Practical Centre for Surgery, Transplantology and Haematology was the first in Belarus to perform a liver transplant operation, and then a multi-organ transplant. “Today, a huge team is engaged in all areas of modern high-tech medicine, from transplantation



to cardiac surgery, microsurgery, and treatment of patients with acute cerebrovascular accidents. In each of these areas, this team has made a real breakthrough in recent years, applied unique developments that will help to significantly improve the quality of care, save thousands of patients,” noted Oleg Rummo, and most importantly, according to the director of the Centre, the team shares its experience, “About a thousand Belarusian doctors have undergone retraining at the educational centre over the past two and a half years, and about 600 doctors from different countries have completed various internships at our centre. We continue to provide assistance by traveling with master classes to different countries, performing complex surgeries on residents of these countries.”

Aleksei Fedosov

Photo by BELTA

A photograph of President Aleksandr Lukashenko and a priest in a church. The President, on the left, is wearing a dark blue jacket and is lighting a candle. The priest, on the right, is wearing a purple mitre and a dark robe with a large ornate cross necklace. They are both holding lit candles. In the background, other people are visible, and the church walls are decorated with religious murals. The scene is lit with warm, golden light from the candles and some overhead lights.

PERSEVERANCE WILL HELP TO OVERCOME ALL DIFFICULTIES

Traditionally, the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko celebrates the holiday of the Nativity of Christ together with believers in the church

This year, the Head of State visited the Church of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker in Logoisk. The place is unique. The church was built in 1866 and is an architectural monument. In the 1930s, the church was closed and converted into a grain storage facility. During the Great Patriotic War, services were resumed here and were not interrupted. In 1907, the ancient icon of the Logoisk Mother of God, considered lost, was returned to the church. There is a healing spring at the church, flowing from the foot of the hill on which the church stands. Aleksandr Lukashenko lit a festive candle in the church. And then he talked with the believers. Although the conversation was not entirely festive, it was on the most important topics.

“These holidays are in our hearts forever”

Congratulating the President on the Nativity of Christ, the rector of the church, Archpriest Vladimir, noted that during the Divine Liturgy, believers pray for the country. Archpriest Vladimir wished the Head of State peaceful rule, health, strength and physical strength, as well as deep peace in the soul, about which the angels sang in Bethlehem on Christmas night. “And as a wish from all the residents of Logoisk, the parishioners of this church — I want the joy of this holiday to always remain with you and with all of us,” noted the priest.

The President thanked everyone who came to the church. “I really appreciate that you came to meet on this bright, holy holiday,” he noted. The Head of State recalled his thesis that it is very important for an independent state to have stable and recognised by all people traditions. According to him, one of them is the holidays: Easter, New Year, Victory Day, Christmas. “These are the holidays that our difficult history could not erase from our memory. I am sure that these holidays are in our hearts forever,” noted Aleksandr Lukashenko. He congratulated everyone on the bright holiday of Christmas. “I want it to bring joy to all of us. So that you are less often upset. So that you are not upset at all, this does not happen, you understand this perfectly well. Therefore, I wish you to be upset as little as possible. And most of all, may your children never upset you,” wished the Head of State.

“You just need to work harder.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko also spoke with Logoisk residents about the main topics of the coming year. “They don’t lie in church. I always remember this and always say this. It’s better to remain silent if you don’t want to talk,” he noted. The President warned that the coming 2025 would be difficult. “It’s difficult not only because they started to put pressure and strangle us and Russia from all sides. So far, the tactics and strategy that we have defined help us not only stay afloat, but also live with dignity. Let’s be honest, everyone lives the way they want. This is what I can say today with confidence. Why? Because if you want to live better, such conditions have been created in our country.

If you want to live better (the Lord has always hinted at this), you just need to work harder. If you don’t work (you know this very well), you will never live better or even well. Therefore, we will overcome all the difficulties and hardships of the next year,” he said.

The Head of State explained that all the difficulties are connected not only with the pressure from outside on our state. 2025 will also be difficult because our friends and neighbours with whom we trade (and trade and economic relations are the basis of life of any state) are in a difficult situation. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, if things were normal for them, we would be very good. “That is why I warned you and I warn you again that the New Year will not be easy. It will be hard. But we will overcome it. We will overcome all these difficulties, we have faced them



WARMTH OF THE MEETING

more than once literally recently, and we experienced the pandemic, and we experienced the sanctions. If we are united, if we are together, if we at least look in the same direction, then everything will be fine for us,” noted the Belarusian leader.

Let's stick together

Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that there are enough problems inside the country and challenges appear constantly, almost every month. One of the latest challenges that the population might not have noticed, thanks to the work of responsible persons, the President named the forced migration of people fleeing from war. According to him, Russia has long been engulfed by this problem, while Belarus has been spared until recently. “I am already being informed that people from the East are starting to arrive, not only those who wish us some kind of hostility and war. No. People who want to live, work, earn money and send some money to their homeland to feed their children are arriving. But all these people are far from the matters that we solve. They are incompetent, professionally unprepared. This is also not scary, the main thing is that these people want to work and study. Our people can teach people, we need labour resources. But uncontrolled migration is a disaster,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He emphasised that different people are fleeing to Belarus. And through our country there is a large transit of migrants to the West. The Head of State responded to accusations that Belarusians are helping with this migration: “I have always been honest. We will not protect anyone from migrants. Especially those who impose economic sanctions against us. What are sanctions? This is economic pressure so that we

do not develop, so that it is more difficult and complicated for us. So why should we protect them?”

The President drew attention to the fact that Vladimir Zelenskyy recently exclaimed, “Long live Belarus”. “Well, it lives, of course it lives,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted ironically. “He, however, said that soon everyone throughout Belarus will pronounce this slogan — ‘Long live Belarus’. He allegedly hinted that soon we will have the same as in Ukraine. That is what I thought when I heard him: God forbid. Therefore, there are enough challenges. But the main challenge is the economy. We will stick together, we will try to do better, so that life is better — we will overcome these challenges too.”

The main thing, according to the Belarusian leader, is peace. He assured that Belarus will do everything possible to maintain peace. “If there is peace, everything else, as I say, we will buy. We will live, maybe not richly, but with dignity. As we live now, we do not ask anyone for anything. We live on the money, the means and opportunities that we have in Belarus. Therefore, the main thing for us is to maintain peace,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko.

He noted that he is often criticised for his words about peace. “I understand that if there is no peace, nothing is needed,” the President responded to this. As an example, he cited neighbours, where hundreds of thousands of people are dying, dirt and everything else that war brings are there. “Do we need this? We do not need this. Therefore, we will do everything to maintain peace,” stated the Head of State.

“As long as I have health, I will be with you”

Aleksandr Lukashenko returned to the thesis that he voiced in his New Year's address. The future, especially the next five





years, is a change of generations. “We need to prepare the younger generation, the next generation of our children, who will take Belarus into their hands and will protect it, value it, at least in the same way that you and I, the current generation, protected it and made this country sovereign and independent. For the first time in history,” said the President. He drew attention to the fact that a change of generations is always a painful process. But he promised to carry it out in such a way that Belarusians would not notice any pain.

According to the President, the country will continue to implement the policy of a socially oriented state. He noted that many may be sceptical about this. “I must tell you: what we are doing for the people of Belarus is not being done in any other country. The most important thing is that we know how to hear our people, listen to our people,” noted the Head of State. He gave several examples. The last artesian wells will be opened in the coming days, which will supply Minsk with clean artesian water. The practice of taking water from open sources and purifying it will no longer be used in the capital. After all, artesian water is much better. He explained that in total, Minsk consumes more than 400 thousand cubic meters of water per day and it was also necessary to ensure water supply from

underground sources in the amount of 120-130 thousand cubic meters. “Who are we doing this for? For our people,” noted the President. He drew attention to the fact that not all countries are dealing with this issue. “But we did it because I know that people will remember it forever. Real people will be grateful, because air, water, our food are the basis of life,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko, drawing attention to the fact that in other cities there are no critical problems with water. Another example is roads. The President recalled that last year these heights were literally taken by storm. He drew attention to the fact that today every family has cars, sometimes even two or three. This means that huge funds are needed to maintain the roads in normal condition. The Head of State set the task of connecting all district centres with agro-towns with hard-surface roads. “We must, no matter how difficult it is, overcome this misfortune in the country over the next year. For whom is this done? For the people,” said the Head of State. “Therefore, a socially oriented state is when the state looks towards the people.” According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, this does not mean that the state will work for each person, this is not its role. He drew attention to the fact that the state has its own functions. But in recent years, they have significantly expanded.



The President gave another example — each village has its own standards. Most of them are met. The Head of State promised that attention will be paid to this issue, because the first year of the five-year quality plan is the Year of Improvement. Therefore, according to him, in the village, not to mention the agro-towns, conditions for people should be created, figuratively speaking, at least one street lamp should be lit so that people can safely move along the street. Speaking about the village, Aleksandr Lukashenko shared his concerns, “We are counting on our youth. Yes, we have good youth, they are what they are, there will be no other. But I am concerned that our youth are not as committed to work as we are.” Therefore, according to him, the country will face a serious test in the future. “We need to determine a normal government, a normal President, a government that will show the path along which our country will develop. We will not escape this. This is the essence of generational change,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. “I will not go anywhere tomorrow. As long as I have health, I will be with you, in any position I will work to preserve what we have created with our own hands.”

There must be justice at the core

According to the Head of State, and he considered it important to remind about this on this day, there should be justice at the core. “There should be no injustice,” he stated. Hence, the President drew attention to the state’s

interference in pricing issues. “And this is not price regulation, as some say. Absolutely not. We are not going to regulate prices. This is impossible today in a market economy. These are not the Soviet times, when prices were set for everything. A self-regulating system must be created. It must not suppress business or production. If a farmer produces something, why should we tell him where and at what price he should sell the product? Let him sell it. But he must remember what he produced, and the people who are next to him buy it, and they must be able to buy this product,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. According to him, the same situation is with industrial goods. You can make as many tractors as you want, but it is not a fact that agricultural enterprises and farmers will be able to buy them. Therefore, it is necessary to create a self-regulating system that will help establish justice. This, according to the President, will solve the problem when profits from the sale of products

are exported abroad. “We must remember that the people create the goods in the country. And you must give from this profit what is due to the people, and not put all money into your pocket. This is the principle of justice. If there is no such justice, we will come to war,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He recalled that in Ukraine, all the problems began with injustice, when a huge clan of oligarchy appeared, which strangled the country. And little by little, this oligarchy led Ukraine to war. “The same Zelenskyy, he is not a poor man. Therefore, those who have huge earned money in their pockets, they put a lot of pressure on them. And then you will no longer think about the state, you will think about this money. And all the presidents there were like that. Therefore, everything starts with injustice,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. According to him, in Belarus, all issues regarding prices, wages and others will be resolved fairly. “What is earned in Belarus should remain in Belarus. It should not be exported. You earned money — you took it abroad, put it in banks or opened some enterprise. Why should we work for someone? Everything should remain in Belarus,” emphasised the Head of State. He noted that special attention will be paid to these and other issues of fairness in the near future.

“We will overcome all difficulties”

Aleksandr Lukashenko explained that he gave this non-festive speech so that people would understand that all difficulties can only be overcome together. “No President,

no government will save you if he (or the President) goes in one direction, and you in another. If we keep up with you, as we did in the past decades, we will get out of this difficult situation. We will overcome all the difficulties and hardships,” he said. The Head of State once again congratulated everyone on the holiday and wished everyone health and joy. “Let’s work for the future of our children,” he said.

Archpriest Vladimir thanked the President for the words that came from the heart. He noted that the Head of State’s speech expressed love for all Belarusians. “I love my people, and this is my specialty. Forgive me for my immodesty,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. “30 years ago, I swore that I would serve my people. And I am doing it.” The Head of State noted that during this time, all sorts of things have happened. But no major mistakes were made. He drew attention to the fact that the country was walking on thin ice, which never broke. And Aleksandr Lukashenko called this the main achievement of Belarusians. According to him, in the current difficult times, when passions are running high, it is necessary to preserve our island of peace, no matter how much our opponents may not like it. “If we are drawn into a war, it will be a difficult situation. We may not be able to withstand it as a state. Therefore, we are doing our job patiently, persistently, as the church teaches us. Time will rebuild everything. Time will judge everyone. We need to endure. Let them say that it is a dictatorship or something else. Listen, a dictatorship like the one in Belarus is better than a democracy like the one in Ukraine. We need to endure,” emphasised the President. He noted that he is not clinging to power. “I will do everything to quietly and calmly transfer this power to the new generation. After all, I hope to live under the new government, and you too. My children will live. I want to see how they will live. Mine are not that this is my child. My children are these. I want to see how they will live. This is my goal. Therefore, it is my great advantage that I am not trying to somehow hold on to power by force,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He drew attention to the fact that our people have lived through difficult times, passed them. Thanks to this, people have become smarter. “We are now subjected to both spiritual and psychological cruel attacks. But the people are holding on. Guests come to us and envy: hospitable, kind, sympathetic. Why is that? Because our people are good. From the root. They are holding on,” noted the Head of State.

In memory of this meeting, the President was presented with the Znamenne icon of the Mother of God of Logoisk. In ancient times, the city of Logoisk was a border town of the Polotsk land. The Znamenne icon of the Mother of God of Logoisk has been known in the lands of Belarus since ancient times. Even the Polotsk prince Boris Vseslavovich (1054—1128), the brother of the father of the Venerable



Euphrosyne of Polotsk, depicted the Znamenne icon of the Mother of God of Logoisk on his seals and money seals. In the 30s of the 20th century, the image of the icon was lost, but based on the captured photographs, the residents of Logoisk during the Great Patriotic War painted a copy of the icon on canvas. With the blessing of the Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus, Metropolitan Filaret, the Belarusian icon painter Pavel Zharov painted a new Znamenne icon of the Mother of God of Logoisk in 2000.

And the President, in turn, presented the church with the Smolenskaya icon of the Mother of God. And another touching tradition of this holiday is a bouquet of white roses to the rector of the church. And, of course, sweet gifts for the youngest parishioners.

Aleksei Fedosov
Photo by BELTA



THE METRO IS STILL THE FUTURE

Minsk residents and guests of the capital received a valuable New Year's gift — three new stations of the third metro line were opened in Minsk.



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The gift for Minsk residents and guests of the capital is extremely valuable. For example, thanks to the opening of new stations, it is easier to get to the emergency hospital or the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Traumatology. Many young families live in these areas, and trips with children will now be easier. And the stations themselves are designed to make people feel comfortable — there are elevators, ramps, and there is enough space on the platforms for everyone. The first passenger at the new Aerodromnaya, Nemorshansky Sad and Slutsky Gostinets stations was the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko.

The main criterion is fairness

It should be said that the Head of State began the meeting in the metro with problematic issues. He recalled that residents of the Minsk-Mir microdistrict had complained about the developer and inquired about the current state of construction in this area. Moreover, the President was interested not only in residential buildings, but also in infrastructure. Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev reported that more than a hundred houses have already been built, and about thirty more are in progress. The developer is building a school and a financial centre at its own expense. Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that the State Control Committee had found serious violations by this developer, for which it had paid large fines. “They must hold everyone accountable. The main thing is people,” demanded the President.

He drew attention to another very important aspect in the lives of citizens — large chain stores and convenience stores. The task of the Minsk leadership is to in no case allow the chains to displace small stores that are convenient for people. Vladimir Kukharev noted that there are about seven thousand convenience stores in Minsk and their number increases every year. “Let them grow, small stores, closer to people — this is necessary,” noted the Head of State. Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that responsible persons must ensure that people are comfortable in each store. The issue of pricing is also in the centre of attention. The main criterion is fairness. “People should not be offended. Pricing should be fair. And so that businessmen and people who trade and produce do not run after you: let us raise, let us do this, let us do that. They themselves must know in which range they operate. Therefore, sit

down with businesses and work it out,” instructed the Head of State.

We need to do it faster. Twice as fast.

Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev reported on the prospects of the capital’s metro. According to him, this is the most mobile form of public transport. In 2024, compared to 2023, the number of passengers transported increased by 8 percent; last year, the capital’s underground



transported 249 million people. It is assumed that the new stations of the third line will help increase this figure to 260 million. Design work on the fourth line is beginning — this is the metro's ring line. 25 kilometres and 17 stations are planned according to the general plan. "We are planning taking into account the large North Waterfront microdistrict and microdistricts where over 800 thousand people live (these are Frunzensky and Moskovsky), after the completion of Park Druzhby Narodov (a station on the third line, which is still under construction), we will start from this side," said Vladimir Kukharev.

Aleksandr Lukashenko asked how the construction of the North Waterfront district is going. According to the head of the Minsk City Executive Committee, everything is going according to plan and in working order. And continuing the topic, the Head of State drew attention to the construction of the Minsk International Exhibition centre, located in that district. "I did not rush you to open it. But I want to warn you that the exhibition centre must be built from the door to the conference hall, as they, the investors, promised. And there can be no deviations here. There is a good project there, so everything needs to be done," said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He stressed that the 'green zones' in that area also need to be put in order. "The exhibition centre must be handed over on a turnkey basis: parking lots, lighting — everything, everything... It is a foreign company that is building it. When we with the President in the Emirates discussed this issue (he asked me proactively how they work), I did not go into details, I said that they worked well. Therefore, everything must be done as it should be. So that the entire complex is done by May 9th," demanded the President. "Everyone must be treated equally. Xi

Jinping also warned me: if, he says, our people are not working well, tell me. Otherwise, they run around and start proving something: who is closer to the President, who is further. The closest people to the President in Minsk are you (Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee) and the people of Minsk."

As for the construction of the metro, according to the President, in general everything is good, but catastrophically slow. He noted that in Moscow such work is carried out much faster. "We need to do it faster. Twice as fast," demanded the Head of State. Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev said that in order to intensify the construction of new stations, it is planned to buy a second Alesya tunneling shield. He also noted that the construction of three new stations cost 832 million roubles, one kilometre in the equivalent of about 70 million dollars. "We have no other choice. In Minsk, the metro must be made really good," noted the Head of State. He emphasised that the domestic school of metro construction needs to be expanded — in the future, it is necessary to lay a ground metro to satellite cities. "And let it be Metrostroy. They are good guys, but they do it slowly," noted the Head of State. Vladimir Kukharev emphasised that the speed can also be affected by funding issues. But, as the President aptly noted, the faster they build, the more they save. "We will try to finance as required. But if you said that a kilometre costs not 70 million, but 50 — that's it, you get the Hero's Star. But for now it's 70," stated Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Quality is already a habit

The President was given an unlimited metro pass, which he used immediately. Metro and Minskmetrostroy employees were waiting for him at the Aerodromnaya station. Aleksandr Lukashenko began the conversation with a traditional answer to the question: why did he come? When visiting work collectives, he always explains why he is interested in this or that enterprise. The Head of State chose a special reason to visit the metro — New Year. "We always give our people some kind of gift for the New Year. And the better it is, the richer it looks, the happier our people are. I came to congratulate our people, especially Minsk residents, guests of the capital, not only on my behalf, but also on your behalf," said Aleksandr Lukashenko. "I want to tell you right away not to get cocky, I warned the mayor of Minsk and your leadership: do it right, well, without any excesses. No need to drive palaces underground. It would be better if we made the stations decent, simpler, but we will build more, more metro stations."





The President noted that every day the metro transports about 700 thousand people — this is almost a third of the population of Minsk. But we must strive for a higher figure. “Minsk should be a good, accessible, beautiful city. The real capital of our country,” he said. The Head of State emphasised that many admire the cleanliness of the Minsk metro and emphasised that it should be so, since the metro is the brand of our capital. He repeated his remark that the metro in Minsk is being built well, but slowly.

Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled how he was once offered to close the metro, not to build the metro, as it was very expensive. “I must tell you that I thought about it seriously, since there was no money. But still, the Lord then prompted me, and I said: no, we will build a meter a year, a day, but Metrostroy must be preserved, because it is a school. Young people would not go into underground construction. And we would not be able to build a metro, as is the case in many countries of the world. Not all, far from all and not many countries are engaged in such underground construction today. It’s difficult, it’s a school, you know me better,” he said. Therefore, according to the President, thanks to the preservation of this school, today Belarusians can build kilometres of metro, which is very expensive. But the work will continue despite everything.

The President also spoke about further plans in this area: “We must connect Minsk with satellite cities. We will not build up Minsk, as other cities do, and expand Minsk beyond the ring road. Minsk will suffocate, and Minsk residents will be disgusted to live in this city. Therefore, it was decided that we will build satellite cities. But they need to be connected by high-speed highways. Therefore, we will plan and look at how to build a surface metro, not underground. Who will do this? You will do it.” Therefore, as the Head of State noted, the Metrostroy team of four thousand people is only the beginning, it needs to double. He emphasised that more attention needs to be paid to the construction of the metro and that people working in this area should not be offended.

“I am very glad that you worked well. Slowly. But qualitatively, well,” summed up the President. He announced that the next five-year period will be devoted to high-quality construction, high-quality work. “Get ready for this. There will be no poor quality. Any President who is elected will still be focused on quality. This is already a habit of our people — cleanliness, quality. This is our main achievement and our brands. Get ready for this,” said the Belarusian leader. He thanked all the metro workers for the opportunity to give people such gifts before the New Year.



The metro must work

The heads of the Minsk Metro and Minskmetrostroy, Aleksey Shilov and Vasily Kosovets, thanked Aleksandr Lukashenko for his long-term support for the development of the metro. The head of Minskmetrostroy handed the President a symbolic key to the new stations. And the Head of State, in turn, handed it over to the director of the metro. “We, the metro workers, will do everything for the comfort and safety of our passengers,” assured the director of the metro, Aleksey Shilov.

The ceremony was also attended by a veteran worker of the metro, Ivan Ovsyanik, who drove the first train of the capital’s metro. On behalf of the team, he presented the President with a memorable gift — a book published for the 40th anniversary of the launch of the Minsk metro. “He does not look like a veteran. He himself can still perfectly drive such beautiful and powerful trains,” noted Aleksandr Lukashenko. But now Ivan Ovsyanik is engaged in training young personnel. The Head of State shared his memories associated with the metro. Thus, one of the first clean-up days was held at the metro construction site in the Partizansky District of the capital — it was necessary to give impetus to the construction of the metro.

The second memory that the President shared is not so joyful — a metro stop in the late 90s. “I was still a very young President when your parents elected me. And we had a decent mess. If it weren’t for the police, we would hardly have survived — cars were turned over and so on and so forth. And the opposition of that time very actively used the ‘services’ of the metro workers. I remember how they persuaded (bad page, they don’t show this) your parents to speak out in support of the opposition and stopped the metro in the summer. All the people were on the surface. Naturally, there weren’t enough buses, there wasn’t enough of everything then,” said the President. He separately noted that metro drivers were then receiving salaries 3-5 times higher than the average salary in the country. “Minsk was filled with people. It was scary to watch on the street. But I said: don’t bow to anyone. Under no circumstances. They don’t want to work, they don’t have to. But at the same time, I understood that the metro should work,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. We turned to the railway workers for help. At first, they doubted: they said that the drivers of surface trains would not be able to travel underground, they would not be able to maintain the interval. But the Head of State insisted that the metro

should work and the railway workers went along the rails underground. Then all the metro workers worked, except for the drivers, so the city residents were able to return to the subway.

I was in the Government House at the time. I saw a large number of people walking. Men in front, women behind. With brooms, sticks, driving the men in front of them. I asked what was going on. And these were the wives driving the drivers out to work. I said, “No, they don’t want to work. If they don’t want to, it’s not necessary.” And for three days I forbade hiring them,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. They were not allowed to go to work for several days. “You left, then leave!” Like today’s fugitives. They went abroad. Doctors, teachers were offered jobs as dishwashers. “But we don’t want to be dishwashers. Well then, go outside...” They asked to come back. That’s why we created a commission under the leadership of the Prosecutor General — go and explain... If you didn’t blow up or set fire to the metro, God forbid, come and work. But if you committed an offense or broke the law — answer. That’s exactly what happened with the train drivers,” mentioned the Head of State.

Returning to those events with the metro strike, Aleksandr Lukashenko said that when the train drivers were soon allowed to return to work, they were the most reliable, most loyal, strongest people. “Since then, I have never had any problems with the metro workers,” summed up the Belarusian leader. “I remember that incident when the drivers wanted to show that nothing could exist without them. It will exist! Without the drivers, without the builders, and without this President. There is no irreplaceable workers. Everything will exist. So remember this and value these meters not only underground, but also above, where we and our children will have to live.”

Flight, ecology and historical style

The Head of State, together with the metro employees, travelled through three new stations and inspected each of them. The third metro line provides modern technological solutions, high automation of control and monitoring processes for engineering equipment, intelligent train traffic control systems, fare collection, fire safety, new means of transmitting and processing data on the operation of all metro systems. It is very important that about 90 percent of the equipment and materials used in construction are of Belarusian production.

Each new station is defined by its design and demonstrates a certain idea. For example, Aerodromnaya, which the President visited first, reflects the theme of flight. The main element of the platform section interior is square lamps against the background of an aluminium



suspended ceiling with a mirror surface, which seem to float in the air. The design of the Nemorshansky Sad station, as you might guess, symbolises a garden. The designers managed to achieve a sense of being under the crowns of trees, to create an emotional connection with the outside space. Slutsky Gostinets is a modern historical station. The design concept is a set of historical metaphors, quotes in ultra-modern forms and colours. There is also a place for the most famous landmark of Slutsk — Slutsk belts. Some patterns used in fabric products are reflected in the interior of the station in a stylised form.

Meanwhile, the Head of State did not limit himself to metro issues. He asked the mayor of Minsk in detail about the construction and improvement of old and new districts of the capital.

Vladimir Velikhov
Photo by BELTA

“MINSK RESIDENTS WILL BE GRATEFUL TO US”

The Head of State took part in the ceremonial launch of artesian water from underground sources for water supply of the capital



Three years ago, the President ordered that Minsk be switched to water supply from underground artesian sources. At the same time, an order was signed on the implementation of the corresponding investment project. During this time, colossal work has been done — new wells have been drilled, pumping equipment has been modernised, new main, collection and distribution water pipelines with a length of more than a hundred kilometres have been installed, new water treatment utility structures have been erected.

Forget about water problems

And recently, at the new Shchomyslitsa pumping station, the Head of State took part in the ceremonial launch of artesian water from underground sources. As Vladimir Kukharev, Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee, said, today the city uses about five hundred thousand cubic meters of water daily. There were 330 thousand of water from underground sources, about 120-130 thousand were supplied daily from surface sources, in particular, from the Vileika water system. In order to find these 130 thousand, there were no such water reserves in the city itself or in the surrounding areas. They were at a distance of 35-40 kilometres from the city. To raise this water, 87 new wells were drilled and built, and more than 40 were rebuilt. 114 kilometres of large-diameter pipelines were built. Thanks to

this, residents of the largest in terms of population districts of Minsk, Frunzensky and Moskovsky — and this is almost 800 thousand people — will have clean water from underground sources in their homes. Previously, they used water from ground sources, which, of course, is inferior in quality to artesian water.

So, now Minsk residents can forget about water problems. Although the project is not only technically complex, but also financially expensive. According to the Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee, the estimated cost of the project was 850 million roubles. But they approached it in a business-like manner. They worked quickly, saved on purchases, thanks to which they managed to save about 150 million roubles. Although the final figure of 700 million roubles is also not small, but they did it for the people. At the same time, the system of obtaining water from ground sources in the city is preserved: the water will be used by industrial enterprises as technical water, to meet energy demand and to flood Minsk.

“We talk a lot about space, about satellites, about flights, about nuclear power plants. And this project is similar to that, but even more important for Minsk residents,” noted Aleksandr Lukashenko. Still, almost half of the capital’s population lived without artesian water. This is not a great tragedy. The Head of State noted that most countries use water from land sources. But high-quality water is the basis

STATE APPROACH

of life. “They say that Belarus has no mineral deposits. The most useful deposit we have is clean water,” he noted. And this is not a subjective assessment. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Belarus is among the top 20 countries in terms of population access to clean water. In 2023, Belarus took 40th place in the world ranking of drinking water quality, ahead of all its neighbours.

“This is a very serious project”

“Providing a metropolis of almost two million people with absolutely artesian water is the greatest feat of our generation. I do not know of any countries that would approach this issue with concern for people. We could simply make do with what we have. We had good water. But we made excellent water,” said the President. “This is a very serious project that has been implemented. I think that Minsk residents will appreciate it. They will finally appreciate it. This is a big deal. Because air and water are the most important things for people, for their lives.” Vladimir Kukharev reported that the city had three systemic problematic issues: water supply to urban areas from underground sources, the issue of treatment facilities and their reconstruction, and the construction of a waste sorting plant. Now the capital has one less problematic systemic issue. Work continues on solving the rest. The Head of State noted that in the five-year plan for quality, in the year of improvement, the topic of treatment facilities and the construction of a waste processing plant will be given close attention. He cited Switzerland as an example, which recycles almost all of its waste and gets valuable products from it. “We need to do this so as not to pollute this piece of land on which we and our children need to live,” stated Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Vladimir Kukharev reported that Minsk has already begun the reconstruction of mechanical treatment facilities, this project is divided into several stages. As for the construction of a waste sorting plant, according to the Chairman of the City Executive Committee, bidding procedures for the purchase of equipment will begin this year. Taking into account all the work by 2028, it is realistic to ensure the reconstruction of all treatment facilities in Minsk, which will be equipped with modern technologies and ensure waste-free production.

“In the next five-year period, this entire problem for Minsk must be closed. It will be solved earlier according to plans. But we can’t go beyond the five-year period,” the President set the task. A large-scale integrated project to build a treatment plant in the country is being implemented for the first time. Aleksandr Lukashenko instructed to consider the possibility of building such stations in other large cities.

By the way, a large-scale project to reconstruct the capacities of the waste processing plant at the Trostenetsky solid municipal waste landfill is currently being implemented in the capital. “If we reconstruct this complex, will it be enough for us to process?” clarified the Head of State. Vladimir Kukharev assured that the reconstruction of the waste processing plant will completely cover the city’s needs. “This means that we need to do it quickly,” demanded the President. The Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee reported that it is planned to complete the construction of the waste sorting plant by July.

“This is not actually garbage. This is the greatest thing when the country processes the waste that we sometimes bury in the ground, throw away just like that — plastic, paper, fabrics, and so on,” noted Aleksandr Lukashenko.





In Belarus, no more than forty percent of waste is recycled and reused. The issue of waste recycling in the country has been addressed for a long time, governors and the government have been given the relevant instructions.

“In this five-year period that has begun, we will complete these projects. This year, we will also do a lot of landscaping. But we need to recycle all waste. Glass, and other things, and plastic, paper sent for recycling. These are huge resources.”

Save water and other resources

The President talked to the people who gave Minsk clean, high-quality water — the builders and workers of Minskvodokanal. He noted that this is the most important work for the population, and thanked everyone who did it. Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that a lot is being done in the capital for the convenience of its residents. For example, three new metro stations were recently launched, construction of new stations is ongoing, and satellite cities will be connected to Minsk by metro lines. This is a very important matter. But, as the Head of State noted, people could live without the metro. But they cannot live without water.

“Our generation has truly accomplished a feat by providing such a megalopolis of two million with the purest underground water. Therefore, I want to congratulate the people of Minsk. And once again thank you for this great

work,” noted the President. “And now the water utility workers will have to operate these systems so that the people of Minsk do not get offended by us regarding the water supply. I really hope, opening this station, that the system will work without interruptions and the people of Minsk will be grateful to us for this,” he said.

The Head of State congratulated the specialists on the past holidays, wished them health and advised them to take care of themselves. And he instructed the Ministry of Health to analyse the epidemiological situation in Belarus. According to him, the current weather always leads to a surge in diseases. Therefore, it is necessary to take additional measures to those already taken by the Ministry of Health. Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that every resident of the country has the opportunity to get all the necessary vaccinations. “Please, everything in the country has been purchased, including medicines to protect you and your children from diseases. Good health to you!” he said. Director of Minskvodokanal Fyodor Rymashevsky thanked the Head of State for his help and support in implementing such a complex, large-scale and, of course, necessary project as the transfer of Minsk to water supply from underground sources. As a symbolic gift, he handed the President a capsule with water extracted from artesian wells drilled during the construction of the new Shchomyslitsa pumping station.



In response to this, Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that the project is really expensive — 700 million roubles. And he called on everyone to save water. “What worries me most is that we sometimes treat the resources we have recklessly. If you go into the forest, it gets boring... In agriculture, we will figure it out this year: unploughed lands on which you can get products. Last year, we earned 9 billion dollars from the sale of food products alone. This means that crop rotation must be introduced. The same applies to solid household waste. The same applies to water,” noted the Head of State. He emphasised that water is a very expensive resource. Drilling a well, pumping water, cleaning it (and even artesian water must be cleaned to be suitable for consumption) are very expensive measures, and they are subsidised from the capital’s budget. Belarusians do not pay for water as much as it costs. “Therefore, please take care of water, as well as other resources. Frugality has always been inherent in our people. We must maintain these approaches,” summarised the Belarusian leader.

“This is a gift for the people”

With the light hand of the President, artesian water was launched into the capital’s apartments. Together with the Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev and the Director of Minskvodokanal Fyodor Rymashevsky, he turned the symbolic valve. The Head of State also inspected the equipment of the machine room of the pumping station. A colossal amount of work was done to create the pumping station. 60 electrical substations were

built, 88 kilometres of cable networks were laid to provide all this with electricity, Vladimir Kukharev noted. Now there is enough high-quality water for everyone. In addition, about 40 settlements of the Minsk and Pukhovich districts will be connected to this system to also receive artesian water, emphasised the Chairman of the City Executive Committee. “The fact that our specialists know how to do this is a big deal. This is an achievement,” summed up the Belarusian leader. Some of the equipment at the station is of foreign manufacture. According to the President, it is necessary to once again study the wear resistance of systems and materials and think about what can be produced in the country. The Head of State also tasted the artesian water that is supplied to the apartments of Minsk residents. “Excellent water! It can be bottled and sold. Very good! This is a gift

“I know that people will remember this forever. And they will be grateful. Because air, water, our food are the basis of life. Not medicine. But this.” Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko visited the temple on January 7th)



for the people, a significant gift, how to live without water,” assessed Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Towards wealth with the utmost care

One of the most valuable resources of our country is water. There is a catastrophic shortage of it in the world. According to UNESCO, 2.2 billion people on Earth currently do not have access to clean drinking water, and 3.5 billion are deprived of basic safe sanitation. Our country is provided with quality drinking water. According to the UN Development Programme, Belarus is among the top countries in the world in terms of population's access to clean drinking water, and in terms of water resources in general, it is in fifth place in Europe, significantly ahead of Poland and Ukraine. The state balance of fresh groundwater reserves includes 1,322 water intakes, deposits (their parts) with balance reserves of more than 6 million m³ / day. Fresh groundwater is extracted from 990 water intakes. The reserve of mineral groundwater includes 246 water intakes, deposits (their parts) of mineral groundwater with balance reserves of more than 62 thousand m³ / day. Only 127 water intakes are being developed.

The annual volume of fresh groundwater extraction from the available balance reserves is about 20 percent — only a fifth of the explored reserves are used. Mineral waters are consumed even less — about 3.5 percent of the available wealth. In addition, about 7 percent of the country's territory is occupied by undrained swamps,

which are not only the lungs of Europe, but also natural reservoirs of fresh water. They contain about 8 km³ of water — almost as much as in all the lakes of Belarus together.

Of course, this wealth must be treated with the utmost care. Thus, in recent years, the number of surface water bodies that have been assigned good and the highest ecological status has increased by 68 percent. Rational use is facilitated by the involvement of recycling and re-water supply systems in production processes. Water savings as a result of the introduction of such systems in 2023 amounted to 94.5 percent. The volume of discharge of insufficiently treated wastewater has also significantly decreased.

According to Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Viktor Galanov, Belarus is actively moving along the path of 'green' growth, introducing technologies that provide additional environmental, economic and social benefits: reducing greenhouse gas emissions, creating new jobs and innovative products, and maximising waste use. It is no coincidence that in 2024, our country took 30th place among 166 countries in the Sustainable Development Goals achievement rating, according to the Sustainable Development Report 2024. Countries are ranked by the overall score, which measures progress in achieving all 17 SDGs. Belarus scored 78.6 out of 100 possible points.

Vladimir Velikhov

Photo by BELTA



HAVE TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED! AND TO BE ADMIRED!

The exhibition "My Belarus" breaks records of popularity



The exhibition of achievements is held in the Minsk International Exhibition Centre and continues to attract tens of thousands of visitors from different parts of the country. According to Anna Petkevich, the Head of the External Communications Sector of the State Enterprise "BelExpo", more than 150 thousand people visited the exhibition only for ten days! The greatest activity falls on weekends.

According to the Minister of Education Andrei Ivanets, such a large-scale exhibition is unique and timely. "Our country has travelled quite a long way to become a sovereign independent state," he emphasized. "And we can proudly say that Belarus has become a socially oriented state. Belarus is intellectual, because the most important wealth we have is our people. And everything that has been done in our country has been done with the help of hands, labor and intellect of our people."

The Minister of Education emphasized that within the framework of the exhibition we see various thematic blocks, which not only highlight the history of the formation of our country, but also show the perspective, its future. These are the locations "We are the Future", "Smart City", "Beautiful Country", "Science and Intellect", "Care and Health", "Sports Country", "On Guard", "Nuclear Energy", "Agriculture". "We see how actively new and traditional sectors of the economy are developing. Nuclear energy is among them. We are proud to say not only that Belarus has become a country that operates a nuclear power plant, that approximately one third of our country's electricity consumption is provided by the Belarusian Nuclear Power Plant. But also that it has become a locomotive for various branches of science and economy," said Andrei Ivanets.

He said that Belarus is training new specialists in the field of chemical, nuclear, information technologies and others. Because the most important thing is to ensure the safety of our nuclear power plant. "The biotechnology industry was born in the country," the Minister of Education stressed. "The Belarusian National Biotechnology Corporation has been established. It is not only connected with the development of the agro-industrial complex, which is certainly important, because today food security is not only a brand of our country, but in many respects, it is a recognizable brand far beyond the borders of Belarus. This is the development of high technologies. We see how our scientists and industrialists are actively co-operating today and getting very serious and significant results for the country."

According to Andrei Ivants, such traditional industries as mechanical engineering has actually opened a new page today, received a new breath. "As electric transport, creation of electric buses, cargo hybrids, electric dump trucks - this is also a page of our sovereign Belarus, which is inseparably connected with technology, with the intellect of our nation," he said.

The Minister dwelt on such major blocks of the exhibition, which show that Belarus is a socially oriented state, as healthcare, education, physical training and sports. "Our



youngest children, who will come to the exhibition, will be able to try themselves in various sports," he said. - Those who are older will be able to see super-modern health centers. Also, they will be able to see the diagnostics that our doctors are performing today at the highest level. Those medical

THE EXPOSITION IS IMPRESSIVE



technologies that have been introduced today. And our country is rightly considered a leader in the lowest infant mortality rate. We are among the top 10 countries in terms of this indicator. Such areas as transplantology, oncological diseases treatment, creation of new drugs are also the brand of our country”.

Andrei Ivanets said that at the educational location called “We are the Future” young people will be able to see how modern the education system is today, how the quality of education is ensured, and how it is inextricably linked to production. And universities of the future, and science of the future - this is also all actively presented on the stands of the location. “Therefore, I am confident that everyone who comes to the exhibition will find a lot of interesting things here and will not just be proud of their country, but will look to the future with confidence,” said the Minister.

The exhibition “My Belarus” has been organized at a high level. This was stated by Minister of Agriculture and Food Anatoly Linevich, visiting the stand “The success of the village is the guarantee of a rich table”. “All spheres of economy and life, the most advanced technologies are represented here,” said the Minister. “Our stand is called “The success of the village is the guarantee of a rich table”. Collected achievements that are made by people. A special place was dedicated to the flagship - CJSC BNBK.”

What today is still at the idea stage, and what we will see in the near future in new agricultural machinery - these questions can be answered by visiting individual exposition blocks of the agro-industrial complex. “So, at the exhibition we show a digital tractor simulator BELARUS-3522,” says the press service of the department. “It provides maximum approximation of training conditions to the working

conditions of a real tractor driver with attached equipment (plough, cultivator, seeder), trailer. It will be possible to find a breakdown in the agricultural machine through virtual glasses. The simulator is designed to practice maintenance skills and, incidentally, has already been used at our Belarusian State Agrarian Technical University.”

But that’s not all of the agrarians’ tricks. Visitors will be able to see an autopilot system for precision farming technology. Its use allows to increase productivity up to 60 per cent and maximally reduce sowing time. And agrodrones will help to process crops. This digital novelty is already being actively used in farms: for example, the Vitebsk Zonal Institute of Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus was one of the first to implement it. Representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will tell about how effective agrodrones are at the exhibition.

Without leaving the exhibition center and without leaving the capital, one can walk around the modern dairy complex with the same VR-glasses.

The aim of the exhibition is to show pride for Belarus, to interest people, to encourage them to creative activity. This opinion was expressed by the First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Academician Sergey Chizhik, on the margins of the exhibition “My Belarus”. He noted that the achievements of science are shown in a number of pavilions, ranging from space to Antarctica. These are the results of scientists’ work for a long period. “Space is ours! The flight of our cosmonaut is the event of the year. Without a doubt, we emphasized this in the pavilion dedicated to space,” said Sergey Chizhik. “We placed here the capsule that was in space, placed the costumes of our cosmonauts.”



He also reminded that the participation of Belarusian scientists in the space theme is also devices, materials, and protective screens that work in space. Also the location “Science and Intellect”, according to him, presents various chips, optics and laser technology. ‘Of course, the country’s achievements in the field of electric vehicle construction are presented,’ Sergey Chizhik pointed out. “Including a joint development with Belgee, which is ready for mass production and is undergoing pilot tests. The car is full of our components - an electric motor, electronics, batteries.”

Several variants of flying machines, including a manned one, are also on display at the location. “Science and Intellect” also introduces advances in biology, pharmaceuticals. “Today we are presenting a number of original and interesting drugs for humans,” said the scientist. “Including for the treatment of joint system diseases.” According to him, Belarusians have something to be proud of in the field of agrarian sciences and food production.

The stand dedicated to the Antarctic reflects the life of our expedition, informed Sergey Chizhik: “Here is a moulage of the stations where our polar explorers are staying now. One can get acquainted with some instruments used there, watch films shot by a drone in Antarctica.”

The exhibits “My Belarus” in the new Minsk International Exhibition Center are collected from all over the country in the format of thematic locations: “We are the Future”, “Smart City”, “Beautiful Country”, “Science and Intellect”, “Care and Health”, “Sports Country”, “On Guard”, “Nuclear Energy”, “Agriculture”. It will be possible to get acquainted with the advanced achievements of Belarus in various branches of economy, make virtual journeys to separate regions, plunge into traditions and discover new things about the country.

Without exaggeration, the most tasty stand was presented by Belgospisheprom. The Deputy Chairman of the Concern Alexander Yakovchits noted that the exposition contains the history of the Concern’s formation and the achievements of the enterprises since the 1990s. A total of eight industries are represented: confectionery, sugar, salt, canning, alcohol, brewing, oil and fat and food concentrate. “One of the main elements of the exhibition is the “From Raw Materials to Finished Product” exposition. For example, have you seen what cocoa beans brought from Africa look like, from which our Spartak and Kommunarka factories make chocolate and sweets?” Alexander Yakovchits intrigues. “And you will be able to see it at the exhibition. I will tell you straight away that the raw materials will be shown in their natural form, but the finished product will be enlarged. How enlarged? Believe me, it will be spectacular!”

Belgospisheprom’s photo exhibition will reflect interesting facts about the work of our enterprises. For example, this year “Spartak” celebrated its centennial anniversary, and in the coming year “Kommunarka” will celebrate its 120th anniversary. “Sometimes even the natives of the capital do not know whose name was called confectionery in Minsk and where it was located before 1917,” adds the speaker.

“We will show and tell it all.”

In addition, the achievements over 30 years of the concern’s existence will be shown on the touch table. As an interactive activity, you can assemble a bouquet of marshmallows, marshmallow and marmalade, paint gingerbread, take a master class in cake decorating or create “Snowman” crafts out of marshmallows. But, as the stand organizers say, that’s not all - visitors will learn the rest of the secrets.

THE EXPOSITION IS IMPRESSIVE



You can walk through the flax mill in virtual glasses, learn how to tie shoelaces fashionably and print a print on clothes - this and much more can also be done at the exhibition "My Belarus" at the Minsk International Exhibition Center. Bellegprom Concern presented a stand with such an interactive experience.

A hologram depicting new collections of Belarusian brands is not the future, but the present. And this will be shown and proved at the exposition "Quality Mark" of Bellegprom enterprises. "We had a task to make the stand as interactive as possible," says Elena Romanovskaya, the Chief Specialist of the Department of Domestic Trade and Exhibition Activities. "That is why we divided it into several zones: visitors will pass through all the stages of the light industry formation - from manual labor to what will be created in the future. Thus, there is a separate zone of master-classes. The Dobrush Porcelain Factory, for example, will give an opportunity to paint dishes, with representatives of Lenta OJSC you can make bracelets, friendship bracelets, Belvest will teach you how to tie shoelaces fashionably."

"Bellegprom" took care of the New Year's content: there are photo zones where you can make a cool video. But not only such a memory can be taken away with you: the zone of modern technologies is equipped with a photo printer, with the help of which they will make printing on clothes according to the sketches prepared in advance. The drawings, by the way, were created by students of the Baranovichi State College of Technology and Design.

One of the most attractive zones during the first days of the exhibition was a virtual tour of the Orsha Linen Mill. "In addition, we present new stylish collections," continues Elena Romanovskaya. "We have analyzed trends and imagined what will be worn in 20 years. And holograms will show the latest novelties. And traditionally, of course, at the exhibition you can not only look at them, but also buy them in the already favorite shops "Da domu" and "First".

It should be noted that the exhibition "My Belarus" is not a permanent exposition, so you should hurry up to visit it. This is what numerous educational institutions do, and not only in the capital, but also in the countryside. Thus, Olga from the Golotsk school of the Pukhovichi district came here with her pupils. "The impressions are the brightest!" said the teacher. Ivan is studying at the Lyceum of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the capital. The boy was particularly impressed by the stand, where domestic achievements in the space industry are presented. True, the boy, when he grows up, wants to become not an astronaut, but a policeman-participant. "This is my dream, that's why I entered the specialized lyceum," he shared. Misha from the capital's secondary school No. 97 came to the exhibition purposefully - to see a unique robot-dog live. "I saw it in the video and I really wanted to come here. Finally, my dream has come true," said the schoolboy. Darya, a friendly teacher from secondary school No. 67 in Minsk, looks at the technological novelties of the smart city with the children. "You can walk around here for a long time, there's so much to see that your eyes run wild!" noted Darya.

In a word, it's fun. Children are especially happy at the sports stand, where you can shoot, ski, do exercises on the bar and even get acquainted with the Olympic silver medallist in rhythmic gymnastics Inna Zhukova, who smiles and gives autographs, as well as taking photos with all comers. "The mood is great. I came here with my little gymnasts to show everyone our beautiful sport. The exhibition is large-scale and amazing, it's very inspiring and you feel really proud of our country," said the Olympic silver medallist.

We approach the retro stand of a popular Minsk holding, where one can see the evolution of the refrigerator and TV from 1959 to the present day. Here young people take spectacular selfies.

And we are going to the food court zone, where you can have a tasty and inexpensive snack. Prices are very democratic. Having had enough to eat, you can continue walking around the huge exhibition hall or watch a concert in the cultural events zone.

Vsevolod Evseev
Photo by BELTA



MOVING ALONG A **WELL-TRODDEN** PATH

While visiting the Minsk Technopark, the President made a number of important statements in which, among other things, he outlined the main directions for the development of domestic industry





A rich prehistory of the Technopark

The Minsk Motorcycle Plant has seen a lot of things in its eighty-year biography. The enterprise remembers its heyday, it is not for nothing that the brands “Aist” and “Minsk” are known all over the world since the Soviet times. In the rich history there are also black streaks, the way out of which was searched for more than one year. There were many options of what to do with the enterprise. Among them there was even a proposal to completely demolish the production facilities and build residential houses on this territory. But President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko categorically forbade it and said that only production should be in this place. And high-tech, clean production, which is extremely important for the capital. “It is necessary to make a model Technopark and to develop it in other cities and places,” said the Head of State four years ago. At the same time, the capital began to create a modern production complex. The Minsk City Technopark was given a land plot on Partizansky Avenue with the area of about thirty hectares, on which there were about sixty freestanding buildings and structures with the total area of one hundred and fifty square meters. However, a little more than half of them were used. The deterioration of buildings and engineering networks was essentially critical. Two and a half years ago Aleksandr Lukashenko personally checked how the work on the creation of the Technopark was going on. At that time he demanded to build in a modern way, qualitatively and quickly.

And now we can say that the task has been accomplished. Today, almost seventy tenants and about thirty residents of the Technopark operate on this site, they occupy an area of

nearly one hundred thousand square meters. And this year the area of more than one hundred thousand square meters will be presented to the enterprises for accommodation.

Reconstruction is underway, and financing is not completed. Full payback of expenses on reconstruction of Technopark areas is expected in six years. And after the full completion of works it is planned to place here almost one hundred and fifty enterprises, including four dozen residents of the Minsk City Technopark with an annual output of about three hundred million rubles.

“This is the kind of production that should be created”

Since this issue was under constant control of the Head of State, the President familiarized himself with the activities of the Minsk City Technopark. The Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev reported on the reconstruction of the Technopark site and its prospects. First of all, the Head of State asked what problems have not been solved yet, which is alarming. But Vasily Gerasimov, Chairman of the State Control Committee, assured that everything is going according to plan. Except that there are still questions about localization. “Localization is the most important issue for us. This is not just an image project. We made tractors in the Soviet years, cars (MAZs), bicycles, motorcycles - yes, image. But what is the essence of this problem? We stopped at the development of our schools. What we inherited from those generations, we need not only to preserve - we need to develop and modernize. “Motovelozavod” is on that list. We need to develop what we can do and what has already been done,” said Aleksandr

Lukashenko. According to him, Belarus “went from the Earth” and began to develop those schools, which we had and whose products are really needed in the country, such as tractors, bicycles, motorcycles, etc. The Head of State drew attention to the fact that Belarusians can make anything, even a space rocket. But, first of all, it is expensive. And, secondly, does the country really need them?

The Head of State was shown samples of products of some resident enterprises of the Technopark. They work in various areas from medicine to the design of light steel structures. The most important thing is that these import-substituting products are in demand in Belarus and have a good export potential. “These are the kind of productions that need to be created. And I do not rule out, and it will definitely be from the world experience, that we will gradually expand these productions,” the President noted.

The Head of State paid special attention to Motovelozaod products. Director of the enterprise Sergey Manko said that Belarusian motorcycle and bicycle products are in great demand both in the country and in foreign markets. “Well. And they said we don’t need neither bicycles nor motorcycles. It turns out that we need everything. The bicycle and motorcycle are the future,” the President emphasized. He asked how the import substitution policy is being implemented at the enterprise. The director replied that other enterprises of the Ministry of Industry and private companies are involved in the production. The localization level reaches 80 percent for certain models. “It’s well done to engage,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. “But do not stop.”

“It is important for us that you develop”

The Head of State also personally familiarized himself with the work of some resident enterprises of the Minsk City Technopark. On the way to the place, the officials had time to talk about the most important issues. For example, the second nuclear power plant. As the President noted, he is more and more inclined to build it, as the demand for electricity is only growing. We did not ignore the Five-Year Plan for Quality and the Year of Improvement. The tasks here are unchanged - to put things in order where it is necessary.

The first enterprise for visiting by Aleksandr Lukashenko was the Private Unitary Enterprise “Globalpishchesservice”, which is a developer and manufacturer of equipment for processing oilseeds. The products are supplied to the Russian Federation and foreign markets where they are in demand. The Head of State pointed out that it is also very important for private companies not to chase imported components and parts, but to buy their own first of all. This is a task for the Ministry of Industry, among others. “If you need help, you speak up. It is important for us that you develop,” said the Head of State to the Head of Globalpishchesservice.

Stratnotekinvest is a neighbor of this enterprise, with production facilities located in the same workshop. This organization is engaged in the development of thin-film coating technologies and production of vacuum process

equipment for applying such coatings. The new direction is the processing of parts for machine building. All products are innovative. The company employs fifty people. The President asked Director Airat Khisamov whether they plan to expand. He answered that there are such plans.

The Head of State also saw how the Eurostroystandart enterprise works. Its main activity is designing light steel thin-walled structures. Here Aleksandr Lukashenko also paid close attention to localization. The products of this enterprise are in demand in the construction of healthcare facilities, agriculture, industry, trade and other areas where comfortable and convenient buildings are needed.

Aleksandr Lukashenko did not miss the workshops of the Motovelozaod itself. He went through the paint, assembly and frame assembly shops. Thanks to the President’s decisions, the production at the famous enterprise got a second wind. Much has been done to expand the range of products and localize them. The Head of State was actively interested in the work of the production. And not only in the reports of the management, but also in the opinions of the workers, who were not affected by the President’s visit. As the Head of State noted, there are very young people working here. Director Motovelo specified that the average age of workers is forty years old, told that all non-resident workers are provided with a hostel. “Everyone should be transferred to rented housing,” the Head of State set such a task to the head of the plant. Aleksandr Lukashenko also visited the room where the workers can have a rest and refreshment. Chairman of the Minsk City Executive Committee Vladimir Kukharev said that the Minsk City Technopark will soon have a canteen. Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the social sphere is being formed around the technopark, which includes hostels and rental housing. He emphasized that the prices should be affordable. “People should be treated well,” is the general requirement of the President.

Not to lose such a strong school

According to the tradition of visiting enterprises, the Head of State talked to the staff. “I am very glad that we probably did not start this battle in vain, starting with the restoration of Motovelozaod and ending with the fact that 140 companies will already work here and produce the necessary equipment,” the President greeted the employees of Motovelozaod and employees of the resident enterprises of the Technopark.

Aleksandr Lukashenko reminded that once there was a whole epic with the facility on Partizansky Avenue. First privatization, “a private company will come and save it. The Head of State recalled that this site was “eyed” by some figures who wanted to resume production, but they were not going to fulfill the conditions.

Then the leadership of the country was offered to demolish Motovelozaod and build housing on this site - the place is very convenient, not far from the center of Minsk. “The easiest thing is housing, one ruble taken, you get 20 later,



sell it for more. The market, everything is uncontrolled. When we tried to control something somewhere, we were strangled: the Americans, the West, even the Russians. Why they strangled us. “You don’t have a market economy”, i.e. there is no freedom of ‘what I want, I do’. If the state starts to regulate something, “it’s not a market economy,” it means that you have no loans or high interest rates, we won’t buy your products, and so on.... I had to go through this. But we did not give up production. This was my first demand. We’ll help everyone who works for the country, but first of all the producers,” continued to recall the history of this place, the Head of State.

As a result, the Minsk City Executive Committee was instructed to restore the site. “Motovelo must live, and this is an inviolable principle.

Motovelo, MAZ, BelAZ and other enterprises are brands of our country. Behind this is a huge number of people, these are schools, these are competencies, these are you. If Motovelo is gone, the school will die,” - emphasized Aleksandr Lukashenko. According to him, we don’t need to lose such a strong school, besides, people absolutely need motorcycles and bicycles.

Now not only the old buildings are being modernized at the Motovelo zavod, but also new ones are being built, for which the President thanked the leadership of Minsk. “So far everything is going as agreed. It is clean. And we will agree on where to build housing,” said the Belarusian leader. He said that the country will build rental housing for employees of enterprises. “Director - square meters, please, hire people, let everyone who wants to work,” pointed out the Head of State.

One should be ready for labor migration

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the topic of labor migration was discussed during the conversation with

the management of the technopark. The discussion of this issue continued in the conversation with the staff. “It is alarming that unorganized migration, primarily from Central Asian republics, has rushed from Russia. And who are these people? Do we know them?” the President shared his concern. According to him, when inviting migrants to work, managers should know what kind of people they are and be sure that they are needed at the enterprise. “If they don’t know how - teach them. But you should be responsible for these 10-20 people with your head. We have to treat them humanely. They are people like us, but they are running away from trouble. They have already tasted this life and they always work well when they are treated humanely,” said the Belarusian leader.

Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasized that citizens of other countries would have access to education and medicine in Belarus. Everything will be like ours. Especially, the President drew attention to the Ukrainians.

“A lot of Ukrainians are coming to us today. We should accept them as our own people. Those people who have come to us from Ukraine, I have not heard anyone say that they are bad. They are good people.”

- the President said. These issues will soon be considered at the highest level. “As long as the fire is not blazing in Belarus, this issue should be dealt with. Moreover, we need people. But each person should be looked at,” said the Head of State. He suggested involving trade unions, parties, public associations in the work with migrants - let them see who they invite to the team. But the main question is whether these people are really needed at this or that enterprise.

We have to start small...

Returning to the talk about Motovelo and the Technopark, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that things are going well here. He named the direction in which he would like to



see the effect - the scale of the enterprise. "It is necessary to scale these productions. We should start small, and then we will help, let it develop," the President emphasized. This applies to both state and private enterprises, residents of the Minsk City Technopark. "And we will help these private enterprises."

There is no attunement in Belarus and will not be against private production, those that pay taxes, pay normal wages, sell products," the President said.

Speaking about the Motovelo site, the President emphasized: "I feel we will get what I wanted from this site in 2025. And we will develop our production facilities from here. Thank you very much, you have done well. Aleksandr Lukashenko talked about plans to build five more such Technoparks in Minsk in the next five years. One of the sites will be the Horizont plant, where high-tech industries will be created. As the President noted, "less iron - more brains."

"On housing, I said how we will develop. As for wages - what you earn is yours. I have told you how we will develop production. As for trade, you have heard: the formula of justice. Nobody should rip people off, fill their pockets and take them out of the country," added the Belarusian leader.

Belarusians can produce everything

The state has done a lot for the development of Motovelo zavod in recent years. This enterprise is constantly under the President's attention. He has repeatedly noted

that it is a brand of the country, which should be preserved. This year the famous brands "Minsk" and "Aist", known far beyond the borders of our country, are celebrating their eightieth anniversary. In 2024 the metal structures workshop, assembly workshop, warehouse complex were put into operation. Since July, a new paint shop has started to work. According to the results of 11 months of the last year, the enterprise worked with net profit, ensuring the growth of wages. The share of export in the total sales volume exceeded one third. Work has been carried out to increase the level of production localization. Last year, a section for testing and assembly of lithium batteries was installed and launched at the company's facilities. There are plans to develop and produce electric vehicles. One of the employees of the enterprise asked the President whether it would be possible to get a state order for such products to provide electric bicycles and motorcycles for medics, police, military and other services, especially in rural areas. "I have done everything you need. Further - produce and sell," said the President. He pointed out that Belarusians can produce anything, even a space rocket. But the main issue is time and money. And there is no extra money. Therefore, Aleksandr Lukashenko said, when launching production of some products, one should ask whether it is really necessary. The President is sure that the enterprise itself should take care of the product sales first of all.

“They will not erase the feat of our people.”

The President was asked what he thinks about the fact that in Kyiv near the monument “Motherland” on the Alley of Hero-Cities the inscriptions “Minsk” and “Moscow”, as well as five-pointed stars of hero-cities were dismantled. “If you hadn’t told me, I wouldn’t even know,” replied Aleksandr Lukashenko. “If it’s convenient for them, let them erase it. They can’t erase the feat of our people.” According to him, there were similar trends in Belarus in the 90s. But our country didn’t go that way. And it won in this. The Belarusian leader noted that he had known the Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky for a long time. “It seemed to me that this is a normal intelligent person. But you see how he acted. That’s how it turned out,” he said. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, everything that happened in Ukraine is from the authorities: “Everything started from there, you were pushed to it. Why didn’t you think that it’s harmful for your people? Well, there were other interests. This is their business.”

“We are people with a deep history”

In continuation of the theme of historical memory, they recalled the exhibition of achievements of sovereign Belarus “My Belarus” that was held at the Minsk International Exhibition Center. The President was asked whether this project will be continued. Aleksandr Lukashenko said that he had had such an idea for a long time. “Back when I was still a deputy, I traveled and saw many exhibition centers in the world, in Russia, in other countries. I thought that we would need it - so that people would come like this and then be proud of their country,” he said. The President stressed that this exposition is not a complete exhibition project. It will be fully opened in the spring, by Victory Day. The idea was to open the first stage of the project, to show it to people. Especially, according to the Belarusian leader, it is important that children and young people see the exhibition. “We will develop this sector - the exhibition sector,” said the Head of State. “It’s good that you have seen it. You will no longer shout that we are “shovellers”. You will realize that we can do this with our own hands. That was the idea. And by May 9, I invite you to come and we will open a grandiose exhibition center with you.” The President noted that the building of the Minsk International Exhibition Center, which resembles a stork, is interesting in itself. He said that the best foreign and domestic designers and architects worked on its creation.

Exhibition activities reflecting the history and achievements of Belarus will continue at the National History Museum, which will be built near the Independence Palace. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, it is very important for young people to see where our country came from. And this information should be provided brightly, unusually, similar to the exhibition “My Belarus,” which is very popular. “It will be a large-scale museum, where you will see that there was nothing around us but forests.”

Our people started to develop their statehood here. The Turov Principality, the Polotsk Principality ... Here we will show that we are not shovellers, that we are not Ivans who do not remember their family, that we are people with a deep history,” the President emphasized. According to him, the main goal of this project is to make every visitor to the expositions proud of the fact that he lives in this country.

Today, actions are important...

Journalists did not miss the opportunity to ask questions to the Head of State. The first question, of course, was about the election campaign. The journalists noticed that Aleksandr Lukashenko does not speak programmatically, does not participate in debates, but works in the usual mode. And the Head of State admitted that he doesn’t even follow the election campaign - there’s no time. “I know that there are debates. But I have not seen any debates. I’m not up to debates now. And what are debates - for people to figure it out. Figure it out. Today we don’t need words. Today we need deeds. And Belarus will never be the Belarus of the 90s, when I was elected President as a young man.

Back then, we could not dream about these “palaces” - about production and other things. Then we had to survive. Now we have to develop and fight. That is why we need deeds, not words,” emphasized the President. He announced the rapid opening of a new production of buses. “The demand for our buses is enormous. We have built this plant in a year and a half or two years. That is why business is needed. I know this more than anyone. That’s why I keep on doing my business,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He said that he had a lot of “debts” in the form of events dedicated to production. And spring will come, and one will have to deal with agriculture. “Bread will have to be sown. We are not going anywhere. With this President, with the second - you will have to sow bread. Because there is nowhere without bread,” the Head of State pointed out.

The President noted that the election campaign in the country is calm and it is normal. We don’t need a show. Aleksandr Lukashenko urged all citizens to make up their minds and cast their votes for the candidate they like the most on election day. Especially since there is enough time for this, early voting starts on January 21. “You are experienced, intelligent people. Think. I have never talked about elections, never called you to do anything. Come and vote - for a whole week. If you find time, vote. Well, if you don’t want to - we won’t pull you on a rope,” added the Belarusian leader.

Journalists have noticed that the Polish authorities are actively reacting to the elections in Belarus - they called the campaign a fraud, refuse to open checkpoints, as they don’t see any steps from the Belarusians, and the topic of Poczobut is attracted everywhere. Aleksandr Lukashenko was asked why the Poles are so restless. “As for Poczobut, there’s nothing to say. I’m honestly telling you as a person who is informed: they refused to give up Poczobut. The



Poles refused to even talk about Poczobut. As far as I am informed, Poczobut does not want to go there. That's the whole question," said Aleksandr Lukashenko. "Andrzej Poczobut is a Belarusian citizen, and he will answer for his crimes according to the law. We'll see further. Believe me, the earth doesn't revolve around Poczobut."

As for the checkpoints, according to the Head of State, the Poles can close them all, while Belarusians don't go there and don't take anything. "What, does Motovelozaovod take there to sell products? No. They have imposed sanctions against us. They imposed sanctions against us. Well, we are not fighting against that migration and people who want to live there and go there. I have already said it a thousand times: I will not defend them with a noose around my neck," the President noted.

Commenting on the allegations of "fraud," Aleksandr Lukashenko advised the Polish authorities to deal with the situation in their country. He pointed out that there are presidential elections in Poland in May, so the authorities are trying to shift their attention to Belarus in order not to answer to their people.

The President emphasized that the fugitives continue to discuss plans for an armed attack on Belarus from the territory of Ukraine or Poland. "Yes please, try it. Then don't take offense. We see that they are preparing detachments and other things there. We've been seeing it for a long time. But let them not think that these detachments will fight against Belarus. They are on the territory of Poland, and they can still use weapons against Poles. The Lithuanians are "fed up" with the Belarusians: our nationalists came

there (thanks to them) and began to argue that Vilnius and other things are Belarusian cities. "Poles don't know what to do with our fugitive "Lithuanians" anymore," he said.

"Life is going on, developing. We don't need to worry much about Poles and everything that they have going on. This is the usual chatter. It's racing to suit the Americans. The Americans now, to destroy Europe (and this is their goal, under Trump, look, it will intensify), use the Poles. It will be like with Ukraine. God forbid, of course," summarized Aleksandr Lukashenko.

A gift for the President

As a memento of the visit to the Minsk City Technopark and as a token of gratitude for the care for the Motorcycle Plant, the President was presented with a motorcycle Minsk D4 125. This is the first motorcycle manufactured on the new modernized lines of the enterprise. It is a model of an economical motorcycle with a modern balanced design, created for the road conditions of the CIS countries. The minimalistic design echoes the previous generations of motorcycles of the Minsk line, but it also has modern stylistic solutions.

"I give all gifts to the state, but I will not give the motorcycle. At least until spring. In the spring I'll take a photo specially, "Pool of the first" will put it all out. ... Belarusian motorcycle. Although I have other motorcycles, this one is a native child. So I am very grateful to you," thanked Aleksandr Lukashenko with humor.

Vladimir Velikhov
Photo by BELTA

ALONG THE ROUTE WITH COLORFUL STOPS



The social and cultural action "Unity Marathon" has become a real social phenomenon in the life of the country. As you know, the action was launched by the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko during the solemn event dedicated to the National Unity Day in the "Minsk Arena". Since then, the action has traveled to different cities of Belarus.



Yes, the republican social and cultural action launched by President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko on the People's Unity Day in Minsk has received a wide resonance and continues to march through the regions of the country. The level of interest to it is not decreasing, on the contrary, it is growing. There are many stops behind. First, the "Unity Marathon" left not far from the capital - in Molodechno. Then there were Gomel, Zhlobin, Pinsk, Bobruisk and Mogilev, Vitebsk....

It is difficult to surprise the city on the Western Dvina with large-scale events - for more than 30 years every summer here turns into a star summer: the International Arts Festival "Slavonic Bazaar in Vitebsk", which is personally patronized by the Head of State, has long ago gained world fame. Many other unique events also take place here. That is why it is an asterisk task to surprise the locals with something. However, the "Unity Marathon" is not moving around the country for the sake of entertainment. It has its own bright format, its own goals.

The quality and viability of any project is evidenced by the emerging traditions. The "Sign Meeting", which has already justified its name, is one of them. In Vitebsk, its guests were the heads of a number of leading Belarusian mass media. The speakers, in particular, told how to choose reliable sources of information, which is extremely important in our time oversaturated with fakes.

We do one thing

In the northern regional center, the project "We do one thing" was continued. The colleagues from Vityaz JSC came to visit the staff of the Polimerkonstruktsiya enterprise, while Energokomplekt was visited by employees of Naftan OJSC. "This project has successfully demonstrated itself in Zhlobin, Pinsk, Bobruisk, Mogilev, and we see the response," said the Head of the working group to organize and conduct the Republican social and cultural action "Unity Marathon" Anna Lukashenko. - The regions offer a lot of ideas on how and where to realize the project "We do one thing".

The number of people willing to take part in the quest "It's all my native land" organized by the Belarusian Republican Youth Union is growing from city to city.

Exhibition sites were set up in different places of Vitebsk - both those that have already been shown to the residents of other cities, and completely new ones. Among the latter - "Belarus. Medicine. Future" in Vitebsk State Medical University. Here the visitors were shown how modern medics are trained with the help of simulators, simulators and mannequins. The guests were also familiarized with innovative developments in the field of medicine and pharmacy - antiseptic and medicinal products, TEST-systems used in all areas of medical and diagnostic processes.

The National Library of Belarus brought two exhibitions at once. One of them - "With a Quality Mark" - was located in the Vitebsk State Technological University and familiarized



with unique posters. The second one was located in the Vitebsk State University named after P.M. Masharov. Its name - "Books as a gift to the President" - speaks for itself. These are unusual editions from the collection of the National and Presidential libraries, as well as from the Palace of Independence, presented to the Head of State at different times by the leaders of different countries, public and cultural figures.

Along the path of boundless knowledge

At the "Unity Marathon" in Mogilev two more new projects were launched: "My Life. My Way. My President" and "Knowledge without Borders". The Chairman of the Board of the Belarusian Society "Znanie" Vadim Gigin told about their creation: "In March we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus. On March 15, the Head of State gathered in the Palace of Independence those who had to do with the development



and in a good sense propaganda of the main provisions of the Basic Law, as well as people who have contributed to the development of our statehood over the past 30 years, and said, addressing them: “You have already left your posts, but you can still work with people and talk about many things, share knowledge with them.” I wondered then how we could do that. The “Unity Marathon” helped, during which the project “My Life. My Way. My President.” The first speaker of the project was Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor, Honored Scientist of Belarus Alexander Radkov, whose life and professional path can be considered

an example for many people. He was the First Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration, Minister of Education, Rector of the Kuleshov Moscow State University. “My life. My way. My President” is primarily a conversation about the path of our statehood. Through such bright people as Alexander Radkov, Lidia Yermoshina, who spoke at the “Unity Marathon” in Babruisk, we show the face of the Belarusian statehood,” emphasizes Vadim Gigin. “These are the people who created the modern independent sovereign Belarus and continue to contribute to its development.”

In Vitebsk, the speaker was Vladimir Andreichenko, who was a member of three convocations of the Council of the Republic, and from 2008 to 2024 - Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly. The choice is not accidental - from 1994 to 2008 Vladimir Andreichenko was chairman of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee. Another project is “Knowledge without Borders”. Thanks to it, the funds of the V. I. Lenin Mogilev Regional Library were replenished with about 50 titles of new books by Belarusian prose writers and poets. In addition, it received a certificate for connection to the electronic resources of the National Library.

Meanwhile, Vitebsk became the second city where the exhibition “Feats and Fates of Partisans in Documents” - a joint brainchild of the publishing house “Belarus Today” and the National Archives - was demonstrated during the marathon. Before that, the exposition visited Bobruisk. It is based on the materials of the unique multimedia project “Partisans of Belarus”, which already contains more than 225 thousand personal electronic cards of partisans. The special value of this exposition is that it is constantly updated and replenished with new data. It presents photos





from the times of the Great Patriotic War, award lists, battle characteristics, numerous photo documents - evidence of the exploits of partisans and underground fighters, as well as the names of people who used to be considered missing. The exhibition could be seen in a branch of the Vitebsk Regional Local Lore Museum.

In addition, two master classes by the artists of the Presidential Orchestra of the Republic of Belarus were held within the framework of the “Unity Marathon”: one at the Vitebsk State Music College named after I. Sollertinsky and the other at the A. Bogatyrev Children’s School of Arts.

The route is laid out in the region

Yes, recently the “Unity Marathon” was held in Navapolatsk. And again the whole two days of the republican social and cultural action were filled with emotions and impressions. Exhibitions, concerts, memorable meetings created the atmosphere of a real holiday in the town.

Incendiary, talented, hospitable. This is how the artists of the “Unity Marathon” were received in Izmeritel JSC within the framework of the project “Razam pratsuyem, razam spyavayem!”. Honored Artist of the Republic of Belarus Janet, soloist of the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus Taras Prisyazhnyuk and singer Olga Bulai, a native of the Vitebsk region, gave a wonderful concert to the factory workers.

The audience sang along to their favorite artists, and many of them danced. At the microphone (at first a little shyly, and then more and more boldly) began to sing along the assembler of radio-electronic equipment and devices Ekaterina Lukyanova. Later she shared: “It’s great that the “Unity Marathon” reached Navapolatsk. We, the residents of the town, asked for it very much, and now our dreams are coming true. The concert at the native enterprise is a fire!

Do you see how sincerely the factory workers are happy, how they greet every song with applause?...? You can’t play this on camera: it’s a real holiday for us.

Modern, beautiful and clean city, decent wages, developed social sphere and, of course, most importantly, peace and stability - all this is what Novopolotsk citizens have. Kateryna continues: “As a mother of two children I hope for a good, decent future for them. At the same time, I realize that we, Belarusians, should build the tomorrow of our country with our own hands. We can’t do without unity and cohesion to make it all work.”

As smooth as silk

“All the last four hours I’ve been waiting for this concert!”, - a pupil of Novopolotsk Children’s Art School No. 1 sincerely confessed before the master class of the artists of the Presidential Orchestra, an honored collective of Belarus. The artists shared their professional secrets with the young musicians, demonstrated flawless performance and told about their creative path. As the chief conductor



of the Presidential Orchestra Vitaly Kulbakov noted, each performance of the group at the sites of the cities hosting the “Unity Marathon” is different. The orchestra prepared several new works by Belarusian composers for the residents of Novopolotsk. Some of them were played even at night. The music school is the leading one in Vitsebsk voblast, said director Natalia Seryakova. According to her, 12 out of 500 pupils in the institution are scholarship holders of the President’s special fund to support talented youth. Novopolotsk music school No. 1 is famous for talents. Young starlet Eva Trofimenko, winner of numerous competitions, demonstrated her skills to professional musicians by performing Edvard Grieg’s Nocturne on the piano. The girl was honored with a flurry of applause. The musicians of the Presidential Orchestra also highly appreciated Eva’s performance. Her father Sergei Trofimenko watched the schoolgirl’s performance in the hall. “It is very important to hold such master classes for our children,” he noted. - To give them an incentive for further lessons and victories, to make them braver, not afraid of the stage. Today Eva was very nervous. But she overcame her fear. Our country has very talented teachers, especially in our city, there are many competitions. And everything is free of charge. During the master class the schoolchildren literally threw questions at the artists: how often the musicians of the Presidential Orchestra see the Head of State, how much they rehearse, how long it takes to learn new pieces, whether they recognize the artists on the streets.... They also asked what melody every Belarusian should know. Vitaly Kulbakov answered without hesitation - the anthem of the Republic of Belarus.

Young musicians also asked about the most important performance in the life of the artists. Viktor Timofeev

has been playing in the orchestra for only four years. He admitted that the most memorable for him was the performance at the Palace of Independence in front of the President. The master class ended with an iconic piece known to every Belarusian: the Presidential Orchestra performed “Belovezhskaya Pushcha” and the audience sang along with the musicians.

Schoolgirl Alexandra Alexeeva was impressed by what she saw. The girl also confessed that she loves her country, which makes such meetings possible: “It is very easy to love one’s Motherland, one’s country. And it is very important. Because if you don’t love your country, you simply may not have a homeland. And this is the most important thing, after mom of course.”

Flashback from childhood

Novopolotsk residents studied with interest the photo exhibition “Belarus. Takeoff”, presented by the Belarusian Telegraph Agency in the Zodiac shopping center. It consists of unique posters with photos of the 30-year journey of independent Belarus, taken in the early 1990s by BelTA photographers Arkady Nikolayev, Vladimir Shuba and Alexander Didevich. The unique photos of the Dzerzhinsky archive of film and photo documents were also used in the preparation of the exposition. QR codes have been placed at each poster, having scanned which one can get more information. The exhibition was presented in Novopolotsk for the first time, emphasized Irina Akulovich, Director General of the Belarusian Telegraph Agency: “There are 40 posters about the very difficult life of our Belarusians. About how they tried to buy washing machines, shared walls, sets...”. Irina Akulovich noted that the path our country has traveled for 30 years of sovereign development



was not easy: “Extremely difficult decisions had to be made by our then young President and his small team of like-minded people, who clearly understood what they were doing and how the country should develop. The exhibition “Belarus. Takeoff” is exactly about this. There are no figures here. There are emotions that you and I feel when looking at these photos - how it used to be and how we live now. Everyone can compare what has happened in our country over the years.

Evgenia Kozlova, a young mother in maternity leave, looked at the stands with interest. She came to the exhibition with her two-year-old daughter Polina: “All the photos resonated in my soul, because this is our childhood. Very unusual exhibition. And very useful for young people, generations who did not catch everything that was in the 1990s. Familiarity with it will help them to appreciate more strongly what they have, to see that they have a lot, and to treat it more carefully. It visually reinforces what parents talk to kids about all the time. And this is very valuable. It is one thing to tell how it was, and another thing to see documentary evidence of how the Belarusians of older generations lived. That’s why for me visiting this exhibition became a flashback from my childhood”.

Teacher of secondary school No. 11 in Novopolotsk Zina Zida. Zinaida Gaikovich of Novopolotsk came to the exhibition with the children from the 9th grades: “The photos left a strong impression. Emotions of some of them are even a little bit off the scale. Everyone discusses and compares, not believing that once store shelves were empty and food was allocated by cards. For me, to put it mildly, this is not news, because I had time to live in the Soviet Union. For me, this is my childhood. For today’s schoolchildren such moments are a revelation, they do not believe that it



was really so. They live in a completely different time and world, where everything is simpler, more comfortable and more accessible. I hope that this exhibition will make them think about the great path our country has traveled over these 30 years”.

There is no doubt that this will be the case. At the stand with playgrounds Ivan Uldukis and Maxim Karalkov looked at a modern brightly colored complex with slides, ladders and a photo with a playground from the Soviet past. Everything on it is simple and modest: wooden swings, a sandbox, a few tourniquets. The difference is enormous, the children say: “We are lucky, the living conditions are much better now. You won’t find such playgrounds anymore. Of course, it is impressive that this result is the merit of the state. Looking at these photos, you realize how much has been done in the past years and how much life has changed in the meantime.”

By the way

An unusual action “This is my country” was held in Navapolatsk during the “Unity Marathon”. Everyone could



get branded scarves, hats and shoppers. To do this you had to take a photo in the photo zone of the “Marathon”, post it in any social network with the hashtags #this is my country and #marathon of unity, and then show the result to the volunteers. The action came to the liking of the residents of the city. Hundreds of pictures flew into social networks.

To the bottom of the soul

The big concert of the Presidential Orchestra became a bright end of the republican social and cultural action “Unity Marathon” in Novopolotsk. The general atmosphere of the concert “If we are united” fully corresponded to the name. The best songs were performed by famous Belarusian pop artists. The ensemble “Pesnyary” touched the audience to the core with the composition “Kraina shchhyrykh lyudzey”. Everyone sang along with Janet, who sang “We Choose Life,” and Anna Blagova, the owner of the Francysk Skaryna Medal, who performed the hit “Native House. The performances of Valery Shmat, “Aura” group, Olga Bulay, Evgeniy Kurchich, Taras Prisyazhnyuk, Theo and Olga Ryzhikova, Alexandra Melekh, Evgeniy Ermolkovich and other performers who came on stage that evening were no less touching.

Our pride

Novopolotsk is home to hard-working, gifted, talented people who do everything to make the city develop and the country economically powerful. This was stated by Natalia Kochanova, Chairperson of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly, while speaking at the concert of the

Presidential Orchestra “If We Are United”, which took place in Novopolotsk within the framework of the national social and cultural action “Unity Marathon”. She reminded that the action was launched by President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko during the solemn event on the National Unity Day in the “Minsk Arena”. Since then, the action has traveled to different cities of our country. “It has allowed us to feel once again how united we are. We are united in the desire to keep our country independent, sovereign. Our unity is that we love our country immensely, we are proud of our history,” emphasized the Chairman of the Council of the Republic.

Natalia Kochanova pointed out that every Belarusian city has its own glorious history. Including young cities: “I had a chance to visit the “Unity Marathon” in Soligorsk. It is a young city, the same age as Novopolotsk. And today I am just happy that the “Unity Marathon” is held in our young city of Novopolotsk. I have seen how Novopolotsk citizens have accepted this action for two days: great events were held at enterprises, organizations and institutions. People are having fun, rejoicing, realizing that they live in a wonderful country.

The Speaker of the Council of the Republic drew attention to the fact that Novopolotsk has a very young, but already glorious history, which deserves to be talked about: “And the people of Novopolotsk honor their history, their traditions. On June 7, 1958, Komsomol members from all over the former Soviet Union came here to build an oil refinery and the beautiful city of Novopolotsk. The young people who built these enterprises accomplished a feat. And today the



■ The Head of the working group to organize and conduct the Republican social and cultural action "Unity Marathon" Anna Lukashenko.

feat is to strengthen the economy of their city, to strengthen the economy of our Vitebsk region and, in general, the economy of the country".

The enterprises of Novopolotsk are known far beyond the borders of Belarus, Natalia Kochanova pointed out: "For example, Polimir and Naftan. The young city was built thanks to them. These are also the enterprises Izmeritel, Trust No. 16, Lubava, Belsplat. These and other enterprises make Novopolotsk the glory of a hard-working city. Novopolotsk is also a city of youth and students," emphasized the Speaker of the Council of the Republic. She noted that hard-working, gifted and talented people live here, who do everything to make the city develop and the country economically powerful: "The history of Novopolotsk and Polotsk is our pride. And the histories of all other cities of the country are also our pride. Because our country is beautiful. We live for our people. We do everything to make people live happily. There are few other countries where people are so concerned about people and think about how to live in a free and sovereign country." The President of the Council of the Republic thanked the citizens of Novopolotsk for their hard work and concern: "You deserve to make us proud of you."

Red thread

The "Unity Marathon" gives moments when you realize especially strongly your belonging to your native land, to your people. This was the opinion shared by Natalia Kochanova, Chairperson of the Council of the Republic, with journalists after the evening concert. Natalia Kochanova emphasized: "You know, not only I liked it,

I think the whole Novopolotsk liked it. The concert is wonderful, patriotic! There were songs that touched the soul, and even more so when you listen to them in your native land, in the circle of people with whom you have traveled a very long way. Therefore, of course, I have special feelings and impressions from this magnificent concert." Referring to the action as a whole, Natalia Kochanova expressed confidence that the organizers managed to choose the format of the "Unity Marathon" very accurately: "In my opinion, a very successful form. When we are all together, we realize how united we are in our thoughts and goals, we realize that we are a special nation, Belarusians, who are close to each other. I used to watch the "Unity Marathon" only on TV. But when I visited Soligorsk for the first time, plunged into this atmosphere, the feelings overwhelmed me. At such moments you really realize your belonging to your native land, to your people. It is simply magnificent! Not for nothing they say that creativity, culture is what unites people spiritually. Spirituality, soulfulness are the red thread through the whole action "Unity Marathon". The Speaker of the Council of the Republic also shared that she was particularly moved by the performance of fellow countrywoman Anna Blagova, who sang the song "Home". This composition gave a special feeling of nostalgia in her beloved Polotsk land, Natalia Kochanova confessed: "Every time at home I feel a sense of nostalgia that you live in your small homeland. And this feeling does not let go. The older you get, the sharper and brighter it becomes. It's true."

Aleksandr Pimenov

Photo by BELTA

'I am his mirror image'

Nikolai Lukashenko
on father's advice, family
traditions, social media

The entry where the president's son Nikolai Lukashenko and his teacher Yelena Ostashkina-Myslivchik played the piano became one of the highlights of the "Time Chose Us" concert that usually concludes the Marathon of Unity national social and cultural event that is running in various cities and towns across Belarus. BelTA correspondents got a chance to talk to Nikolai Lukashenko before the concert in Vitebsk. The president's son told BelTA how the idea for this performance came about, what he means by such a comprehensive concept as unity, and whether he has social media accounts.

I appreciate the opportunity to perform at the concert and take part in the Marathon of Unity

- Nikolai, you participate in almost every Marathon of Unity. For you, is this a kind of obligation or a personal interest based on the creative, emotional component of the concert? After all, the audience was captivated and mesmerized by your performance in Minsk Arena on 17 September.





— Considering our stage experience, I believed that we could put on a good show at the concert in Minsk Arena on 17 September. We could convey our vision of national unity by our performance. Then our entry became a major highlight of the concert “Time Chose Us”. Not because we authored it or because I perform there, but precisely because of the message and scale. And we decided, so to speak, to make it permanent at the Marathon of Unity so that more people could see it.

— How do you manage to combine your studies and the Marathon of Unity? Is there a secret to handling everything?

— When a person has a sense of responsibility, he mobilizes himself and makes every effort. That’s how it works in my case. I feel a great responsibility.

Well, this is not the first time I have such a workload. I have a lot on my plate. You see many activities on TV, but there is even more that you don’t see. I am grateful for the opportunity to perform at the concert and take part in the Marathon of Unity in general. I can put to practice some of my creative ideas here, work together with creative groups. There are many people working here who spend a lot of time and energy on it, probably even more than I do. And I understand that there are many 20-year-olds who can do this no worse than me. Maybe they can play this piece of music better. I mean professional artists. But I am the one doing this. I regard it as a great opportunity and I truly appreciate it. That is why this is happiness for me.

— Why did you choose such a musical instrument as the piano?

— It is one of the most classic ones. This instrument is self-sufficient, in my opinion. I could as well take up singing classes. But I opted for the piano, and have been playing it for 11 years now.

“When adults think that they have outgrown such values as peace and goodness, it brings people on the brink of destruction”

— Do you have a favorite entry in the “Time Chose Us” concert?

— I love all kinds of entries. I really like children’s performances — they embody everything that we highlight in this Marathon. In simple children’s language, they convey fundamental, comprehensive concepts that we, adults, have forgotten, have outgrown or think that we have outgrown. They think: what kind of goodness, what peace are you talking about? We are grown-ups. It is

at this moment, I believe, that the destruction of nations, the destruction of people and the future begins. When adults think that they know better than goodness and peace. Therefore, we need to listen to children and do our best to make good things attractive.

— **And what is unity for you?**

— It is difficult to answer this question. Unity is the link between generations, it is how we look at children. Unity is about doing something for our loved ones and our homeland. Unity is aspiration, dedication. There is a line from our anthem that articulates this concept very well: “We are wholly devoted to our land”. Doing something for society, seeing yourself as part of a big cause. Living not for yourself and not for your own pleasure, but doing something every day to make other people's lives better. Building a legacy that we could pass on to the next generation.

— **“Of course, I try to build the most objective picture of all events”**

— **The head of state jokingly calls you “the biggest dissenter in the family”. I know that you get your news from a variety of sources, social media.**

— Yes, I use different sources of information. And, of course, I try to build the most objective opinion possible about all developments. I have an opportunity to say what I think, bluntly. And I will never be silent if I know for a fact that something is true. I do not tolerate fake admiration and pretence. Of course, I often express my opinion. And that is why I can be called a ‘dissenter’.

But I cannot be a dissenter in relation to the state, to the head of our state, because I am his mirror image. Some people say that I am different from my father. But these people either do not know me or do not know my father.

When my father was young, he also reacted sharply to injustice, controversial issues that exist in any society, in any state. The only question is how you deal with it: keep silent and do nothing or fight for people, for justice.

The head of state is a good manager, he is tough, he is the president of the country. And I consider him an absolutely great person. We see the fruits of his labor every day. And I see these fruits in the making.

— **Many people see it this way: the head of state holds meetings, and that's it. We only see what media shows us. But we probably don't see even half of his work.**





— A very large part of his work is not covered by media. And people often take this work for granted.

— **Do you have social media accounts?**

— I don't. You would know it if I did. But of course I read social media. It's part of our lives. It's impossible, for example, not to read Telegram channels.

“I respect and pay great heed to advice of my father”

— Just recently — during a meeting with students of the linguistic university — Aleksandr Grigorievich was asked how he would treat your significant other. The media did not show the president's answer to this question, but everyone was intrigued. Can you reveal the secret, do you already have a partner?

— He has a huge responsibility as the head of state. As a father, he is very delicate, very caring, very receptive. Of course, he pays a lot of attention to me. It has been like this since the moment I was born. And I believe that this is his personal feat. He invested a lot of time and effort in me, in my upbringing, despite having such a busy schedule. He kept me near him, so that I could learn from him. This took a lot of his time and energy.

And I have no doubt that he will be very attentive to my personal life. Of course, I absolutely trust him and his opinion. Many teenagers try to go against the opinion of their parents. Maybe I had this period too, but certainly I don't have it now. I respect and pay great heed to my father's advice. Not just because I should, but because he has good judgment and I have seen this multiple times: from the biggest things to the smallest, personal things.

I will not disclose the details of my personal life, because I want to keep it private. And in my situation, this is probably not something to focus on.

“Making a pause, taking a breath, looking at the result before moving forward is a small, but very important New Year's tradition”

— New Year is coming soon. This is a time of family holidays and traditions. What is important for you at this time? What do you usually do on holidays? And is there something without which you cannot imagine New Year?

— We have a very big family, you know. And we try to somehow get together and spend time with each other. To chat in a relaxed atmosphere over New Year's dinner. Such a simple tradition.



Our family has a lot of long-standing traditions but you need a stable life to follow them. And when you don't know where you'll end up in an hour or two (as a journalist, you understand this very well), it's hard to develop traditions and stick to them. Our entire family is involved in what the head of our family, the head of our state, does. We all follow his lead. We have the same way of life as he does, some to a lesser extent, others to a bigger extent. I dare say that I am involved in it to a greater extent.

On New Year you can find yourself in any place of the country and do very different things. And sometimes you do not even have time to think about New Year. New Year's period is a very busy time. I'm sure it is the same for you too.

But making a pause, exhaling, looking at the result before moving further — this is a small, but very important New Year's tradition. And we stick to it.

— **And how would you like to celebrate the year 2025?**

— I want to be around my loved ones, see as many family members as possible. It's very difficult though to get everyone together.

— **I understand that you don't have much free time. But when you do, how do you prefer to spend it?**

— One of basic questions to ask a person is: “What is your hobby?” But for me, all my hobbies have morphed into some kind of quasi-professional activity. Or amateur activity, but with a professional approach. I would say that hockey is my hobby.

I perform at the Marathon of Unity, but there is not a single person here who performs at this event for a hobby. Therefore, I have to prepare professionally. There are many activities that could be my hobby, but I have to approach them as a professional, which I do with pleasure.

— **And what is rest for you?**

— I really like reading. The very process of reading, turning pages. As I major in biotechnology, I have to read technical literature, scientific literature. I read a lot of it: scientific articles, monographs, collections, all sorts of scientific regulations.

I like popular science literature because it brings up a number of questions. I don't like it because it has little to do with real life and does not solve any problems.

I read fiction to improve my speaking and writing skills, among other things. And great works of fiction can be reread several times in a lifetime.

Andrei Voropai
Photo by Belta

TO GIVE JOY

ON A WAVE OF WARMTH, KINDNESS, AND BEAUTY





Charity events *Our Children, From the Bottom of Our Hearts*, Unity Marathon, Christmas balls and other pleasant attributes of the holidays lasted in Belarus from mid-December to mid-January. Once again, these projects and their new formats confirmed how great is the traditional desire of Belarusians to give each other joy, to surround with attention and care not only their relatives and friends, but also all those who especially need it.

Magic, miracle, beauty... On New Year's and Christmas holidays, we say these words so often. They are inevitably associated with kindness, openness, a smile. And also good deeds. On holidays that are already behind us, these good deeds, and they last in the country throughout the year, become more noticeable. After all, holidays are a special time.

"If a child smiles, it means the state exists and society is healthy"

It should be noted that the charity event *Our Children*, which took place in the country, is more than a quarter of a century old. It is known to draw attention to the problems of childhood, to provide assistance and support to the least protected categories of children who need close care and attention from society and the state, as well as those who have achieved high results in their studies, social, sports and cultural activities. The main goal of the event is to give a child a holiday. The event was launched in 1995, when the Head of State instructed the Ministry of Education to include the events of the campaign in the Children of Belarus programme. Since then, this initiative has become traditional. It is held under the patronage of the President of Belarus. Aleksandr Lukashenko has repeatedly sincerely thanked everyone who responds to his call to bring joy to those children who especially need it during the pre-New Year and Christmas holidays and goes to them with gifts. During this period, the country's top officials, heads of state bodies and organisations, concerns and banks, the largest public associations visit large families and family-type orphanages, children's boarding schools, hospitals. An integral part of the campaign is the regional New Year celebrations. More than 20 thousand children took part in the campaign at the national level. In total, the events covered about 1 million children.

"We want only one thing — to see the smiles of children and know that they live in peace and safety," said Aleksandr Lukashenko on the day when the charity festival was held in the Palace of the Republic. Its programme included both the main Christmas festival of the country and the fairy-tale performance *New Year Formula*. More than 2,300 children



■ “We wish only the one – to see the smiles of children and know that they are growing up in peace and safety,” said the President Aleksandr Lukashenko during the charity event for kids in the Palace of the Republic

from all regions of Belarus were invited to the main Christmas festival of the country. These are orphans and children left without parental care, students of cadet schools, children from refugee families, children from Donbass, children of persons who died in the line of military duty. Students — winners of international, republican, regional Olympiads, contests, festivals and competitions also attended the festival. Children from Latvia, students of the Riga Belarusian Basic School, also came to the fairy-tale performance *New Year Formula*. “We must not forget the old people...”

Statistics show that there are more than one and a half million people over 65 living in Belarus. Of these, 120 thousand people are single citizens who live in social boarding houses, hospices, nursing hospitals or live alone at home. As a natural continuation of the *Our Children* campaign, and again at the initiative of the President of the country, the *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* campaign was born in Belarus at the beginning of 2023. Its goal is to pay attention to the elderly, surround them with attention and care during the long winter holidays, when the need for family communication is especially acute. This time, the campaign started on December 26th and lasted until January 15th.

Within to this campaign, increased attention is paid to single citizens, as well as people living in social institutions, and there are about 20 thousand of them. The long-livers of Belarus were not left without attention either — more than 40 thousand have already celebrated their 90th birthday, and 613 people have crossed the centenary mark.

Good initiatives for the elderly are impressive and inspiring. This is how the director of the Istok Minsk city social boarding house Yulia Mitko spoke about it in the media. She said that the decision to hold the *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* campaign in Belarus was perceived very positively by her. “I was surprised, pleasantly impressed. When such good initiatives related to the elderly come from the President, when we hold such an event throughout the country, it is worth a lot. After all, society is judged by its attitude towards the elderly...” And she added, “This campaign is a great help for all social boarding houses and moral support for all elderly people ... Of those living (in Istok), about 110 people are veterans of labour. They dedicated their labour activities to the state. And when they are taken care of until the last day, it inspires hope and reassures them that their life was not lived in vain.” According to Yulia Mitko, holding such events also allows us to draw the attention of society to the work and employees of social protection, to their hard work and great contribution to the protection and support of vulnerable groups of the population.

Particular attention is paid to veterans of the Great Patriotic War in Belarus. According to statistics, as of the beginning of October last year, 961 veterans of the Great Patriotic War, 6,572 victims of its consequences, and about 500 thousand citizens who were minors during the hard times of war lived in the country. Also, in all regions there are about 123 thousand single and 788 thousand elderly Belarusians living alone.



- A musical surprise, gifts and words of support were given to residents of the Istok Minsk city social boarding house by the Belaya Rus district organisation of Minsk. Among the residents was Semyon Yevdokimovich Beresnev, a participant of the Great Patriotic War, an Honored Transport Worker of the BSSR and a veteran of labor. On January 15th, 2025, he turned 105 years old.
- Age is not an obstacle for manifestation of creative abilities

A festive mood was also created for Belarusians of the so-called 'golden' age. Thanks to the older generation, we have a country that we are proud of. Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology Sergei Shlychikov (belta.by) spoke about this during the *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* campaign at the 24-hour care centre for senior citizens and people with disabilities in the Shchuchin District. We quote, "It has been noted more than once that it is thanks to the older generation that we have a country that we can be proud of. And there is really something to be proud of: developments in the field of high technology, successes in space, fundamental physics, nuclear energy, aviation and much more. And the elderly deserve a lot of credit for this," said Sergei Shlychikov. "Each of us had and has mentors in our lives who not only taught us at schools or universities, but also helped us become real people. Taking the best from them, we pass on this knowledge and experience to the next generation. Once upon a time, the older generation took care of us, and today it is our turn to help them," added the head of the committee and emphasised that in this way a good example is shown to future generations.

In the Minsk Region alone, the *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* campaign, which is also designed to involve children and young people, thereby establishing intergenerational relations,



TO GIVE JOY



■ At the celebration in the Rodnik Minsk city social boarding house, a lively mood prevailed among the residents (Photo of the Sovetsky District organisation of Minsk Belaya Rus).

covered more than 35 thousand elderly citizens. According to the Head of the Department of State Social Support and Social Services of the Committee on Labour, Employment and Social Protection of the Minsk Region Executive Committee Lyudmila Voshchilo, these are almost 700 patients of nursing hospitals, more than 3 thousand residents of inpatient institutions, where 42 people are over 90 years old, about 300 people living in 24-hour departments of the Territorial Centre for Social Services, as well as more than 23 thousand who are receiving home care. At the same time, the youth *Marathon of Good Deeds* was held, during which children and young people provided social and domestic assistance to the elderly, congratulated them at their place of residence.

As part of the campaign, more than 150 different events were held in the Minsk Region, to which more than 8 thousand people were invited. These are Christmas balls, meetings, concerts, New Year's festivals, as well as honouring long-livers who have reached 100 years of age or older.

Caring for older people is one of the priorities of the state policy of Belarus. The *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* campaign ended on January 15th, but the marathon of good deeds does not end there.

New formats

The project *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* has its own traditions and new formats: creative meetings, concerts, master classes, exhibitions and just a pleasant tea party in a friendly company. The culmination was real Christmas balls. They were held all over Belarus. The main Christmas ball of the Minsk Region, for example, in Uzda gathered dozens of attractive couples of the 'silver' age. The programme included several dance sections, including master classes for beginners and an interactive immersion in the atmosphere of the 19th





century. Christmas balls are one of the most creative and favourite formats of the *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* charity event. In every corner of the country, beautiful music was heard, couples danced. The initiative inspired about 800 representatives of elegant age who enjoy an active life, full of events and communication. For example, fans of dance evenings from the northern region of the country gathered in the Vitebsk Regional Philharmonic on January 8th. While on a well-deserved rest, representatives of the older generation strive to combine raising grandchildren and do not tire of creatively realizing themselves. And thus inspire the youth.

At the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus

The Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus also joined the marathon of good deeds. A beautiful programme was prepared for the audience — elderly people who especially need warmth. The theatre's children's studio, headed by Yevgenia Neronskaya, invited everyone to a wonderful concert *Kalyadnaya Zorka*. Young talented artists, together with choirmaster Tatyana Pyshnaya and accompanist Tatyana Panasyuk, presented a



■ The Christmas ball for people of 'silver age' is one of the highlights of the republican campaign *From the Bottom of Our Hearts*. The veterans of labor, veterans of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus, and representatives of social service centers came to the Drutsky-Lyubetsky Palace from different parts of the Grodno Region. The organisers arranged for them a beautiful and unforgettable holiday with games, dances and fashion shows (dzyannica.by)

programme consisting of New Year and Christmas musical pieces — songs and hymns. The concert was decorated by opera soloists Diana Trifonova and Yelena Zolova. The New Year's greetings to veterans of the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus in the Chamber Hall turned out to be touching. Deputy General Director Vadim Martyshevich congratulated former employees of the theatre. Those who wished could also watch a New Year's performance in the theatre foyer — a theatrical fairy tale *The Birthday of the Snow Queen*. Warm, heartfelt words to the audience — the elderly people of Minsk and the Minsk Region — were said from the stage of the theatre by the Minister of Culture of the Republic of Belarus Ruslan Chernetsky and the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Belarus Natalia Pavlyuchenko during the ceremonial part. A beautiful final point of the holiday was the performance of the most fabulous ballet of the Bolshoi Theatre — the play *The Nutcracker* by Pyotr Tchaikovsky, staged by Valentin Elizariyev. Nikolai Kolyadko conducted. The main parts were performed by Alina Rudenko, Andrei Bariev, Vladimir Ruda.

This event has become another wonderful tradition during the New Year holidays. To surround with warmth and leave bright memories in the hearts of elderly people is the main goal of this kind event, an important core of which is the connection between generations.

We will add that the events within the framework of the republican charity campaign *From the Bottom of Our Hearts* were held for the second time at the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus. For the first time, the theatre took part in the event exactly one year ago — in January 2024.

Once again about balls

Balls are loved and anticipated in the country. Especially the pre-New Year and Christmas ones. Belarusians prepare for



■ The ball with the President, which was held in the Independence Palace in the Ceremony Hall

them in advance. Young girls and ladies sew floor-length dresses. Representatives of the stronger sex try on tailcoats and elegant suits with a tie or bow tie. Balls are a very beautiful sight. It is enough to recall the pre-New Year TV reports from the Hall of Ceremonies of the Palace of Independence, where, according to established tradition, a magnificent ball was held, in which President Aleksandr Lukashenko took part. Representatives of gifted, talented youth from all regions of Belarus received an invitation to take part in this event — about 330 people in total: students of higher, secondary, vocational and secondary specialised education institutions, as well as pupils of cadet schools and the Minsk Suvorov Military School.

The tradition of holding a New Year's ball in Belarus was revived in 2018 with the support of the Head of State. As the President himself said during the current ball, this event began with a proposal to hold a Vienna Ball at the Palace of Independence. "I then thought, 'Well, why should someone come here and create such a holiday for us? We must do it ourselves.' And we did. For many years now, we have been gathering on New Year's Eve and spending this holiday together. It has become a tradition. It is symbolic.

Remember, this is what the history of any state is made of — sovereign and independent," said the Head of State.

"It is extremely important for me that you, being here among people of different ages, statuses, positions, feel the essence of the way of life of our society, where everyone is equal in their opportunities. Where the change of generations is built on respect for the historical achievements of the people and, of course, on continuity," emphasised the President, addressing

the participants and guests of the New Year's Ball.

The dance programme of the classical part of the ball opened with a traditional polonaise performed by debutants. For each of them, this event is certainly the most exciting. In a relatively short period of time, young men and women must not only rehearse the dance program, but also carefully think through and prepare their image. This task was especially labour-intensive for girls. After all, they had to comply with a number of strict dress code requirements. The ball gown should be white or pastel, lush, but not too much. With regard length — not just to the floor, but slightly revealing the feet in closed-toe shoes. Mandatory ballroom accessories are gloves in the same tone as the dress above the elbow and a small bouquet of flowers. You can allow 'liberties' in your hairstyle: curls, spiral or tubular curls, fine curls or 'corkscrew' curls. For young men at the ball, a tailcoat or tuxedo, a military uniform, snow-white gloves are required.

The fairy tale and drive of the Old New Year united everyone

For Belarus, the culture of ballroom dancing is quite traditional. However, a modern ball is open to all categories





■ The Old New Year's Eve ball at the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus was held for the 16th time



of citizens. And it does not matter what someone's wealth, origin and social status are. If in the past only representatives of the nobility and wealthy families could afford balls, now everyone has the opportunity to attend a ball, wherever it is held. One of the most anticipated balls in the country, in my opinion, takes place at the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus on the eve of the Old New Year. In 2025, it was held for the 16th time! To the ball for Cinderella — this is the theme of the holiday chosen by the directors: conductor Vitaly Grishchenko, director Natalya Baranovskaya, choreographer Yulia Dyatko, artist Yekaterina Bulgakova. The age of the ball participants is varied. There were young couples and those who were almost 80, but mostly middle-aged couples flashed by: from 30 to 50 years old. The dance programme included polonaise, country dance, waltzes and polka. The dancing began after the grand opening at 20.50. And at 20.00 in the foyer of the dress circle, the grand opening of the Royal Ball took place. The main dance master, Honoured Artist of Belarus Yulia Dyatko, directed this beauty. The guests of the ball, accompanied by the Symphony Orchestra of the theatre, were greeted by the artists of the Bolshoi Theatre: the Storyteller, the Fairy, the King and the Queen, Cinderella, the Prince, the Stepmother and her Daughters. And before and after there were dances, and master classes, and selfies in creative photo zones, and a grand concert ... More than two hundred dance couples whirled in the Bolshoi, blinding each other with smiles ...

The six-hour show, moving from one location to another, replacing one theme with another, pleased everyone without exception. As Anna Motornaya, the Main Director of the theatre, said, the idea of the magical tales of the Bolshoi is extremely important for adults. So that they do not forget how to be surprised and happy like children. The fairy tale that magical evening united everyone: fairies, Puss in Boots, and other characters from favourite fairy tales.

The ball at the Bolshoi Theatre is in great demand. According to General Director Yekaterina Dulova, regular theatre visitors know about this project well... And already three or four months in advance they buy tickets, come to the ball not only to watch, but also to take a lively part in it, immersing themselves in the atmosphere of the theatre, in the wonderful classical music that accompanies the ball, communicate with the artists who perform for them, and can also enjoy a full-fledged and unique New Year's concert.

The ball at the Bolshoi is also a touch of the high culture of the gallant age, as was said among the participants of the ball. This is an elevated mood, and inspiration, and the rustle of ball gowns, and exquisite manners. And every time there is something exciting, special... In this atmosphere, as one venerable guest of the ball said, you feel smart, polite, a gentleman...

Mikhailina Cherkashina

Photos by BelTA and other open sources



FIND CHILDREN

What the Presidential Sports Club lives like

Uniting thousands of people with one competition, tearing young people away from gadgets, launching a breakthrough project — for many, this is impossible. But not for the Presidential Sports Club. The projects of this organisation unite thousands of people. The *Snow Sniper* biathlon competition, the *Golden Puck* hockey tournament, and the *Golden Racket* tennis tournament have become a good start for many athletes. Only in 2024, as part of the charity project *Sports for All*, modern multidisciplinary sports grounds appeared in 41 settlements. Thanks to this project, even residents of small villages have the opportunity to

play sports. The Presidential Sports Club also supports professional sports. Every year, it provides scholarships to the best athletes and their coaches to help them take their place on the podium. The active and effective work of the Presidential Sports Club is one of the most eloquent confirmations of the fact that Belarus is a truly sports state. We talked to the Assistant to the Chairman of the Presidential Sports Club, Pavel Yegorov, about how Belarusians manage to unite with love for sports, and what new and traditional means are needed to strengthen this love.

“The past year was full of projects and events. Pavel, please highlight the main result of the Presidential Sports Club’s activities in 2024”

“One of the key goals for 2024 was to improve work on social media. And based on the results of the year, I will give this work a ‘good’ rating. If a person who is interested in sports, leads an active lifestyle, did not find out about an event of the Presidential Sports Club, this is our failure. We do not like failures, so in 2024 we began to use new, non-standard forms of covering events, we use alternative sources, social media, we attract bloggers, influencers, media people. A similar approach was first tested at the *Sports for All* site as part of the Minsk Half Marathon. People took it with a bang.”

“The Presidential Sports Club Instagram account has 18,000 subscribers. It is clear that the audience is diverse. How do you find an approach to everyone?”

“The Presidential Sports Club’s activity is known to be very diverse. Some participate in our projects, some just watch. We traditionally receive feedback from

participants, but we are also interested in communicating with observers, hearing their comments and suggestions. I can say that we also got through to observers. The *Reach for Your Dream* project, the first project we launched on social media, served as an example. Then we set ourselves an interesting task — to use social media to activate the younger generation. The rules are absolutely simple — do as many pull-ups as possible, post a video with a hashtag on Instagram and get a valuable prize. The well-known pull-up is the most difficult task, but at the same time it is the most accessible exercise. Already in the first season, we saw great activity among children and teenagers, for whom the project was designed. In the second season, we expanded the age categories and saw that adults joined the project with the same enthusiasm as children. For me personally, it was a shock that one of the winners did

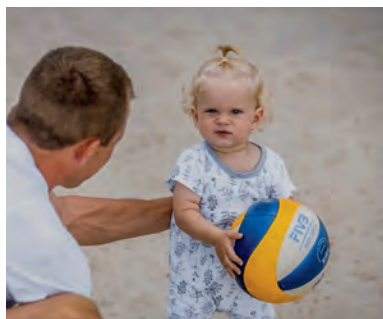


■ Pavel Yegorov at the *Sunny Ball* tournament
■ The television show *Heroes*

WE WIN TOGETHER

130 pull-ups. It turns out that it is possible. But perhaps the most important thing is that this virtual project changed the real lives of the participants. One of the winners, a guy from the district centre, was so determined to win the prize that he made a schedule for the day: he got up and went to bed according to the schedule, allocated time for studying and training, worked according to the

schedule. Thanks to this, he also improved his studies. In one of the seasons of the *Super Libero* competition, a mother and son won in different age categories. They trained together, filmed videos. As a result, the family not only began to spend more time together, but the kid also got into the Minsk volleyball team and participates in the Ball over the Net children's volleyball league, our



joint project with the volleyball federation.”

“Today, the television show *Heroes*, winner of the *Televershina* award, is incredibly popular. What do you see as the super task of this project?”

“The *Heroes* project is the work of a huge team of people who love their job. The management of the Presidential Sports Club and the Beltelecomp company discussed the idea of such a project back in 2018. When the employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations approached us with a request

to support the fire and rescue sports competitions, we realised that here they are, the brave, courageous heroes worth telling about. And the wheel spun. The first season of *Heroes* is a show for Belarusian children. In the second season, the children's show became international, Belarusian celebrities began to participate in it. The third season remained an international children's show, and we also gave the opportunity to any Belarusian who wanted to participate. Several hundred people came to the casting, who wanted to get out of their comfort zone and challenge themselves. Thanks to this project, we see



and show viewers how many brave, active people, real heroes, there are in our country. We are already seeing interest from other countries. Therefore, it is quite possible that representatives of at least three continents will participate in the fourth season. Perhaps this is the project's ultimate goal — to unite active people, both on the set of the show and on the other side of the screen.”

“The famous *Snow Sniper* project has maintained its popularity for decades, without exaggeration, several generations have grown up on it. What is its secret?”

“That the *Snow Sniper* is what it is. For a long time, the competitions were held in a format where children shot at a shooting range one day, and went skiing the next day. And the results were calculated arithmetically. There was no biathlon as such. Olympic champion Sergei Bulygin told us about a mobile device for an air rifle, the use of which would allow holding full-fledged biathlon competitions. Today, all stages of *Snow Sniper* from district selection to the finals are held with biathlon sets and air rifles. Honoured coach of Belarus Yuri Albers helped with all the nuances. Here is one of the secrets of *Snow Sniper* — such legends as Yuri Albers, Yelena Zubrilova, Lyudmila Kalinchik work on it. And the venue for the tournament final itself is the Raubichi Republican Olympic Training Centre for Winter Sports. A world-famous facility that is always prepared at the highest level. Of course, it is a big event for children to compete where their idols compete. This symbiosis creates an incredible vibe of sports and healthy lifestyle enthusiasts. *Snow Sniper* is closely monitored by specialists from the biathlon federation, they look at talented children from all over the country, conduct selection. A striking example is the Gnedchik family. Maria is the current leader of the national modern pentathlon team, a multiple winner of *Snow Sniper*, her younger brothers went through these competitions. Yes, they did not become biathletes, but they bring medals to the country.”

“Pavel, and yet the main goal of the Presidential Sports Club is the popularisation of sports, increasing the mass participation or the search for future professional athletes?”

“Finding talented children, getting them interested in order to get professional athletes in the future is not just the goal of the Presidential Sports Club, it is our strategy,



■ Pavel Yegorov and Chairman of the Presidential Sports Club Dmitry Lukashenko at the opening of a sports ground as part of the *Sports for All* project

our roadmap. That is why we hold all tournaments at the highest level. All finals are held in Minsk for a reason. It is no secret that the best coaches are concentrated here, and specialists from sports federations participate in organising the competitions. For example, the finals of the Ball over the Net children's and youth volleyball league or the competition *Swift Ball* are held at the Republican School of Olympic Reserve. The best coaches working with the reserve watch the children from the stands. I will just give one figure. Based on the results of this season of *Swift Ball*, 80 people were invited to the Olympic Reserve School for try-outs.”

“In 2025, the Presidential Sports Club turns 20 years old. You have been working at the club for 15 years. How do you maintain your love for your work after so many years?”

“This is the best job in the world. It gives you the opportunity to constantly develop, there is no routine here. And many thanks to the management for the opportunity to experiment, make mistakes, correct mistakes and constantly discover something new. I want to thank our partners — the Ministry of Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Education, the National Olympic Committee, sports federations — everyone with whom we implement various projects. These are thousands of people who are devoted to their sport, their business. And it is very cool to be among them, to learn from them and to create together.”

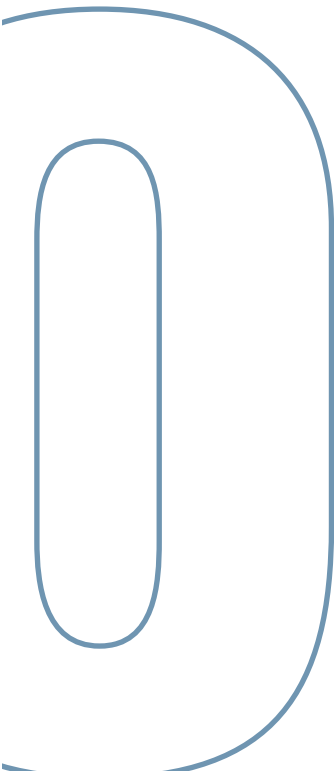
Valeria Stetsko

Photo by the Presidential Sports Club

INVISIBLE KILLER



What harm does plastic do to the planet and humans?



One of the main environmental problems of the 21st century, the scale of which we probably do not realise, is the widespread pollution by microplastics. Did anyone think about this in the middle of the last century, when plastics were coming into use all over the world and seemed to be a universal and very practical material, suitable for everything?

There are still few scientific works on its harm — not enough data has been accumulated. Nanoplastics, which surround us everywhere, are a special mystery for scientists. How much of it gets into our body every day? Is it possible to reduce its consumption? Which countries make money on plastic and how? We talked about this with a neurosurgeon, a researcher at the Department of Brain Tumours of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of Oncology and Medical Radiology named after N.N. Aleksandrov, professor at the Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery at the Institute for Advanced Studies and Retraining of Healthcare Personnel of the Belarusian State Medical University, a member of the Belarusian Union of Journalists Gumen Ghorbannijad.

“Dr. Gumen, where did the history of plastic begin?”

“With a game that is the prototype of modern billiards, which Europeans created in the 16th century. And already in the 19th century it became very popular. The only problem was that the balls were made from elephant tusks. The need for them increased, and it became obvious that it was impossible to make them from elephant tusks in such quantities. The ball must be hard and withstand impact. Many materials were tried. But nothing could replace elephant tusks.

American scientist John Wesley Hyatt in 1867 invented a substance that was obtained from cellulose, calling it celluloid. Since 1907, coal began to be added to this substance, which made it much more durable. Even then, it was clear that the material was in demand. And after the Second World War, since the 50s, the production of various types of plastic began to increase sharply.”

“When did it become clear that plastic is not as safe as it seemed?”

“Already in the 90s of the last century, scientists knew for sure that plastic does not decompose and will remain in the environment. Its production increased from year to year until new islands began to appear in the oceans — made of plastic. They are collected by natural currents in the ocean, their thickness reaches three meters. Plastic is in all oceans, and the largest amount is in the Pacific. Now even online satellite observations of the movement of plastic waste in the ocean are available on the Internet.

However, the problem is much deeper. When scientists began to study these islands, they saw plastic bottles that were over 50 years old. The weight of such waste is about 400 thousand tons. But this is only 1% of the plastic produced on the planet. Where is the rest? So scientists encountered microplastic — its thickness is about the

same as a human hair. And it is almost everywhere in the water. The bodies of fish and all other animals that live in the ocean are also clogged with microplastic.

In addition to microplastic, there is also nanoplastic, which is 50–100 times smaller and can only be seen under a microscope. Microplastics and nanoplastics have aerosol properties: together with water evaporation, they rise into the air and are scattered across the planet with precipitation. Microplastics and nanoplastics have been found at the highest point on the planet – the Himalayas and the deepest place in the ocean – the Mariana Trench. There is no place where there is no plastic waste.

The most common type of plastic waste found in the environment are cigarette butts, the filters of which contain tiny plastic fibres. Food wrappers, plastic bottles, plastic bottle caps, plastic grocery bags, plastic straws and stirrers are the next most common.

While microplastics, getting into our body, are not absorbed in the intestines and pass through, then nanoplastics are so small that they remain inside us. The immune system perceives it as a foreign element

and begins to attack. Because of this, people develop various allergic reactions. And since our immune system is constantly overloaded with the fight against nanoplastics, it weakens. And it cannot fully perform one of its most important tasks – to recognise and destroy cancer cells, which are constantly formed in us. The probability of cancer increases, and this concerns people all over the planet. Nanoplastic greatly affects the hormonal background of our body, hence infertility and other problems.

And even if you try to prevent nanoparticles from entering the body through food, they will enter through the air. Numerous studies have found microplastics in the body, including joints, blood vessels, organs and even the brain. It is found in breast milk and sperm. Therefore, the entire planet, including the world's oceans, and our body are considered a plastic dump."

"How much microplastics enter the human body? What harm does it cause us?"

"Recently, the Medical University of Vienna published a study according to which about five grams of plastic particles enter the human gastrointestinal tract per week. A new study using air filtration machines shows that everyday activities, such as folding synthetic clothes, create a cloud of microplastics around us.

Scientists are trying to understand its impact on our health. According to some studies, swallowed microplastic particles can damage internal organs, as well as release dangerous chemicals in the body – from bisphenol A (BPA), which negatively affects endocrine organs, to pesticides. Scientists have also concluded that nanoplastics can change the DNA code, which leads to an increase in cancer cases on the planet."

"Is it possible to reduce its consumption?"

"There are various recommendations, for example, how to purify water from nanoplastics. If you boil it and carry out additional filtration, this allows you to remove up to 90% of microplastics, and since we constantly drink water, the remaining 10% will still accumulate in the body. By the way, researchers from China conducted an experiment in which they found that nanoplastics are contained not only in bottled water, but also in tap water.

Scientists are looking for a way out, but there is none yet. They come up with various fantastic scenarios: create bacteria that will decompose plastic; genetically modify aquatic worms so that they eat plastic particles and purify water; filter water, air. Scientists believe that ultimately, as a result of evolution, a certain number of people with organisms most resistant to nanoplastics will remain on the planet."





“But plastic is also recycled...”

“About 400 million tons of plastic are produced on the planet every year. Importing and recycling plastic waste is a profitable business, and many countries receive large incomes from it. For example, Sweden imports plastic waste, recycles it and uses it to generate electricity. Second and third world countries that do not have enough technology to recycle it, burn it or otherwise dispose of it, which ultimately leads to a large number of cancers, including in children, and respiratory diseases in these countries. But they continue to import plastic, because it brings in income.

But the largest exporters of plastic waste are Germany, Japan, Great Britain and the USA. There are also countries such as Kenya and Morocco, where plastic bags are banned. However, this does not matter much, because a huge amount of plastic is already produced. Here it is necessary to understand that we all live on the same planet and micro- and nanoplastics will get into the air or water in different ways and return to where they were taken from. In the Soviet Union, we looked with envy at the bright

Western packaging, because all our products were sold in glass containers, which were then sent for recycling, and the preserves were made in glass jars. People went to the store with cloth bags, and their purchases were received wrapped in paper. Now we understand that this type of packaging was the most environmentally friendly and safe.

If the meteorological service added an indicator of the amount of nanoplastic particles in the air and reported them every day, people would notice that this concentration is constantly increasing, and they would wonder what to do about it.

However, plastic today is a multi-billion dollar business. This material is used everywhere: from car parts to food packaging in our refrigerators. Unfortunately, when we start producing something, we do not think about the consequences. And even if a new type of degradable plastic is invented now, nanoparticles will not disappear anywhere in the next 500 years. And this is further evidence that the new world order looks like everything but order.”

Yelena Kravets

У АВАНГАРДЗЕ ЛІТАРАТУРНАГА СЯБРОЎСТВА

У Кітаі пабачыў свет збор твораў Алеся Карлюкевіча

走在中白文学友 谊的最前沿

阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇作品集在中国出版

У Кітаі ў выдавецтве “Туризм і адукацыя” (Пекін) надрукавана новая беларуская кніга, ёй сталі “Выбраныя аповесці” Алеся Карлюкевіча. У кнігу ўключаны аповесці “Прыгоды Максімкі на радзіме і ў іншых краінах”, “Шубуршун і яго сябры”, а таксама “Апавяданні пра Айчыну”. Гэтыя творы на кітайскую мову пераўвасобіў перакладчык рускай і беларускай літаратуры, дэкан факультэта рускай мовы Другога пекінскага ўніверсітэта замежных моў Хань Сяое.

Асоба Алеся Карлюкевіча (Аляксандр Мікалаевіч Карлюкевіч) – старшыні саюза пісьменнікаў Беларусі, пісьменніка, журналіста, краязнаўцы і выдаўца, шчыльна ўплецена ў выдавецкія і літаратурныя працэсы краіны апошніх трыццаці гадоў. За дасягненні ў галіне літаратуры і грамадскую дзейнасць Алесь Карлюкевіч узнагароджаны медалём Францыска Скарыны. Пісьменнік з’яўляецца лаўрэатам Прэміі Прэзідэнта Рэспублікі Беларусь “За духоўнае адраджэнне”, Нацыянальнай літаратурнай прэміі Беларусі, Прэміі Супольнасці Незалежных Дзяржаў “Зоркі Супольнасці”, Прэміі Валянціна Пікуля (Расійская Федэрацыя), Прэміі “Прохараўскае поле” (Расійская Федэрацыя) і Міжнароднай літаратурнай прэміі “Алаш” (Казахстан). Творы Алеся Карлюкевіча перакладзены на рускую, англійскую, кітайскую,

у Чынах у выдавецтве “Туризм і адукацыя” (Пекін) надрукавана новая беларуская кніга, ёй сталі “Выбраныя аповесці” Алеся Карлюкевіча. У кнігу ўключаны аповесці “Прыгоды Максімкі на радзіме і ў іншых краінах”, “Шубуршун і яго сябры”, а таксама “Апавяданні пра Айчыну”. Гэтыя творы на кітайскую мову пераўвасобіў перакладчык рускай і беларускай літаратуры, дэкан факультэта рускай мовы Другога пекінскага ўніверсітэта замежных моў Хань Сяое.

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阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇的作品已被翻译成俄语、英语、汉语、塞尔维亚语、亚美尼亚语、立陶宛语、乌兹别克语和哈萨克语等多种语言。

阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇1964年出生于明斯克州普哈维奇区扎季托娃·斯洛博达村。父亲在集体农场工作，母亲是小学老师。这位未来的作家从小就酷爱白罗斯文学和历史课程，热衷于对故乡的研究，并很早就开始为报纸投稿。上高中时，他开始在共和国儿童刊物、地区报纸《普哈维茨基新闻》和报纸《红色接班人》上发表文章。正如亚历山大·尼古拉耶维奇本人所说，他对新闻工作产生了兴趣，并对写作和寻找新闻热点感到兴奋。

1985年，阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇毕业于利沃夫高等军政学校新闻系，随后在部队服役，为乌兹别克斯坦、土库曼斯坦、古巴的军事报社以及明斯克报社《为了祖国的荣耀》工作。退伍后，卡尔柳科维奇曾在《文化》报、《星》报、《苏维埃白罗斯》报等报社工作，担任《红色接班人》报、《文学与艺术》新闻和出版社以及《星》出版社社长兼主编工作。2017年至2020年担任白俄罗斯共和国新闻部长。如今，他是白罗斯作家联盟主席、《白罗斯》出版社社长。

亚历山大·尼古拉耶维奇的第一本书《返回……白罗斯》于1994年出版，致力于讲述祖国的历史。随后陆续撰写了其他历史和文学研究方向的书籍：《普霍维奇的文学地图》（1999年）、《伊古缅笔记》（2005年）、《扎季托娃·斯洛博达村》（2007年）、《布隆村》

сербскую, армянскую, литовскую, узбекскую, казахскую и иные языки.

Алесь Карлюкевіч нарадзіўся ў 1964 годзе ў вёсцы Зацітава Слабада Пухавіцкага раёна Мінскай вобласці. Яго бацька працаваў у калгасе, а маці была настаўніцай малодшых класаў. З дзяцінства будучы пісьменнік любіў урокі беларускай літаратуры і гісторыі, цікавіўся вывучэннем роднай старонкі і даволі рана стаў пісаць у газеты. Ужо з 5 класа сярэдняй школы пачаў друкавацца ў рэспубліканскім дзіцячым друку, пасля – у раённай газеце “Пухавіцкія навіны” і газеце “Чырвоная змена”. Па словах самога Алеся Мікалаевіча, яго пачала цікавіць спецыфіка журналісцкай работы і ён адчуў асалоду ў пісанні, пошуку тэм.

У 1985 г. Алесь Карлюкевіч скончыў факультэт журналістыкі Львоўскага вышэйшага ваенна-палітычнага вучылішча, а затым служыў у ваенных шматтыражках ва Узбекістане, Туркменістане, на Кубе, у мінскай газеце “Во славу Родины”. Пасля звальнення з Узброеных Сіл Карлюкевіч працаваў у газетах “Культура”, “Звязда”, “Советская Белоруссия”, узначальваў газету “Чырвоная змена”, рэдакцыйна-выдавецкія ўстановы “Літаратура і Мастацтва”, “Выдавецкі дом “Звязда”. З 2017 па 2020 гг займаў пасаду міністра інфармацыі Рэспублікі Беларусь. Сёння ён з’яўляецца старшынёй саюза пісьменнікаў Беларусі, дырэктарам выдавецтва “Беларусь”.



■ Алесь Карлюкевіч
■ 阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇

Першая кніга Аляксандра Мікалаевіча “Вяртанне... да Беларусі” выйшла ў 1994 г. і была прысвечана гісторыі родных мясцін. За ёй услед рушылі іншыя праекты ў кірунку гістарычнага і літаратурнага краязнаўства: кнігі “Літаратурная карта Пухавіччыны” (1999), “Ігуменскі блакнот” (2005), “Зацітава Слабада” (2007), “Блонь” (2007), “Радзімазнаўства” (2010), “І марам волю дам” (2011), “Ігуменскі павет (Падарожжа па родным краі)” (2020), “Навагрудчына. Літаратурнае гняздо Беларусі” (2023) і інш. Гэты ўлюбёны ў сваю малую радзіму пісьменнік так успамінаў у адным з інтэрв’ю пра вытокі сваіх літаратурных захапленняў: “Краязнаўства са мной – з самага маленства. У першую чаргу – ад бацькі. Ён быў неблагім апавядальнікам звычайных побытавых гісторый... І моцны штуршок краязнаўству дала школа. Асабліва на ўроках Васіля Маркавіча Лапко. Ён выкладаў гісторыю ў 4 класе. Падручнік называўся – “Апавяданні па гісторыі СССР”, калі не памыляюся. І неяк так аказвалася, што ці не ўся гісторыя спалучана з нашай мясцовасцю. Гэта ўражвала. Калі ішла гаворка пра



■ Хань Сяое
■ 韩小也

Айчынную вайну 1812 года, то аказвалася, што яна праходзіла і ў нашых ваколіцах. Што ўжо казаць пра Кастрычніцкую рэвалюцыю, стварэнне калгасаў, Вялікую Айчынную вайну... А непасрэдна да літаратурнага краязнаўства падштурхнулі сустрэчы з пісьменнікамі ў школе. Выдатная практыка была, калі на выступленні прыязджалі паэты і прэзаікі... Пачаў збіраць выразкі з раённага і рэспубліканскага друку з публікацыямі вершаў, апавяданняў “пухавіцкіх” пісьменнікаў. І фактычна свае кнігі “Літаратурная карта Пухавіччыны” і “І волю марам дам: літаратурная карта Пухавіччыны” я пачаў збіраць і пісаць тады, у школьныя гады.” Потым тэматычныя інтарэсы пісьменніка пашырыліся і выйшлі за межы Беларусі. Ён пачаў даследаваць сучасную беларускую літаратуру і яе сувязі з туркменскай, узбекскай, рускай літаратурамі, прысутнасць беларускай літаратуры ў свеце. Выйшлі яго кнігі “Літаратурнае пабрацімства: Беларусь — Туркменістан” (2016), “Урокі сяброўства. Беларуская літаратура ў свеце” (2017), “Дарогі да

(2007 год), “Зямля” (2010), “Якім чынам я вярнуся” (2011), “Ігуменскі блакнот” (2005), “Зацітава Слабада” (2007), “Блонь” (2007), “Радзімазнаўства” (2010), “І марам волю дам” (2011), “Ігуменскі павет (Падарожжа па родным краі)” (2020), “Навагрудчына. Літаратурнае гняздо Беларусі” (2023) і інш. Гэты ўлюбёны ў сваю малую радзіму пісьменнік так успамінаў у адным з інтэрв’ю пра вытокі сваіх літаратурных захапленняў: “Краязнаўства са мной – з самага маленства. У першую чаргу – ад бацькі. Ён быў неблагім апавядальнікам звычайных побытавых гісторый... І моцны штуршок краязнаўству дала школа. Асабліва на ўроках Васіля Маркавіча Лапко. Ён выкладаў гісторыю ў 4 класе. Падручнік называўся – “Апавяданні па гісторыі СССР”, калі не памыляюся. І неяк так аказвалася, што ці не ўся гісторыя спалучана з нашай мясцовасцю. Гэта ўражвала. Калі ішла гаворка пра

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叶被译成中文的白罗斯作家的作品，而且还积极了解白罗斯当代文学发展状况。而阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇的《中篇小说选》则成为白罗斯当代文学结缘中国的延续。近年来，阿列斯·巴达克、安德烈·费多连科、奥列格·日丹·普希金、赖莎·波罗维科娃、维克多·施尼普、雷戈尔·波罗杜林、列奥尼德·德兰卡-莫伊休科等作家的中文作品也相继出版。这得益于中国才华横溢的翻译家韩小也、辛萌、张惠芹、孙凡奇等人的努力。

白罗斯方面也正在进行类似的进程，卡尔柳科维奇在其中发挥了重要作用。白罗斯出版社和期刊积极出版白罗斯文学作品中文译本和中国文学白罗斯语译本。因此，《白罗斯》杂志已成为积极出版白罗斯作品的著名平台。该杂志的页面上出版了弗拉基米尔·卡罗特科维奇、卢德米拉·鲁布斯维娅、叶卡捷琳娜·哈达塞维奇-里索娃雅、杨卡·卓巴、阿弗里扬·哲祖鲁辛斯基、雷戈尔·波罗杜林和瓦西里·维特科的作品译文。将中国文学翻译成白罗斯语的大规模项目的典型例子是《龙翼之下》一书。《中国诗人百人》、诗歌丛书《明象：中国诗歌》、20世纪中国诗歌选集《莲瓣菊花》。这些中白两国间文学关系发展的举措都是阿列斯·卡尔柳科维奇坚持不懈工作的结果。他成为白罗斯和中国之间，以及更广泛的白罗斯和世界之间文学友谊的大使。

维罗妮卡·卡尔柳科维奇
(韦兰妮)

Паднябеснай: старонкі беларуска-кітайскіх літаратурных узаемасувязей” (2022) і інш.

Яшчэ адна вялікая тэма для Карлюкевіча – дзіцячая літаратура. Але і адрасаваныя юнаму чытачу кнігі пісьменніка прасякнуты любоўю да роднай старонкі і цікаўнасцю да іншых краін. “Натуральна, што захапленне краязнаўствам зрабіла на Алеся Карлюкевіча вялікі ўплыў пры звароце яго да жанру казкі. Бо апроч арыгінальных казачных сюжэтаў, яго дзіцячыя творы вельмі пазнавальныя – і ў гістарычным, і ў геаграфічным плане.

Аўтар нярэдка адпраўляе сваіх герояў далёка за межы роднай краіны, што робіць кнігі яшчэ цікавейшымі і павучальнымі, бо праз іх пісьменнік прамаўляе актуальныя на сёння каштоўнасці: мір, сяброўства, дабрыню, на якіх і трымаецца наш далікатны свет”, – тлумачыць знакаміты беларускі пісьменнік Алеся Бадак.

З далейшым паглыбленнем беларуска-кітайскіх стасункаў, значна вырас досвед пра Беларусь у Кітаі. Беларуская літаратура паступова становіцца адным з фокусаў для кітайскіх даследчыкаў і перакладчыкаў. У Кітаі добра ведаюць не толькі творы Якуба Коласа, Янкі Купалы, Максіма Танка, Івана Шамякіна, Васіля Быкава і іншых беларускіх пісьменнікаў, якія пераўвасобілі на кітайскую мову ў другой палове ХХ стагоддзя, але і актыўна даследуюць літаратурную прастору ў Беларусі. І “Выбраныя апавесці” Алеся Карлюкевіча стала працягам знаёмства з сучаснай беларускай літаратурай у Кітаі. У апошнія гады на кітайскай мове былі таксама выдадзены творы Алеся Бадака, Андрэя Федарэнкі, Алега Ждана-Пушкіна, Раісы Баравіковай, Рыгора Барадуліна, Віктара Шніпа, Леаніда Дранько-Майсюка і іншых. Гэта адбылося дзякуючы намаганням таленавітых кітайскіх перакладчыкаў Хань Сяое, Джан Хуэйцзінь, Сінь Мэн, Сунь Фаньцзі і іншых.

Аналагічныя працэсы адбываюцца і з беларускага боку, і значную ролю ў іх адыграў Алеся Карлюкевіч. У беларускіх выдавецтвах і перыёдыцы актыўна з’яўляюцца пераклады кітайскай літаратуры на беларускую мову і беларускай літаратуры на кітайскую мову. Так, сталай беларускай пляцоўкай, дзе актыўна друкуюцца кітайскія пераклады беларускіх твораў, стаў часопіс “Беларусь. Belarus”. На старонках часопіса апублікаваны пераклады з твораў Уладзіміра Караткевіча, Людмілы Рублеўскай, Кацярыны Хадасевіч-Лісавой, Янкі Журбы, Авярыяна Дзеружынскага, Рыгора Барадуліна, і Васіля Віткі. Яркімі прыкладамі маштабных праектаў па перакладзе кітайскай літаратуры на беларускую мову сталі кнігі “Пад крыламі Дракона. Сто паэтаў Кітая”, паэтычная серыя “Светлыя знакі: паэзія Кітая”, анталогія кітайскай паэзіі ХХ стагоддзя “Пялесткі лотаса і хризантэмы”. Гэтыя ініцыятывы па развіцці літаратурных стасункаў паміж нашымі краінамі рэалізаваны ў выніку мэтанакіраванай і паслядоўнай працы Алеся Карлюкевіча. Ён стаў своеасаблівым амбасадарам літаратурнага сяброўства паміж Беларуссю і Кітаем, і больш шырэі – паміж Беларуссю і светам.

Вераніка Карлюкевіч

THE GOLDEN KEY OF OPERA

**Following the
Minsk International
Christmas Opera
Forum, which took
place for the 14th
time at the Bolshoi
Theatre of Belarus.**





**Forum,
which was
held for the 14th time
at the Bolshoi Theatre of
Belarus.**

This project has been pleasing us, fans of opera art, for a long time. It is expected among the public, both Minsk audience and guests coming to Belarus. And, as Ekaterina Dulova, General Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, expressed in her welcoming speech to the audience, this festival has been and remains the most grandiose event in the sphere of academic art in Belarus, and this time

- General Director of the Bolshoi Theater Ekaterina Dulova noted that the Minsk International Christmas Opera Forum is a bright event in the life of the Bolshoi Theater. "We certainly live in a sense of celebration. Interest in ballet is traditionally very great, but these days it is the art of opera that reveals itself fully."



- Andrei Popov, the artistic director of the Chuvash State Opera and Ballet Theatre "Volga Opera" and the author of the idea of the performance, was pleased to introduce to journalists one of the main characters of the opera "The Main Question", the robot artist Grisha, who does not need a salary, but only a recharge



- Rustam Sagdiyev, the author of the libretto, composer and conductor of the space opera "The Main Question" tells the media about how the idea to co-author a neural network was born



Opera". This performance, as the theatre's artistic director Andrei Popov jokingly put it at a meeting with journalists, is unique also because it involves a robot-artist who does not need a salary and only needs a recharge.

The Christmas Forum opened with a digital space opera that surprised the theatre community. Successfully! It's unbelievable! The libretto, music, costumes and scenery are the product of joint labor of a human and a neural network...! Such remarks could be heard in the foyer of the theatre from the audience, leafing through a fresh catalog,





■ Scenes from the performance

introducing the public to the program of the forum. And for those who did not visit the Bolshoi Theatre in those days, I would like to inform you that the author of the idea for the opera *The Main Question*, Andrei Popov, who took over the Volga Opera Theatre as Director in January 2022, now combines his directorial duties with the position of Artistic Director. And St. Petersburg composer Rustam Sagdiyev, the author of the libretto and conductor-director of *The Main Question*, has taken on a neural network as a co-author: some of the text was generated by Chat GPT (a powerful artificial intelligence system). Costumes and scenery were



■ The performance "The Main Question" ended with a wonderful major choir singing in Italian, in which the characters told the not at all frightening news about how one day will come (but in reality, of course, it will not come) when a person will be replaced by a machine. We, the audience, were asked to flash our phones, as it happens at concerts. We did it with pleasure, realizing that this machine - iPhones, smartphones - is already in everyone's hands.



also created with the help of a neural network; the author of digital content is Ilya Semenov, he is also the video artist of the project. By the way, we learned from Andrei Petrov that about 110 people came to Minsk for the forum. Here's how he told us about it before the performance: "... It's two trucks of scenery, four buses. Accordingly, there are a lot of wires and communications to surprise your dear spectator and to draw attention to the fact that there are no more such performances in the world." I will not sin against the truth: the

spectator was surprised. In any case, we have never seen anything like this in Minsk.

The space opera tells us about the new challenges that mankind may face in the near future - interaction with supercomputers that surpass human capabilities, meeting with alien intelligence, ethical problems arising in the contact between humans and digital beings.

We saw composer Rustam Sagdiyev at the conductor's console at the opening of the forum.

To say that the opera impressed us, the audience, is to say nothing. It should be listened to and seen. And we listened and watched what was happening on stage, holding our breath because this performance completely overturned our idea of opera. There is no traditional plot as such in it, with a plot, development of events, climax and denouement. The plot is fantastic, in some ways absurd, designed to think about our interaction with artificial intelligence. The opera's protagonist is Deep Thought AI, an intergalactic artificial intelligence engaged in a search for the ultimate question of life. The production consists of nine episodes linked by a protagonist on whose behalf the narrative is told. The episodes are performed in nine languages - Russian, Chuvash, English, Italian, German, French, Japanese, quasi-Slavic and Sanskrit. The plot of the opera includes references to popular works of science fiction, philosophical works, computer games and anime.

And how could one not hold one's breath when a robot dog walks across the stage, lost in the looking-glass and unable to find its way out without a human... Right, you even sympathize with the dog. Or in the first episode of the second act we are shown a space ballet: a couple, illuminated by neon-blue light, dances in weightlessness.

SB.by



The sight is amazing, though you realize that the ballet is performed with the use of all sorts of devices.

I do not exclude that during the performance some spectators thought about the main questions of existence. I was just among those who were not looking for this answer, I did not try to analyze what was happening on stage. I just enjoyed the beautiful vocals of the soloists and empathized with the characters. Moreover, each of the episodes encouraged me to do so, despite the fact that the novellas were performed in different styles. It would seem to be a farce, but it squeezes out a tear. At some moments empathy even went off the scale... And the answer to the main question, which was never formulated, somehow opened up by itself. And it is quite optimistic. It became clear to me: the opera's directors do not see anything malicious or frightening in artificial intelligence. They are convinced that human beings do harm to themselves, as well as to others like them.

The play "The Main Question" ended with a beautiful major chorus singing in Italian, in which the characters tell the not at all frightening news about how

one day there will come a day (but of course it won't actually come) when man will be replaced by a machine. We, the audience were asked to shine our phones, as it happens at concerts. Which we did with pleasure, realizing that this machine - iPhones, smartphones - is already in everyone's hands.

And after the performance in the Chamber Hall of the Bolshoi for all comers there was a meeting with the creators and leading soloists of the performance, which showed how intelligent, intellectual and inquisitive our audience is, so hospitable and friendly. Anna Motornaya, Chief Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, also took part in the conversation with the audience. The opera forum continued with the Voronezh State Opera and Ballet Theatre's production of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*, one of the brightest opera performances in the Russian theatre playbill. The production was staged in 2021 by conductor Felix Korobov, People's Artist of Russia, and director Mikhail Bychkov (Artistic Director of the Voronezh Chamber Theatre and Platonov Arts Festival).

Mikhail Bychkov commented on his work this way:

- In my opinion, although it is called a comic opera, *The Marriage of Figaro* contains not so much comedy as a huge spectrum of human feelings. Mozart wrote this marvelous music in 1786, and today we continue to express our feelings through it - because love lives on, people continue to suffer cheating, to pursue their lovers. This is not just a funny situation comedy - it is a deep, meaningful story, which contains a huge emotional range.

The proposed director's solution of the play allows us to justify the heat of passion inherent in the musical score by the extraordinary circumstances in which the heroes find themselves by the will of fate. It is not surprising that the action is transferred to one of the European powers drawn into the theatre of war of the First World War of the 20th century. Events unfold at the juncture of the end of the war and the return to peaceful life. This production has received six nominations for the prestigious Golden Mask Theatre Award for the 2020-2021 season.

"We continue to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Union State countries, because our guests opening the forum





are two theatres from the Russian Federation: the Chuvash and Voronezh opera and ballet theatres,” Ekateriena Dulova also told reporters before the opening of the forum, emphasizing that the forum is returning to its international format, as well as increasing interaction with Russia. Today, according to the general director, the Bolshoi Theatre already has about 20 partners among Russian theatres. “This is a very remarkable phenomenon,” she said, “and of course we value that we have the opportunity for exchange tours with major Russian theatres from Kazan, Yoshkar-Ola, Novosibirsk and other regions. We have also discussed with Valery Gergiev, Director and Artistic Director of the Mariinsky and Bolshoi Theatres, the possibility of joint projects in the year of the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory.”



■ After the performance a meeting with the creators and leading soloists of the play took place in the Chamber Hall of the Bolshoi, which showed how smart, intelligent and inquisitive our audience is, as well as how hospitable and friendly. The main director of the Bolshoi Theatre, Anna Motornaya, Andrei Popov, Rustam Sagdiyev, as well as the leading soloists of the Theatre “Volga Opera” – Sergei Kuznetsov, Honoured Artist of Khakassia (Laureate, Junior Engineer), Ivan Snegirev, Honoured Artist of Chuvashia (Chairman), Alisa Shalginova, Laureate of international competitions (Presenter), Elena Sokolova, Honoured Artist of Chuvashia (Painter), Margarita Finogentova, National Artist of Chuvashia (Cyber-Akita-Neko, ARGO).



POSTSCRIPTUM



Particular attention at the forum was paid to the premiere of a new version of the opera “Eugene Onegin”, dedicated to the 225th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin. This production - the eighth performance of Tchaikovsky’s opera on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus - became a real gift for fans of classical music during the forum.

- This is a genius work, - Anna Motornaya is convinced. - The further in life I go with this work, the more I plunge into its incredible depths: emotional, spiritual, psychological, intonational, moral. On the one hand, it is an “encyclopedia of Russian life”, on the other hand, it is a story about a man out of time.

The forum program also included the fairy-tale opera “Turandot”, a large-scale work by Giacomo Puccini. This production was staged in 2013 by

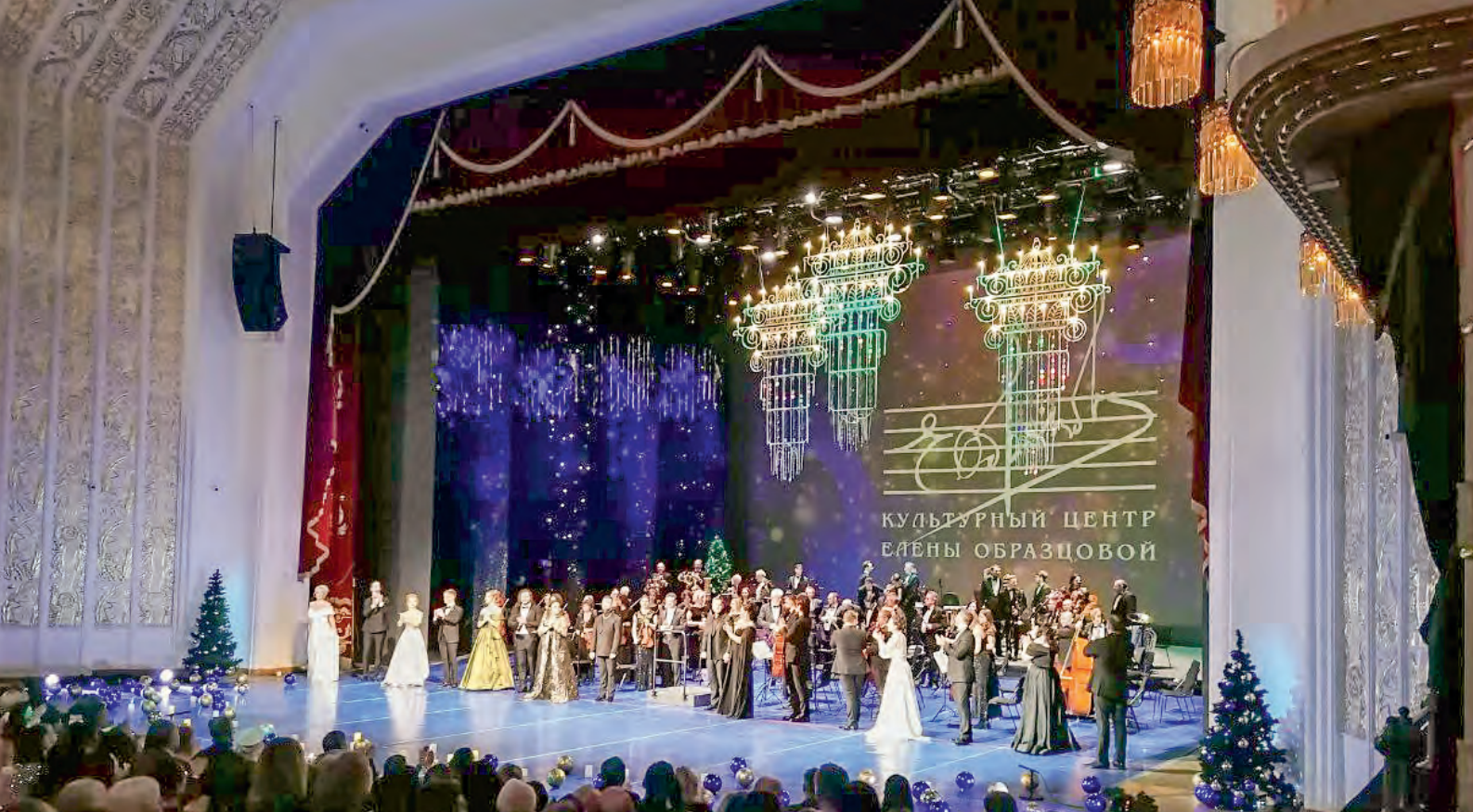


■ The opera “The Marriage of Figaro” by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart of the Voronezh State Opera and Ballet Theatre, one of the most striking opera performances in the Russian theater’s playbill.

■ The new version of the opera “Eugene Onegin”, dedicated to the 225th anniversary of the birth of Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin – the eighth performance of Tchaikovsky’s opera on the stage of the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus - became a real gift for fans of classical music during the forum.

■ Scene from the performance “Turandot” Giacomo Puccini





Mikhail Panjavidze. The main roles were performed by guest opera stars, masters of the Russian opera stage, in particular from the Mikhailovsky Theatre (St. Petersburg) and the Moscow Musical Theatre "Helikon Opera".

The Gala Concert, which ended the Christmas forum, was attended by winners and participants of Elena Obraztsova competitions of different years. Among them were Belarusian, Russian and Korean young performers. Also for the first time the Bolshoi Theatre hosted guests from Nicaragua - INCANTO Foundation soloists Katherine Velásquez and Mauricio Delgado. Vasily Yurkevich was at the conductor's desk.

Instead of an afterword

I will never cease to be amazed at how revered opera is in Belarus, the most elite, I would even say exquisite theatrical genre: every evening at the Bolshoi Theatre, there are full houses. Such were the evenings during the Minsk International Christmas Opera Forum. And once again I wondered why I love opera so much. Once, it was a long time ago, I realized that a good opera is like a golden key that opens the door to our inner world. For some people opera is like a religion, as the Russian theatre scholar,

- The final stage of the Gala Concert that concluded the Minsk International Christmas Opera Forum
- Guests from Nicaragua — INCANTO Foundation soloists Katherine Velásquez and Mauricio Delgado.

music critic, poet and librettist Alexei Parin said in his essay.

- What is opera? Does it replace the process of cognition - mastering the world and ourselves? Or has it become a substitute for religion, that is, it forms a time and space where we relate to something higher?

Man is becoming more and more complex, new, unexplored layers are emerging in him. The composer intrudes into this "inexpressible". The conductor pulls all the most hidden things out, nurtures them, puts them in the audience's ears. The director in one way or another turns everything into human action, into a play of wills and dependencies. The singers turn themselves inside out so that everything becomes somehow understandable.

Opera, opera alone, opera alone can answer all the most difficult questions. No, it can't. It can be an attempt to look into our souls, to get to the worst and the most worthy, it can pull out from the



depths of the world such secrets that we have never even dreamed of. Or suddenly present all the best things that even we do not always recognize inside ourselves.

Every time the lights go out and the curtain opens, we hope that after this well-organized magic we will become different, better or worse, braver or more docile, loftier or simpler. This is what always happens if we are given the "right" opera. This is what the opera was like during the Minsk International Christmas Opera Forum. The right one!

Valentina Zhdanovich

Photo by BelTA, author, and also provided by the Bolshoi Theater of Belarus

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ART UNITES

The State Russian Museum and the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus presented in Minsk an unprecedented in scale joint exhibition project Russia — Belarus. Intersection of Fates, dedicated to the work of artists of the 19th-20th centuries in the context of Russian-Belarusian cultural interactions





The objective reality was such that, in accordance with the realities of the century before last, a talented person born in the historical lands of Belarus was guided by the nearest in location and spirit generally recognized political and educational centres, which were, first of all, the Russian cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow. The connection of a person with the land where he was born is undeniable and is presented in different aspects: Motherland, people, small homeland, family, biography, destiny. This combination — the 'genius of the place' — is unshakable. The famous Belarusian educator Francysk Skaryna accurately and aphoristically noted, "Because from birth, the beasts that walk in the desert know their pits, the birds that fly in the air know their nests; the fish that swim in the sea and in the



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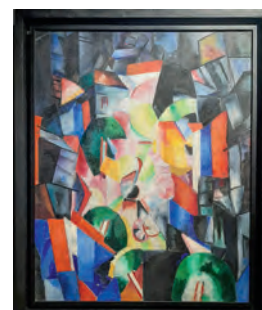


rivers sense their own streams; bees and the like fend off their hives, so do people have great affection for that place where they were born and nurtured by God.”

And no matter what momentary realities determine the territorial affiliation of the native land, its original power, expressed in the national feeling of belonging to it, is not subject to any external efforts. Different aspects can only interact more or less actively.

The nature and level of such interaction is determined by the degree of closeness in essence. The situation with Russia

and Belarus is unique: having preserved the national artistic tradition, they have formed a common cultural space. Over the centuries, since the era of great migration (6th-8th centuries), the context of historical and cultural coexistence of such state entities as principalities that developed in the territories of settlement of Slavic tribes has been formed, says Viktoria Kuzmina, First Deputy General Director for Scientific, International and Educational Work of the National Art Museum of Belarus. In her opinion, the short period of unity in the era of the so-called Kyivan Rus’ (10th-



12th centuries) was extremely important as a stage in the formation of the ethnographic, linguistic, and behavioural community called 'Slavs'. Of course, this process could not have occurred without many nuances and features conditioned by different historical conditions. But its civilizational meaning, including at a great historical distance, is undeniable and obvious, emphasises Viktoria Kuzmina. Namely, close national groups were clearly identified within the region populated by different ethnic groups. Such as Russians and Belarusians.

The problem of national identity is complex and multifaceted in relation to any people, in any sphere, in any aspect. And in the field of artistic culture, it is most delicate due to many nuances — the peculiarities of the historical period, the specifics of the state structure, the intensity and breadth of international relations. Up to the personal preferences of the creator. For the formation of the Belarusian national school, many of these aspects are especially important. During the era of Kyivan Rus', the autonomous Belarusian principalities of Polotsk and Turov became important centres for the formation of national spirituality. The prayer books, writers, and educators Euphrosyne of Polotsk and Cyril of Turov were glorified as saints. It is important that they possessed, in modern terms, artistic talents: Saint Euphrosyne copied books, adorning sacred texts with decorative capital letters and ornaments, according to legend, she was the author of an exquisite design for the altar cross that bears her name (master Lazar Bogsha), and also initiated the acquisition



of a Byzantine icon, the so-called Hodegetria of Polotsk. Saint Cyril is the author of Words and Instructions, which were valued both for their preaching content and for their literary style. It is no coincidence that there was a hypothesis that he was the author of The Tale of Igor's Campaign. In the monuments of Belarusian icon painting of the 16th-18th centuries, reminiscences of the Byzantine style, close to the pictorial language of ancient Russian monuments, are clearly visible. Despite the fact that Western influences, due to historical circumstances, also touched it.

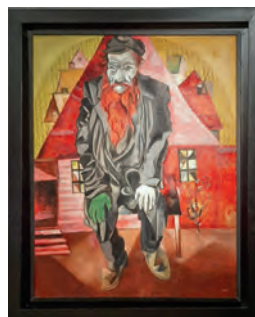
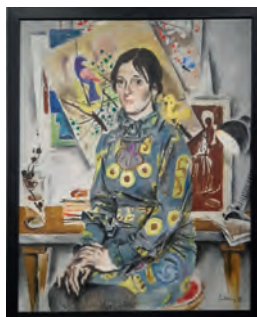
Bright examples of national self-awareness nevertheless clearly manifested themselves, for example, in the works of Francysk Skaryna (c. 1490 — 1541/51) — the Belarusian first printer, possibly originally of the Orthodox confession, a philosopher-humanist, writer, scientist, who received an education and then a bachelor's degree in liberal arts at the Krakow Academy, passed the test for the degree of doctor of medicine at the famous University of Padua, worked in Vilnius, Königsberg, Prague. But he translated the Holy Scripture into the Old Belarusian Church Slavonic language! The historical pattern is such that in small forms of art — folklore, folk art, everyday rituals and rites and clearly, but



less obviously, in icon painting — national motifs are most vividly and organically embodied. The fine and applied arts of Belarus have used them to the fullest extent in modern and contemporary times. The situation changed significantly after the lands were annexed to the Russian Empire, when Vitebsk received the status of a province and was associated with the name of the Belarusian lands. Then with the emergence of the Belarusian People's Republic after the October Revolution, which later became the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic, which in 1991 declared independence and sovereignty as the Republic of Belarus. The change in status certainly determined both the nature and the ways of transcultural communications. It should be remembered that during the division of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, some territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania became part of the Russian Empire. The Vilnius Jesuit College, founded in

1579, and since 1773 — the Main Vilnius School, was transformed

into the Imperial Vilnius University by the Decree of Alexander I in 1803, closed as a “hotbed of wrong ideas” by Nicholas I in 1832. But from 1803 to 1832, it had departments of drawing and painting, as well as sculpture and graphics, and, therefore, it was one of the few centres of art education. The beginning of the 19th century can be considered the time of the formation of the modern Belarusian art school. The peculiarity of the plastic arts is that their professional development requires access to educational centres. Today, universities are not only in Belarusian and Russian regional cities, but also in municipal centres, which in the century before last would not have been suitable for the historical population density. The current situation oriented people from the Belarusian lands to pilgrimage in order to obtain professional skills to Warsaw, Kyiv, Odessa (note, all within the Russian Empire). But first of all, to St. Petersburg — to a prestigious educational institution — the Imperial Academy of Arts, which until the 1860s practically had a monopoly on coordinating the artistic life of the country. The Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, which





was founded in 1843 and became independent as a higher educational institution in 1896, existed under the patronage of the Academy. Upon completion of their studies at the Academy of Arts, Vasily Sazonov, Iosif Oleshkevich, Yan (Ivan) Khrutsky, Kondraty Korsalin, Apollinary Goravsky, and Leon Bakst received the title of academicians. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Vitold Bialynitsky-Birulya, Stanislav Zhukovsky and many aspiring artists chose to study in Moscow. Only at the end of the 19th century did Belarusian private schools of primary art education began accepting students: the School of Drawing and Painting of Yudel Pen (1898, Vitebsk), the Drawing School of Yakov Kruger (1903, Minsk), and the Private Drawing School of Fyodor Parkhomenko (1903, Mogilev). Talented creators born in the cities, towns and villages of Belarus, understanding it in its modern borders, are often included in the ranks of famous compatriots by representatives of neighbouring countries (Russians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Poles), which is confirmed by the real facts of their biographies. Indeed, born in the modern Belarusian lands, which after the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth became part of the Russian Empire, many of the future famous artists, writers, composers left their small homeland and made a

kind of pilgrimage — passing through educational places (by analogy with 'holy places') — to receive the appropriate specialised education in large cities, and sometimes stayed there forever, participating in the creation of the image of these centres of cultural and educational life. Being the bearers of the national cultural code, outstanding politicians, artists, writers, composers subsequently adopted the knowledge and skills of other peoples, came into contact with a different cultural environment, which gave a professional edge to their own talents.

The situation changed dramatically in the 20th century. The Academy of Arts as an educational institution was transformed into the Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture; nine educational institutions called VKHUTEMAS (Higher Art and Technical Workshops) were created in Moscow, Petrograd, Voronezh, Kazan, Yekaterinburg, Samara, Saratov, Yaroslavl and Vitebsk. It became a tradition, having mastered the profession of a painter, sculptor, engraver, applied artist, architect in any prestigious centre, to return to their native places for its practical application. In general, the network of art education institutions expanded and decentralised. Art schools were created (including on the basis of general education schools)

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in Vitebsk, Polotsk, Gomel, Grodno and, of course, in Minsk. Belarusian researchers particularly emphasise the importance of 'artistic Vitebsk', which became a centre of not only all-Belarusian, but also all-Russian significance. Great avant-garde artists lived and worked here from 1918 to 1922: Kazimir Malevich, Marc Chagall, El Lissitzky. The Vitebsk school of the 'new revolutionary model' was opened there, transformed by Malevich into the State Art Technical Workshops. Finally, in 1945, the Belarusian State Academy of Arts began to function, training personnel for the entire national artistic sphere. For Belarus (and, in fact, for any other country that has encountered problems in implementing national sovereignty), this process is extremely important. For, as Nikolai Berdyaev rightly asserted, it is not in politics or economics, but in culture that the goals of society are expressed.

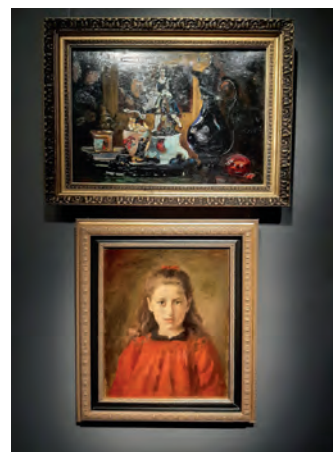
The topic of artists' migration is still relevant today, especially since Russia and Belarus were part of one state for over seventy years, and are now experiencing an era of multifaceted integration in the status of a union of sovereign states. And while the move of a Belarusian artist



to Russia in the 19th - early 20th century was an action forced by one circumstance or another, then in modern times it has become a subject of voluntary choice. And most importantly, it does not mean separation from native soil (in the broad sense of the word!). And people from White Rus' in Moscow, Petrograd-Leningrad, or Paris, forming an international artistic environment, periodically return to their homeland — physically or mentally. David Zagoskin from Leningrad made an art expedition to the collective farms and communes of the Vitebsk Province (1930s). Anatoly Kaplan repeatedly turned to the image of the Belarusian Rogachev in his work, where he was born. A Muscovite by registration, a Belarusian by birth, Georgy Nissky, one of the creators of the austere style, repeatedly painted pictures with the simple title 'Belarusian Landscape'. People's Artist of the USSR Yevsey Moiseyenko often visited his homeland, painted portraits of his compatriots (General Dovator), and in the landscape backgrounds of his thematic paintings, in the types of heroes, national motifs are often seen. Nostalgic memories of home were certainly preserved by Parisian Boris Zaborov, one of those artists of Belarusian origin (along with Chagall and Soutine), who by right of birth and development are considered Belarusians, who went through the Russian art school and became world heritage. This is a complex conglomerate: being bearers of the national cultural code, subsequently not only artists or sculptors, but also outstanding politicians, writers, composers perceive the experience, knowledge, skills of other peoples, come into



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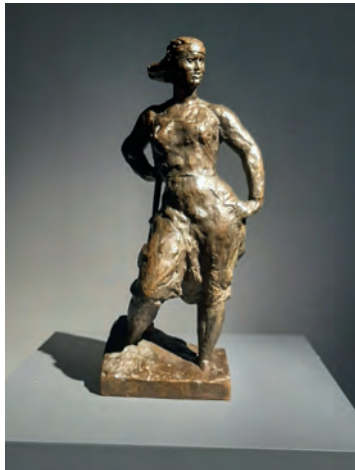
contact with a different cultural environment, completing the faceting of their own talents. This is the pattern of world artistic development. And, of course, the consideration of the fates and creativity of individuals in such a historical multi-parameter approach seems more complex, but also more objective.

The joint exhibition project of the State Russian Museum and the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus presents the work of artists of the 19th, 20th and early 21st centuries, who were born on historical Belarusian lands and received professional education and the potential for creative self-fulfilment in Russian higher schools. The exhibition includes paintings and graphics, sculptures and applied art by iconic artists of Belarus and Russia of the 19th and 20th centuries — Józef Oleszkiewicz, Ivan Khrutsky, Apollinary Goravsky, Zair Azgur, Yankel Kruger, Yudel Pen, Robert Landarsky, Vladimir Stelmashonok, Valentin Volkov, Natan

Voronov, Mai Dantsig and others, whose work during the heyday of their careers formed bright pages in the history of Belarusian art, and whose beginnings were associated with the main cultural centres of Russia — mainly, St. Petersburg (Leningrad) and Moscow. An exhibition of such a representative level is being organised for the first time. It will allow us to characterise in detail the work of a number of major, widely known masters and will reveal many new or little-known names to the viewer.

Let us emphasise once again that this is a joint project of the National Art Museum of Belarus and the State Russian Museum. It is based on the idea of the historical cultural community of two modern sovereign states, Russia and Belarus, uniqueness and unity, authenticity and mutual influences in the cultural space. By the way, a similar exhibition was presented in September in the Marble Palace of the State Russian Museum as part of the anniversary 10th International St. Petersburg Forum of United Cultures.

In total, the current large-scale exhibition includes about three hundred works. Among them, there are paintings, graphics, sculptures, decorative and applied arts from the



rich collections of two leading art museums of Russia and Belarus, from which the first-line works were selected.

As the Minister of Culture of Belarus Ruslan Chernetsky noted at the opening ceremony of the exhibition, this is the beginning of serious relations and the development of our common culture. It is not for nothing, the Minister emphasised, that many interesting events between museums, theatres, concert organisations, film studios are planned for this year.

According to Anna Kononova, Director General of the National Art Museum of Belarus, the project was conceived a little less than a year ago. "We wanted our plan, dream, and desire to be brought to life in such a short time, because the idea itself was obvious, but it was the first time they had been implemented on such a scale and at such a level," she emphasised.

And today, the four exhibition halls of the museum's new exhibition building present works by more than 50 masters who were born in the historical Belarusian lands and received their professional education in the strongest Russian educational institutions, including the Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg and the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. Of course, these are timeless names, names of global significance. Here we should note the Khrutsky, Goravsky dynasties, the name of Sergei Zaryanko, who was a professor at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and an academician of the Imperial Academy of Arts. We also mean Vitold Bialynitsky-Birulya, a master of lyrical landscape, a famous student of Levitan and Polenov. We are talking about the famous artist, Belarusian student of Ilya Repin, Lev Alperovich. Anna Kononova drew attention to the fact that many people's artists



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of Belarus also graduated from the Russian school. These are Yevgeny Zaitsev, Natan Voronov, Pavel Maslennikov, Mai Dantsig, Mikhail Savitsky, Vitaly Tsvirko. Therefore, if we talk about the intersection of destinies, we can trace that the threads of our culture really have a commonality and at the same time their uniqueness, noted the Director General of the National Art Museum of Belarus.

Director of the State Russian Museum Alla Manilova emphasised that the exhibition was made in record time and is unique in the scale of cooperation between the two museums. According to her, the task was first to analyse the common roots by the scientific efforts of the two museums, curators, art historians, historians of painting and fine art. Where is this point of assembly of one, single cultural space? In the process of studying it became clear that the roots should be sought in that period of the 19th century, when talents born on the original Belarusian lands were looking for points of attraction. "We are talking about the period of the Russian Empire, when those art schools that began to appear in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had not yet been born on the Belarusian lands," explained Anna Manilova.

Of course, the current exhibition emphasises the importance of cultural unity, common history, and spiritual friendship of the two Slavic peoples. And, as stated in the press release of the Russian Museum, it will become a new step towards the continuous development of Russian-Belarusian relations, And you can get acquainted with the unique exhibition in the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus until the end of March.

Veniamin Mikheyev



“ВАЖНА НЕ ГУБЛЯЦЬ ТОЕ, ШТО ЯДНАЕ”

IX пасяджэнне Кансультатыўнага савета пры Міністэрстве замежных спраў Беларусі па справах беларусаў замежжа прайшло ў Мінску. На яго прыехалі кіраўнікі арганізацый нашых суайчыннікаў з бліжняга і дальняга замежжа. Такія сустрэчы праводзяцца кожны год для таго, каб падвесці вынікі ўзаемадзеяння дзяржавы і беларускай дыяспары і абмеркаваць планы па далейшым супрацоўніцтве. Госці атрымліваюць таксама інфармацыю пра эканамічнае, палітычнае і сацыяльнае развіццё краіны – тыя веды, якія яны могуць выкарыстоўваць у сваёй рабоце.

Адкрыў пасяджэнне Кансультатыўнага савета намеснік міністра замежных спраў Юрый Амбразевіч. Ён выказаў спадзяванне, што беларусы замежжа будуць садзейнічаць у краінах свайго пражывання адказнаму і правільнаму асэнсаванню працэсаў, якія

праходзяць у Беларусі, накіраваных на захаванне стабільнасці, правапарадку ў нашай дзяржаве.

У сустрэчы ўзялі ўдзел прадстаўнікі розных міністэрстваў і ведамстваў, а таксама грамадскіх арганізацый. Так, беларускі



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фонд міру прадстаўляла Марыя Васілеўская – першая жанчына-касманаўт незалежнай Беларусі. Яна заўважыла, што такое мерапрыемства з’яўляецца важным для ўсіх – для Беларусі, для Саюзнай дзяржавы, для развіцця супрацоўніцтва з іншымі краінамі. На пытанне, ці не плануе яна яшчэ паляцець у космас, Марыя Васілеўская адказала, што калі радзіма загадае, то абавязкова, але пакуль яшчэ многа работы на зямлі. На сустрэчу з беларусамі замежжа яна прыйшла для таго, каб расказаць пра дасягненні Беларусі, пра тое, што ў краіне робіцца для захавання міру.

Сярод ганаровых гасцей пасяджэння быў і член Пастаяннай камісіі па правах чалавека, нацыянальных адносінах і сродках масавай інфармацыі Нацыянальнага сходу Беларусі, кіраўнік рабочай групы па справах беларусаў замежжа Беларускага Парламента Уладзімір Гаўрыловіч. Ён расказаў, што за мяжой пражывае каля 3,5 мільёна беларусаў. Сярод іх многія – нашчадкі суайчыннікаў, якія з’ехалі ў іншыя краіны яшчэ ў XVIII – XIX стагоддзях, але яны захоўваюць нацыянальную прыналежнасць, мову і гаварача тым, што яны беларусы. Уладзімір Гаўрыловіч узгадаў беларусаў цэнтральнай Германіі, якія адзначаюць Купалле і Дзень Незалежнасці. І мерапрыемствы там праводзяцца на такім ўзроўні, што госці, якія хочуць патрапіць на гэтыя святы, часам праязджаюць 400–500 кіламетраў.

Дэпутаты актыўна ўзаемадзейнічаюць з суайчыннікамі. Летась быў упершыню праведзены міжнародны тэлемот з беларусамі, якія жывуць ў іншых краінах. Ён быў прысвечаны 10-годдзю Закона “Аб беларусах замежжа” і 80-годдзю вызвалення Беларусі ад нямецка-фашысцкіх захопнікаў. Уладзімір Гаўрыловіч паведаміў, што сёлета плануецца праводзіць міжнародны тэлемасты, прысвечаны розным актуальным тэмам раз на квартал. Адно з такіх мерапрыемстваў будзе прысвечана 80-годдзю Перамогі савецкага народа ў Вялікай Айчыннай вайне. Парламенцкая рабочая група па справах беларусаў замежжа абвясціла аб правядзенні медыяконкурсу для членаў грамадскіх арганізацый беларусаў замежжа. У ім дзве намінацыі: суайчыннікі могуць дасылаць вершы, прысвечаныя Вялікай Айчыннай вайне, і відэазапісы з выкананнем любімых беларускіх песень.

Сярод пытанняў, якія абмяркоўвалі на пасяджэнні Кансультацыйнага савета – культурныя абмены, захаванне бязвізавага рэжыму. Паступалі і больш

“рэгіянальныя” прапановы. Так, кіраўнік Рэгіянальнай нацыянальна-культурнай аўтаноміі беларусаў Омскай вобласці “Буслы” Алена Аўчарэнка перад пачаткам сустрэчы расказала журналістам, што будзе прасоўваць пытанне аб адкрыцці ў Омску Беларускага гандлёвага дому, бо беларускія тавары ў Сібіры, дзе пражывае вялікая колькасць нашых суайчыннікаў, надзвычай запатрабаваныя.

Старшыня беларускага культурнага цэнтра “Світанак” у Ташкенце Галіна Татаранка таксама

заўважыла, што прадукцыя з Беларусі набывае папулярнасць ва Узбекістане, тут можна купіць беларускія малочныя прадукты, касметыку, трыкатаж. Як высветлілася, беларуская культура таксама вельмі падабаецца мясцовым жыхарам. Так, гледачы Ташкента былі ў захапленні ад спектакля “Паўлінка”, які падрыхтавалі нашы суайчыннікі. Развіваецца супрацоўніцтва Узбекістана і Беларусі ў галіне

адукацыі. Тут працуе сумесны беларуска-ўзбекскі інстытут, беларускія факультэты створаны ў іншых навучальных установах.

Тамара Ломцева, старшыня таварыства беларускай культуры Прыднястроўя, выказала просьбу аб выдачы пашпартаў з грамадзянствам Беларусі, у тым ліку і для дзяцей, якія нарадзіліся ў сем’ях нашых суайчыннікаў ужо за мяжой.

“Важна не забываць, адкуль нашы карані, і колькі добрага мы атрымалі на радзіме, – падзялілася Ала Сандлер. – Я ўехала ў 22 гады, зараз мне 52. Большую частку жыцця я пражыла ў Амерыцы, але ў памяці да гэтага часу нашы дамы піянераў, танцавальныя гурткі, харавыя заняткі. Гэта моцна падтрымлівае. Беларусам у Амерыцы я так і кажу, што важна не губляць тую нітачку, нават канат, які звязвае вас з вашай краінай, дзяцінствам, юнацтвам. Усіх заклікаю прыехаць і пераконваю, што такія паездкі ў Беларусь прыносяць шмат шчасця”. За час удзелу ў стажыроўках беларусаў замежжа і пасяджэннях кансультацыйнага савета Ала Сандлер пазнаёмілася з беларусамі з іншых краін, далучылася да іх праектаў. Так, летась яна ўзяла ўдзел у мерапрыемствах да 25-годдзя таварыства “Сябры” ў Эстоніі, выступала з канцэртамі ў Латвіі. Яе запрасілі ў Карэлію, жанчына падзялілася, што хоча пабываць ва Узбекістане, Арменіі, Грузіі. Яна падкрэсліла, што кожная сустрэча, калі Беларусь збірае сваіх суайчыннікаў, спрыяе таму, каб сувязі паміж імі пашыраліся.

Яўген Кручкоў



ПІЛІГРЫМЫ НАДЗЕІ

Калядная канферэнцыя “У імя міру і дабрабыту”, арганізатарам якой выступілі Мінска-Магілёўская архідыяцэзія Рымска-Каталіцкага касцёла ў Беларусі і Упаўнаважаны па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў Аляксандр Румак. Гэта магчыма менавіта таму, што ў нашай краіне не існуе канфліктаў паміж прадстаўнікамі розных нацыянальнасцяў і веравызнанняў (сёння ў краіне – 25 канфесій і рэлігійных кірункаў). Прычым такая традыцыя фарміравалася на працягу стагоддзяў. У многіх населеных пунктах побач будаваліся касцёлы, праваслаўныя цэрквы, сінагогі, мячэці. У адной сям’і могуць быць і католікі, і праваслаўныя, і гэта, як заўважыў Упаўнаважаны, не перашкаджае людзям, а, наадварот, яднае і ўмацоўвае народ. Канферэнцыя, па яго словах, дала магчымасць абмеркаваць ролю Каталіцкай канфесіі – другой па колькасці вернікаў у нашай краіне. “На працягу стагоддзяў гісторыя каталіцтва цесна звязана з гісторыяй беларускіх зямель, – адзначыў Аляксандр Румак. – У незалежнай Беларусі Рымска-Каталіцкая царква выступае як адзін з духоўных, маральных і сацыяльных арыенціраў нашага грамадства, такім чынам яна адыгрывае ролю ў духоўным адраджэнні грамадства, захаванні гісторыка-духоўнай спадчыны і духоўных каштоўнасцяў беларускага народа. Праз сваё вучэнне яна спрыяе фарміраванню такіх каштоўнасцяў, як любоў, спачуванне, прабачэнне і ўзаемная дапамога, якія з’яўляюцца асновай для мірнага суіснавання”.

Мітрапаліт Мінска-Магілёўскі арцыбіскуп Юзаф Станеўскі перад пачаткам сустрэчы

заўважыў, што канферэнцыя ў тым ліку дазваляе падвесці пэўныя вынікі, што неабходна для таго, каб рухацца далей. Прадстаўнікі Каталіцкай царквы гатовы дзяліцца сваім вопытам па рабоце з моладдзю, раскажваць пра сацыяльныя праекты, многія з якіх здзяйсняюцца ў рамках праграм такой арганізацыі каталіцкага касцёла як “Карытас”. Яе дзейнасць накіравана на падтрымку малазабяспечаных сямей, адзіночкі старых, людзей з абмежаванымі магчымасцямі і тых, хто апынуўся ў цяжкай жыццёвай сітуацыі. “Карытас” арганізуе пункты сацыяльнай дапамогі, кансультацыйныя цэнтры і праграмы рэабілітацыі, дапамагае ў развіцці сацыяльных прадпрыемстваў. Такім чынам яна паказвае, што рэлігійныя цэнтры могуць з’яўляцца і сацыяльнымі інстытутамі, якія здольныя паляпшаць якасць жыцця людзей. Безумоўна, дабрачынныя праграмы спрыяюць захаванню веры. Між іншым, з часоў



Таццяна Бузінойска

пандэміі ўсё больш людзей шукае шлях да Бога. І справа не толькі ў тым, што людзі чакаюць падказак у складаных сітуацыях. Яны бачаць, што будуюцца новыя храмы – і гэта натхняе.

Арцыбіскуп Юзаф Станеўскі заўважыў, што 2025 год Папам Рымскім Францішкам абвешчаны Юбілейным годам Хрысціянства і праходзіць пад дэвізам “Пілігрымы надзеі”: “Гэта асаблівы год, калі трэба яшчэ больш прыкладаць намаганняў, для таго, каб увесць свет жыў у гармоніі і дабрабыце”. Такія каштоўнасці, як мір і дабрабыт, якія абмяркоўваюцца на канферэнцыі, па яго словах, трэба развіваць і прымнажаць. Невыпадкава на сустрэчу запрошаны прадстаўнікі розных канфесій. Як заўважыў Мітрапаліт Станеўскі каштоўнасць свету ў яго разнастайнасці, у той жа час і ў дзяржаве, і ў веры людзі жывуць адной сям’ёй, кіруюцца агульнымі ісцінамі. Каб разумець, ведаць і паважаць адзін аднаго, трэба весці дыялог: “Беларусь – гэта агульны скарб: духоўны, культурны, гістарычны. Мірнае неба над нашай краінай – гэта наша агульная адказ-

“Плённае супрацоўніцтва з’яўляецца прыкладам для іншых краін і рэгіёнаў, паказваючы, як дыялог і сумесныя ініцыятывы здольныя не толькі ўмацоўваць сувязі паміж канфесіямі, але і садзейнічаць агульнаму дабрабыту грамадства. Дзякуючы гэтаму ўзаемадзеянню фарміруецца прастора ўзаемнай павагі, дзе кожная канфесія адчувае сваю значнасць і ўнёсак у пабудову гарманічнай і мірнай будучыні», – адзначыў падчас канферэнцыі біскуп Аляксандр Яшэўскі.



■ Мітрапаліт Мінска-Магілёўскі арцыбіскуп Юзаф Станеўскі



theology.bsu.by

насць і наш клопат. Без адзінства не можа быць ні дзяржаўнага жыцця, ні жыцця людзей. Клопаты аб духоўным, культурным і навакольным асяроддзі з’яўляюцца галоўнымі і стратэгічнымі задачамі, бо ад іх залежыць будучыня чалавецтва”. Дарэчы, у Беларусі склалася добрая традыцыя ўзаемадзеяння паміж прадстаўнікамі розных канфесій. Яны збіраюцца на канферэнцыях, форумах, круглых сталах, абмяркоўваюць важныя для грамадства пытанні, сярод якіх захаванне традыцыйных каштоўнасцяў, інстытута сям’і, выхаванне падрастаючага пакалення, патрыятызм, захаванне памяці пра трагедыі, што адбываліся ў гады Вялікай Айчыннай вайны.



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Муфтый Мусульманскага рэлігійнага аб’яднання ў Беларусі Абу-Бекір Шабановіч, як адзін са старэйшых удзельнікаў Каляднай канферэнцыі, падзяліўся ўласным досведам: “Я – сведка аб’яднання нашай краіны ў 1939 годзе і жаклівых падзей Вялікай Айчыннай вайны, пасляваеннага аднаўлення, калі многія населеныя пункты былі разбураны дашчэнту і іншых гістарычных падзей. Усёй душой адчуваю, што мы павінны абараняць духоўныя культурныя традыцыі ўсіх народаў,

выпрацаваць агульную пазіцыю ў захаванні міру”. Да службыцця ў рэлігій, як асоб, якім давяраюць людзі, на яго думку, – асаблівы патрабаванні. Ён упэўнены, што сёння людская ацэнка за гуманныя дзеянні вельмі значная ў грамадстве, сведчаннем таму з’яўляецца прэмія “За духоўнае адраджэнне”.

На канферэнцыі абмяркоўвалася і пытанне сацыяльнай адказнасці бізнесу. У Год добраўпарадкавання, які абвешчаны сёлета ў Беларусі, гэта тэма надзвычай актуальная. Сёння прадпрымальнікі дапамагаюць вяртаць святыні, аднаўляць і рэканструюваць храмы. Яны могуць таксама фінансава падтрымліваць адукацыйныя і сацыяльныя праекты канфесій, культурна-асветніцкія мерапрыемствы, паломніцкія паездкі, царкоўныя бібліятэкі, выданне духоўна-маральнай літаратуры. Як заўважыў Аляксандр Румак, прадпрымальніцтва можа садзейнічаць справе духоўнага адраджэння, развіццю і захаванню духоўных каштоўнасцяў, якія аб’ядноўваюць увесь наш народ.

Падчас канферэнцыі адбылося ўручэнне ўзнагарод за аднаўленне і будаўніцтва новых святыняў у розных гарадах Беларусі. Сярод адзначаных не толькі прадстаўнікі касцёлаў з розных населеных пунктаў Беларусі, але і Надзвычайны і Паўнамоцны Пасол Венгерскай Рэспублікі ў Рэспубліцы Беларусь доктар Зіта Ілона Бенчык, прадпрымальнікі, старшыня Каардынацыйнай рады грамадскіх аб’яднанняў і палітычных партый Магілёўскай вобласці Андрэй Нікіцін, старшыня Мінскага абласнога выканаўчага камітэта Аляксандр Турчын.

Таццяна Бузіноўская



КАРАГОД СЯБРОЎСТВА

На працягу месяца паводле дабрачыннай рэспубліканскай акцыі “Нашы дзеці” ва ўсіх рэгіёнах Беларусі праходзілі навагоднія мерапрыемствы для хлопчыкаў і дзяўчынак. Прадстаўнікі органаў улады і грамадскіх арганізацый наведвалі інтэрнаты, апякунскія і прыёмныя сем’і, дамы сямейнага тыпу, дзіцячыя бальніцы, цэнтры развіваючага навучання і рэабілітацыі. Сярод найбольш буйных мерапрыемстваў – дабрачыннае свята ў Палацы Рэспублікі, на якое былі запрошаны дзве з паловай тысячы дзяцей. Далучыўся да акцыі “Нашы дзеці” і апарат Упаўнаважанага па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў.

Сабраць творчых сяброў з нацыянальна-культурных аб’яднанняў, якія заўсёды гатовы выступіць у дабрачынных канцэртах, і далучыцца да святачнага карагода вырашана было разам з выхаванцамі сацыяльна-педагагічнага цэнтра Фрунзенскага раёна Мінска. Тут знайшлі прытулак хлопчыкі і дзяўчынкі ва ўзросце ад 4 да 16 гадоў, якія часова засталіся без апекі бацькоў.

Ужо не першы год Упаўнаважаны па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў Аляксандр Румак прыязджае сюды разам з кіраўнікамі нацыянальна-культурных аб’яднанняў. Госці не толькі прывозяць дзецям салодкія падарункі, але і рыхтуюць насычаную песнямі і танцамі розных народаў праграму. Так, яскравыя нумары падрыхтавалі калектывы традыцыйнай карэйскай культуры “Арыранг”, фальклорны ансамбль армянскага танца “Эрэбуні”. Танцавальная група “Луме” прадстаўляла малдаўскую дыяспару “Дойна”, Есенія Мікуліч – Украінскае культурна-асветніцкае аб’яднанне “Ватра”, ансамбль чувашскай песні “Хамар Ял” – міжнароднае грамадскае аб’яднанне чувашоў “Атал”. А музычныя падарункі ад Міжнароднага грамадскага аб’яднання “Татара-башкірская культурная спадчына “Чышма” падрыхтавалі не толькі дарослыя артысты (фальклорны ансамбль “Лейсэн”), але і юная спявачка Сафія Лумпава.

Алена Дзядзюля

КІНАХРОНІКА ВЫЗВАЛЕННЯ

Вучоныя Цэнтра даследаванняў беларускай культуры, мовы і літаратуры Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук Беларусі плануюць разам з расійскімі калегамі даследаваць кіналетापіс вызвалення Беларусі 1943–1944 гадоў, франтавыя кінаархівы. У прыватнасці, ідэя такога праекта была агучана ў Гродне падчас пасяджэння пастаянна дзеючага семінара пры Парламенцкім Сходзе Саюза Беларусі і Расіі на тэму “Дзяржаўная палітыка ў галіне культуры ў рамках Саюзнай дзяржавы ва ўмовах геапалітычных змен: кірункі і перспектывы”.

ВЯРТАННЕ ІМЁНАЎ

У рамках маштабнага навуковага праекта, над якім ужо пяты год вядзецца праца, шмат зроблена не толькі ў плане вывучэння кіналетапісу Вялікай Айчыннай вайны, але і яго папулярызацыі. Як паведаміў вядучы навуковы супрацоўнік Рэспубліканскай лабараторыі гісторыка-культурнай спадчыны Цэнтра даследаванняў беларускай культуры, мовы і літаратуры НАН Беларусі Канстанцін Рэмішэўскі, ужо атрыбуціравана і даследавана каля 300 дакументаў, пабачылі свет манаграфіі “Врагу беспощадная лютая месть!": кинолетопись и киножурнал “Савецкая Беларусь” огненных лет (июнь 1941 – ноябрь 1945 года)” і “Франтавыя кінадакументалісты – стваральнікі кіналетапісу вызвалення Беларусі”; зроблены цыкл тэлевізійных

дакументальных фільмаў, якія прысвечаны творчасці беларускіх франтавых кінадакументалістаў. У выніку гэтай работы вывучаецца хроніка, збіраецца матэрыял пра лёсы людзей, якія стваралі летапіс вызвалення Беларусі. Сярод іх – Іосіф Вейняровіч, Міхаіл Бераў, Уладзімір Цяслюк, Уладзімір Цытрон, Атылія Рэйзман, Марыя Сухава, Міхаіл Капкін, Юліан Доўнер.

Пераважная большасць кінадакументаў, звязаных з Беларуссю, у якіх зафіксаваны ваенныя падзеі, знаходзіцца ў Расійскай Федэрацыі. Так, у Беларускім дзяржаўным архіве кінафотафонадакументаў у Дзяржынску захоўваецца толькі каля пяці працэнтаў кінахронікі вызвалення Беларусі. Беларускія вучоныя спадзяюцца, што ў 80-годдзе Перамогі супрацоўніцтва з расійскімі даследчыкамі ў галіне захавання, вывучэння і выкарыстання ваеннай кінахронікі дазволіць у тым ліку і раскрыць новыя факты, звязаныя як з ваеннай гісторыяй, так і з лёсамі аператараў, для многіх з якіх коштам кадра было жыццё.

Круглы стол “Архіў і кінадакумент: камплектаванне, вывучэнне, рэпрэзентацыя”, які прайшоў у Беларускім дзяржаўным архіве кінафотафонадакументаў і быў прымеркаваны да 100-годдзя беларускага кіно, – адно з мерапрыемстваў, дзе разглядаліся пытанні, звязаныя з захаваннем гістарычнай памяці і вяртаннем ваеннай кінахронікі. Для ўдзельнікаў сустрэчы была арганізавана экскурсія па ўстанове.

ГІСТАРЫЧНЫЯ КРЫНІЦЫ

Сёння ў дзяржынскім архіве захоўваецца самая вялікая колькасць аўдыёвізуальных дакументаў з Беларусі. Гэта найбагацейшая крыніца для вывучэння гісторыі нашай краіны пачынаючы з XIX стагоддзя!



■ Дырэктар Беларускага дзяржаўнага архіва кінафотафонадакументаў Андрэй Ганчар

Самы стары дакумент на сёння – фатаграфія 1860 года. Як заўважыў падчас круглага стала намеснік дырэктара па навуковай і інавацыйнай рабоце Цэнтра даследаванняў беларускай культуры, мовы і літаратуры Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук, доктар гістарычных навук Сяргей Віцязь: “Гэта бяспэжны фонд, трэба гаварыць аб прыданні яму статуса нацыянальнага здабытку”.

Актыўна папаўняцца аудыёвізуальнымі дакументамі архіў пачаў у пасляваенныя гады (створаны ж ён у 1941 годзе). У Дзяржынск установа пераехала ў 1986 годзе.

Сёння тут знаходзіцца больш 60 тысяч адзінак кінадакументаў, каля 300 тысяч фотадакументаў (у тым ліку негатывы і фотаальбомы), звыш 26 тысяч адзінак захоўвання фонадакументаў (грамплацінкі, магнітныя фоназапісы, дыскі), больш 8,5 тысяч відэадакументаў (гэта больш 5 тысяч найменняў відэафільмаў, тэлепрадач, тэлепраграм і сюжэтаў). І матэрыялы працягваюць паступаць. Сярод крыніц камплектавання – кінастудыя “Беларусьфільм”, Нацыянальная дзяржаўная тэлерадыёкампанія, прыватныя калекцыі.

Архіў размяшчаецца ў адзінаццаціпавярховым будынку. Агульная плошча сховішчаў складае каля 885 квадратных метраў, ступень іх загрузанасці ўжо перавысіла за 90 працэнтаў. Каб павялічыць сховішчы за кошт перапланіроўкі, а таксама замяніць камунікацыі, вядзецца вялікі капітальны рамонт з мадэрнізацыяй. Дырэктар Беларускага дзяржаўнага архіва кінафотафонадакументаў Андрэй Ганчар падзяліўся, што ў планах і стварэнне музея.

Дарэчы, нягледзячы на тое, што рамонтныя работы ўжо вядуцца, архіў працягвае працаваць. Удзельнікам канферэнцыі расказалі пра некаторыя з найбольш каштоўных дакументаў, якія тут захоўваюцца. Сярод такіх дакументальных гістарычных крыніц – матэрыялы Надзвычайнай дзяржаўнай камісіі па ўстанаўленні і расследаванні злачынстваў нямецка-фашысцкіх захопнікаў (пракаліраванне і збор сведчанняў, вяліся адразу пасля вызвалення тэрыторый). У пасляваенныя гады архіву таксама былі перададзены нямецкія трафейныя фотаальбомы. Некаторыя з іх мелі прапагандысцкі характар – здымкі для іх рабіліся на тэрыторыі Германіі. Ёсць і адзнятыя на беларускіх землях, у якіх, у тым ліку, змяшчаюцца матэрыялы аб злачынствах і разбурэннях.

Маюцца і ўнікальныя дакументы – з асабістых ці сямейных фондаў. Напрыклад, некалькі гадоў таму

быў перададзены фотаальбом сям’і Кучэўскіх, які гаспадары пачалі весці ў пачатку XX стагоддзя. Першы ўладальнік быў лётчыкам, займаўся фотасправай. Тут змешчаны фатаграфіі розных мадэляў самалётаў, фактычна – гэта цудоўная крыніца для вывучэння гісторыі авіяцыі...

КАБ ДАКУМЕНТЫ ЗАГАВАРЫЛІ...

Госці пазнаёміліся з супрацоўнікамі розных аддзелаў архіва, якія адказваюць за захаванне і рэстаўрацыю дакументаў, наведалі лабараторыі, дзе вядзецца рэстаўрацыя дакументаў. Па кожным відзе з іх патрабуюцца свае работы, большасць з якіх выконваецца ўручную.

Таксама ўдзельнікі канферэнцыі даведаліся, як адбываецца справа з алічбаваннем дакументаў і



■ Загадчык аддзела алічбавання Аляксандр Цюхай

падрыхтоўкай іх для далейшага выкарыстання. Ужо завершана праца па алічбаванні фотадакументаў, на 99 працэнтаў зроблена такая работа па фонадакументам. Дзякуючы новым тэхналогіям дакументальныя крыніцы становяцца больш даступныя для даследчыкаў: карыстальнікі могуць працаваць з лічбавымі копіямі. Пры гэтым, каб палегчыць іх работу, шмат робіцца для ўдасканалення сістэмы навукова-даведачнага апарата, развіцця аўтаматызаваных інфармацыйна-пошукавых сістэм, баз даных.

У электронныя карткі дакументаў уносяцца анатацыі і характарыстыкі дакументаў. Пошук можа весціся і па ключавых словах (напрыклад, па



прозвішчах ці падзеях). Пару гадоў таму было распачата і апісанне відэа па сегментах, каб карыстальнікі маглі хутчэй знайсці той сэнсавы адрэзак запісу, дзе знаходзіцца патрэбная яму інфармацыя.

“Дакументы, калі прыходзяць у архіў, маўчаць. Наша задача, каб яны загаварылі”, – заўважыла загадчыца аддзела дзяржаўнага ўліку і навукова-даведачнага апарата БДАКФД Марыя Раманава.



■ У лабараторыі рэстаўрацыі дакументаў

ПЕРАМОГА ЗАСТАНЕЦЦА НАШАЙ НАЗАЎСЁДЫ

Падчас круглага стала госці падзяліліся ўражаннямі. Так, доктар гістарычных навук Сяргей Віцязь адзначыў на колькі сур’ёзныя і маштабныя задачы сёння стаяць перад архівістамі: “Калі перад Акадэміяй навук стаіць заданне па вывучэнні дакументальнай спадчыны, перад Міністэрствам культуры – прадстаўленне, у вас атрымаўся інтэгральны сінтэтычны падыход, адначасова вырашаюцца пытанні і захавання, і вывучэння, і мэтавага выкарыстання”.

Адна з галоўных тэм круглага стала была звязана з развіццём сучасных форм рэпрэзентацыі экраннай спадчыны. Як заўважыў дырэктар Беларускага дзяржаўнага архіва кінафотафонадакументаў Андрэй Ганчар, дзяржава ўдзяляе вялікую ўвагу захаванню гістарычнай памяці. Архівы адыгрываюць у гэтым асаблівую ролю, сёння яны ператвараюцца ў навукова-метадычныя цэнтры.

З 2022 года архівам пад кіраўніцтвам Міністэрства юстыцыі Беларусі рэалізуюцца маштабныя праекты дзяржаўнай значнасці, накіраваныя на папулярызаванне дакументаў Нацыянальнага архіўнага фонду. Адзін з іх – “Адкрыты кінаархіў”. Гэты дзень мы набліжалі, як маглі, прысвечаны вызваленню Беларусі. У рамках гэтага праекта на аснове хранікальных дакументаў робяцца прэзентацыйныя фільмы, якія выкарыстоўваюцца ў інфармацыйных і адукацыйных мэтах. Стужкі дэманструюцца ў кінатэатрах і навучальных установах. На аснове кінахронікі ствараецца сацыяльная рэклама, якую ў тым ліку можна пабачыць у грамадскім транспарце. Сярод праектаў, якімі ганарыцца архіў, – “Без рэтушы”, “У адкрытым доступе”. Штодзень на галоўным канале краіны “Беларусь 1” выходзяць сюжэты на аснове кінахронікі, звязаныя з падзеямі, што адбываюцца ў краіне.

У круглым stole ўзяў удзел доктар мастацтвазнаўства, прафесар, член кінаакадэміі “Залаты арол”, “Ніка”, Еўразійскай акадэміі тэлебачання і радыё Валерый Фамін (Расійская Федэрацыя, Масква). Ён падзяліўся, што ўражаны і работай архіва, і тым, наколькі кінахроніка сёння запатрабавана ў беларускім грамадстве. “Калі на плёнцы захаваецца, як чырвоны сцяг уздымаецца над Рэйхстагам, Перамога застаецца нашай назаўсёды, яе ўжо не змогуць адняць ніякія заходнія гісторыкі”, – упэўнены прафесар. Дзякуючы перададзенаму раней Валерыем Фаміным аператарскаму здымачнаму мантажнаму лісту ўдалося атрымаць звесткі пра аператараў, якія ў сакавіку 1944 года рабілі сюжэт пра танкістаў на беларускім Палессі. З дапамогай гэтага дакумента ўдалося атрыбуціраваць раней неапісаны кіналетпісны матэрыял пра вызваленне Мазыра і Калінкавіч, які захоўваецца ў архіве ў Дзяржынску.

Валерый Іванавіч падзяліўся прапановамі для праектаў, якія б маглі рэалізаваць беларускія даследчыкі, і выказаў сваю гатоўнасць дапамагаць у іх рэалізацыі. Да 80-годдзя Перамогі ён гатовы перадаць матэрыялы для фотавыстаўкі ў Беларусі, прысвечаныя таму, як кінааператары здымалі вайну. Таксама ён раскажаў пра працу над пяцітомным летапісам кіно (з канца XIX стагоддзя да 90-х гадоў XX стагоддзя), частка матэрыялаў якога датычыцца ўсесаюзнай праграмы. Валерый Фамін прапанаваў калегам зрабіць падобную работу пра беларускае кіно: “Сёння трэба вывучаць гісторыю не толькі кінамастацтва, але і кінагаліны, як працавалі пракат, кінаадукацыя, мянялася вытворчасць, тэхніка. Яшчэ шмат матэрыялаў чакаюць свайго даследчыка: гэта і аўдыёвізуальныя дакументы архіваў, папкі мантажных лістоў, кніжныя і газетныя публікацыі”.

Алена Дзядзюля

“ПАЎЛІНКА” ПАЕДЗЕ Ў АЗЕРБАЙДЖАН

**Нацыянальны акадэмічны тэатр імя Янкі Купалы
і Азербайджанскі дзяржаўны акадэмічны нацыянальны драматычны тэатр
падпісалі мемарандум аб супрацоўніцтве**

Першы намеснік міністра культуры Беларусі Дзмітрый Шляхцін упэўнены, што гэта знакавая падзея, якая будзе садзейнічаць развіццю культурных сувязяў паміж Мінскам і Баку: “Мемарандум адкрывае новыя гарызонты для нашых краін. Установы прырастаць новымі праектамі”. Сапраўды, абмены вопытам ў творчым асяродзі вельмі важныя, дзякуючы гэтаму прырастае прафесіяналізм. Па словах Дзмітрыя Шляхціна, сустрэча вядучых тэатральных калектываў Беларусі і Азербайджана стане прыкладам для прадстаўнікоў іншых творчых калектываў, ва ўсялякім разе міністэрствы культуры абедзвюх краін нацэлены на доўгатэрміновае супрацоўніцтва.

Надзвычайны і Паўнамоцны пасол Азербайджана ў Беларусі Магеррам Абыш аглу Аліеў лічыць, што ў галіне культуры абедзве краіны маюць шмат агульнага: “Нягледзячы на рознасць менталітэтаў, у нас аднолькавыя каштоўнасці і разуменне таго, як выбудоўваць адносіны. Трэба сур’ёзна падумаць аб тым, чым зможам быць карысныя адзін аднаму, не баяцца выказваць ініцыятыву і ісці поруч. Азербайджанцы і беларусы падобныя сваім імкненнем да стварэння. Няма сумненняў, што культурнае ўзаемадзеянне двух тэатраў атрымаецца зладжаным і прадуктыўным”.

Абодва калектывы маюць у рэпертуары спектаклі, якія знаёмяць з культурай і традыцыямі сваіх народаў, але яны могуць быць цікавы адзін аднаму не толькі рэпертуарам. Дырэктар Азербайджанскага дзяржаўнага акадэмічнага нацыянальнага драматычнага тэатра Ільхам Аскераў заўважыў, што падпісанне мемарандуму прадугледжвае як гастролі, так і майстар-класы. Купалаўскі тэатр ужо зрабіў шыкоўны падарунак калегам з Баку – перадаў кнігу па сваёй сцэнаграфіі і дазволіў выкарыстоўваць яе ў рабоце над новымі пастаноўкамі.

Дырэктар Нацыянальнага акадэмічнага тэатра Янкі Купалы Аляксандр Шастакоў раскажаў, што знаёмства

з калегамі з Баку адбылося ў Піцеры, там жа і іўзнікла ідэя аб развіцці партнёрскіх праектаў. Прадстаўнікі вядучага азербайджанскага тэатра былі запрошаны ў Мінск. Госці на працягу тыдня наведвалі спектаклі Купалаўскага тэатра, дзяліліся з калегамі сваімі назіраннямі. Для беларускага боку, напрыклад, стала адкрыццём, што ў Азербайджане запатрабаваны кароткія спектаклі, беларускі ж глядач можа і не заўважыць, як праляцелі дзве гадзіны, напрыклад, калі

Лізавета Іопад



прыходзіць на спектакль “Дзядзюшкін сон”, ці нават тры, як, напрыклад, пры праглядзе пастаноўкі “А зоры тут ціхія”. Ужо ў сакавіку купалаўцы плануюць наведаць Азербайджан. У Баку найперш плануецца прадставіць “Паўлінку” – візітную картку Купалаўскага тэатра. Прынамсі, пяць гадоў таму гэты спектакль атрымаў статус нематэрыяльнай гісторыка-культурнай каштоўнасці Рэспублікі Беларусь. Купалаўцы хочуць таксама прадставіць у Баку “Чорную панну Нясвіжа”, трагікамедыю “Вечар” па п’есе Аляксея Дударова, “Пісаравы імяніны», “Двор майго дзяцінства”.

Таццяна Бузіноўская

НА ШЛЯХУ ДА ВЕРЫ

У 2025 годзе студзень прысвечаны рэлігійнаму турызму

На гэты час прыпадае вялікая колькасць свят. З мэтай папулярызацыі такога кірунку ва ўсіх абласцях Беларусі праводзіліся прэзентацыі, круглыя сталы, фестывалі, святочныя канцэрты і кірмашы, семінары, бясплатныя экскурсіі да святынь для састарэлых, спартыўныя мерапрыемствы (так, на Вадохрышча адбылося спаборніцтва па зімнім плаванні – Кубак Садружнасці Незалежных Дзяржаў “Полацкая купель”). План гэтых мерапрыемстваў зацверджаны рабочай групай па развіцці рэлігійнага турызму на чале з Упаўнаважаным па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў.

Насычаным на падзеі і мерапрыемствы, якія знаёмяць са святынямі, быў не толькі месяц рэлігійнага турызму, але стане і ўвесь гэты год. На яго прыпадаюць 555-годдзе абраза Жыровіцкай Божай маці. 505 гадоў споўніцца Жыровіцкаму манастыру. 100-годзе адзначыць Пінская епархія Рымска-каталіцкай царквы, 125-годдзе – Гродзенская, 1020-годдзе – Тураўская.

Найбольш ярскія ўрачыстасці звязаны з 900-годдзем Свята-Еўфрасіннеўскага жаночага манастыра. Прычым, мерапрыемствы, прысвечаныя гэтай святыні будуць праходзіць не толькі ў Полацку, але і па ўсёй Беларусі. Сярод іх – навукова-практычныя канферэнцыі, выстаўкі, конкурсы навуковых і творчых работ.

Як паведаміла падчас канферэнцыі ў Нацыянальным прэс-цэнтры кансультант аддзела планавання і

арганізацыі турысцкай дзейнасці Дэпартамента па турызме Міністэрства спорту і турызма Рэспублікі Беларусь Дар’я Шыбека, сёння каля 1400 рэлігійных аб’ектаў уключаны ў турыстычныя маршруты і экскурсіі. Цікава, да культурнай і духоўнай спадчыны настолькі вялікая, што каля 85 працэнтаў з усіх распрацаваных маршрутаў не абыходзяцца без наведвання храмаў.

Шмат робіцца для аднаўлення святыняў. Так, вядзецца рэканструкцыя Свята-Успенскага Жыровіцкага манастыра і Спаса-Еўфрасіннеўскага манастыра ў Полацку. У канцы 2024 года пасля рэстаўрацыі адчынілася Валожынская іешыва. У ёй размешчана музейная экспазіцыя (філіял валожынскага краязнаўчага музея), створаны прасторы для правядзення брыфінгаў, выставак, канферэнцый, нават працуе міні-гасцініца.

Наладжваецца ўзаемадзеянне паміж святарамі, прадстаўнікамі мясцовых органаў улады і турыстычнай галіны. Ярскі прыклад тагога ўзаемадзеяння – праект турыстычна-інфармацыйнага цэнтру Навагрудка і прыхода касцёла Святога Архангела Міхаіла – Начная містэрыя “Дамініканцы Навагрудка”. Гэта экскурсія адмыслова праводзіцца ў вячэрні час, каб стварыць пэўную атмасферу для знаёмства турыстаў з мясцовымі тайнамі.

Намеснік упаўнаважанага па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў Сяргей Герасіменя заўважае, што ў Беларусі працягваюць узводзіцца новыя святыні,

Ужо пабудавана 2871 культавы аб’ект і яшчэ 184 узводзяцца. Многія з іх актыўна працуюць з турыстамі. Напрыклад, у Мінску гэта Усіхсвяцкі храм, Саборная мячэць, Армянская апостальская царква.

Усё актыўней аб’екты рэлігійнага турызму рэкламуюцца ў рамках рэспубліканскага конкурсу “Пазнай Беларусь”. Сярод пераможцаў, абвешчаных ў канцы мінулага года, – Царква Святога Архангела Міхаіла ў вёсцы Сынкавічы. Настаяцель гэтага храма протаіерэй Арсеній Ананка раскажа, што да гэтага часу з



■ Свята-Мікольскі жаночы манастыр, г. Магілёў

храмам-крэпасцю звязана шмат пытанняў, на якія яшчэ трэба знайсці адказы. Напрыклад, чаму святыня ўзведзена ў такім месцы, колькі ёй гадоў. Сюды не ходзяць аўтобусы, людзі павінны самі знайсці дарогу сярод поля і леса. Часта, калі яны трапляюць у храм, прызнаюцца, што адчуваюць незвычайныя пачуцці: не хочацца пакідаць гэтыя мясціны. У храме ў Сынкавічах знаходзіцца адзін з цудатворных абразоў – Божай Маці Усецарыцы. Яму моляцца людзі, якія маюць цяжкія хваробы. Таму сюды едуць турысты і паломнікі з розных куткоў свету.

Сёння Гродзенская епархія шукае новыя формы работы з вернікамі. Запатрабаванымі сталі злёты моладзі, экалагічныя акцыі. Так у Сынкавічах была высаджана кедровая алея – у памяць пра вёскі і жахароў, спаленых карнікамі ў гады Вялікай Айчыннай вайны. Мерапрыемства, да якога актыўна далучаліся школьнікі, было прысвечана 80-годдзю вызвалення.

Адным з лепшых аб'ектаў рэлігійнага турызму стаў Кафедральны касцёл Узнясення Прасвятой Дзевы Марыі ў Пінску. Настаяцель храма ксёндз Андрэй Рылко раскажаў, што запатрабаваным ў турыстаў храм стаў яшчэ 40 гадоў таму, калі дзякуючы намаганням тагачаснага настояцеля, а пасля кардынала Казіміра Свёнтака тут былі праведзены рэстаўрацыйныя работы. Унікальны арган касцёла наогул стаў адным з брэндаў Пінска. Тут ужо чатыры гады праводзяцца фестывалі арганнай музыкі. Толькі за мінулы год адбылося 59 вялікіх канцэртаў духоўнай музыкі, паслухаць якія прыбыло каля 80 тысяч гасцей. І гэта без уліку экскурсійных груп і індыўідуальных турыстаў, якія наведаль касцёл.

У манастыры летась зрабілі сюрпрыз для вернікаў і турыстаў – пастараліся сумясціць арганную музыку з паказам нямога кіно. Так была “агучана” адна са старэйшых стужак, створаных у Італіі, прысвечаная жыццю Святога Францыска.

Лаўрэатам конкурса “Пазнай Беларусь” стаў Свята-Елісавецкі манастыр Мінскай епархіі Беларускай Праваслаўнай Царквы. Нягледзячы на тое, што гэтаму духоўнаму цэнтру ўсяго 25 гадоў, сёння ён

робіць вялікі ўнёсак у захаванне традыцыйных духоўных каштоўнасцяў. Экскурсіі – толькі адна з формаў работы ў гэтым кірунку. Дарэчы, манахіні іх тут могуць праводзіць на розных мовах, у тым ліку на французскай, нямецкай, іспанскай, сербскай. За мінулы год толькі ў складзе вялікіх экскурсійных груп тут пабывала больш 10 за тысяч турыстаў. Сярод іх – госці з Расіі, Прыбалтыкі,

Францыі, Германіі, Нідэрландаў, Бельгіі, Ірландыі, Грузіі, Кубы, Конга, Марока Шры-Ланкі, Нігерыі.

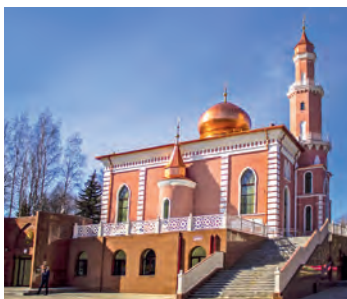
Сёння Свята-Елісавецкі манастыр уключае дзесяць храмаў, духоўна-асветніцкі цэнтр “Каўчэг”. У апошнім ёсць тэатральныя залы і кіназалы, канцэртная пляцоўка на 800 чалавек. Тут праводзяцца сустрэчы са святамі, псіхалагамі, прадстаўнікамі галіны культуры, абмяркоўваюцца фільмы пасля іх праглядаў, актыўна вядзецца работа з сем’ямі, створана дзіцячая група “Арляты”, якая праводзіць спартыўныя мерапрыемствы. Храм мае свой падворак і шэраг майстэрняў, дзе ў тым ліку працуюць людзі, якія патрапілі ў складаныя жыццёвыя абставіны. “Галоўная наша мэта – дапамагчы людзям знайсці шлях да Бога”, – заўважыў супрацоўнік паломніцкай службы Свята-Елісавецкага манастыра Уладзімір Чурбакоў.

Месяц рэлігійнага турызму стаў і часам прэзентацый рэлігійных маршрутаў. Так, Гомельшчына прэзентавала тры маршруты для індыўідуальных турыстаў “Мазыр – Пеніца – Юравічы”, “Жыткавічы – Тураў”, “Іаан Гашкевіч – святы зямлі беларускай”. Сярод аб’ектаў рэлігійнага турызму, якія ўвайшлі ў топ-5 аб’ектаў рэлігійнага турызму Гомельшчыны, – Свята-Мікольскі мужчынскі манастыр і Свята-Пятра-Паўлаўскі кафедральны сабор – у абласным цэнтры, Свята-

Іаана-Кармянскі манастыр – у Добрушскім раёне, Кафедральны сабор святых Кірыла і Лаўрэнція Тураўскіх – у Тураве; касцёл Божай Маці Царыцы свету – у Жлобіне.

Падабраць маршруты і пазнаёміцца са спісам аб’ектаў духоўнай спадчыны можна на сайце Нацыянальнага агенцтва па турызме.

Алена **Дзядзюля**



- Царква Успення Прасвятой Багародзіцы, в. Сар'я
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САКРЭТЫ СВЯТОЧНЫХ ТРАДЫЦЫЙ

“Колькі я ў прафесіі, столькі адчуваю ўдзячнасць вясковым людзям, якія падчас экспедыцый дзяліліся сваімі ведамі, каштоўнасць якіх часцей за ўсё не ўяўлялі”, – прызналася ў сваёй кнізе “Святочны час: Народныя звычаі і павер’і ў аповедах беларусаў” этнолаг Таццяна Кухаронак. Усё сваё жыццё яна прысвяціла вывучэнню народных традыцый, даследаванню эвалюцыі каляндарнай і сямейнай абраднасці.

Яна была ў калектыве аўтараў шматтомнага выдання “Беларусы”, адзначанага ў 2008 годзе прэміяй Прэзідэнта “За духоўнае адраджэнне”. У 2022 годзе стала лаўрэатам прэміі Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук за комплекс работ “Народна-паэтычная спадчына як крыніца развіцця маральнай свядомасці і патрыятызму”. Але бадай адным з яе галоўных дасягненняў можна лічыць унёсак у адраджэнне традыцый.

Таццяну Кухаронак называюць хроснай маці “Калядных цароў” – дзякуючы яе намаганням гэты абрад вёскі Семежава ўвайшоў у Спіс сусветнай нематэрыяльнай культурнай спадчыны ЮНЕСКА. У шматлікіх экспедыцыях навуковец не толькі старанна збірала інфармацыю пра традыцыі, што, як здавалася, адыходзілі ў нябыт. Менавіта ў сваіх кнігах і артыкулах яна расшыфроўвала значэнне і значнасць народных традыцый, паказвала, якія каштоўнасці народ перадаваў праз абрады, святы, абуджала цікавасць да пошуку каранёў, вывучэння культуры, натхняла... І дзіўна – у XXI стагоддзі, калі ўжо няма ранейшага ўкладу (побыту, вялікіх сем’яў), у гарадах і вёсках зноў з’явіліся калядоўшчыкі і валачобнікі, абудзілася цікавасць да рамёстваў, а Рэспубліканскі спіс нематэрыяльных каштоўнасцяў з кожным годам працягвае папаўняцца. Установы культуры, бібліятэкі, музеі збіраюць усё больш гасцей на мерапрыемствах, звязаных з каляндарнымі святамі.

Што не можа не цешыць: з народнымі традыцыямі ў розных гуртках школ і ўстановаў дадатковай адукацыі знаёмяцца дзеці. А значыць традыцыі быць.

Удзельнікі адной з творчых стажыровак для беларусаў замежжа, якая праходзіла ў Мінску, ужо змаглі пазнаёміцца з новай кнігай Таццяны Кухаронак “Святочны час. Народныя звычаі і павер’і ў аповедах беларусаў”. Яны атрымалі яе ў падарунак ад Апарата ўпаўнаважанага па справах рэлігій і нацыянальнасцяў як дапаможнік, які будзе карысным у іх рабоце.

Даследаванне гэта не зусім звычайнае. Як заўважыла аўтар падчас прэзентацыі кнігі, галоўнымі героямі



■ “Калядныя цары” у Семежава

кнігі сталі простыя вяскоўцы, з якімі яна сустракалася ў экспедыцыях за апошнія 20 гадоў, – для кнігі адабраны ўспаміны 232 інфармантаў з 67 раёнаў усіх абласцей Беларусі. Пераважна гэта былі жанчыны 1920–1950 гадоў. Дзякуючы іх успамінам можна “перанесціся” ў пасляваенную вёску, даведацца як пра традыцыі, так і пра тое, як жылі людзі, у што верылі. Тут нават можна знайсці аповеды пра здарэнні, звязаныя са святочным часам. Незвычайная ў кнізе і форма падачы матэрыялу – гэта не апісанне народнага календара, успаміны вяскоўцаў падабраны так, каб расшыфраваць той “код продкаў”, які быў закладзены ў рытуальныя дзеянні.

“Свята – адно з галоўных паняццяў народнага календара. Незвычайны сакральны час, які супрацьпастаўляецца паўсядзёнасці”, – патлумачыла Таццяна Кухаронак. Паводле народных уяўленняў, часова аб’ядноўваліся гэты свет (дзе існавала пэўная сістэма сацыяльных адносін, каштоўнасцяў) і той свет (дзе знаходзіліся звышнатуральныя сілы, духі, міфічныя істоты, памерлыя продкі). Толькі ў пэўныя дні (да якіх прымеркаваны святы) парушалася мяжа паміж імі, і гэта ішло яшчэ з часоў дахрысціянскага светапогляду.

Кожнае свята сімвалізуе сабой пачатак новага жыцця. Адсюль і многія яго атрыбуты: ежа, святочнае адзенне, паводзіны, тэатральныя дзеіствы. Нават у падрыхтоўцы да ўрачыстасцяў былі схаваны пэўныя сэнсы. Навядзенне парадку ў хаце, чысціні, выраб новых саламяных павукоў ці іншых святочных атрыбутаў – своеасаблівае аднаўленне свету. Прычым лічылася, што ўсё старое, напрыклад, тыя ж саламяныя вырабы ці лісце на Сёмуху, нельга было выкідаць. Інфарманты казалі, што як спаліш, то дымам яно пойдзе да Бога. Людзі клапаціліся і пра чысціню цела і душы. Даследчыкі заўважылі, што святы ў беларусаў трэба яшчэ было заслужыць, нават “выпакутаваць”. Перад многімі з іх ішлі пасты. Напрыклад, жанчына з вёскі Будагова Смалявіцкага раёна расказвала, што праз сем дзён посту “здавалася, ужо чакаеш Пасху, як усё роўна Бог прыйдзе з неба”. Калі ж напярэдадні Вялікадня гаспадыні пачыналі гатаваць мяса ды пірагі, колькі было радасці ў іх вялікіх сем’ях!

Са святамі былі звязаны і пэўныя прадпісанні, забароны. У такія дні нельга было працаваць, а парусальнікаў чакалі пакаранні. Маўляў, само Свята ці



■ Калядны вечар у музеі гісторыі літаратуры

пэўныя святыя пакараюць, за тое, што іх не ўшанавалі... Наведванне царквы ці касцёла было адным з абавязковых святочных кампанентаў. Частка матэрыялаў, змешчаных у кнізе, паказвае, як людзі імкнуліся выконваць гэта нават у савецкі перыяд, нягледзячы на забароны “на рэлігію”, на “прафілактычныя” гутаркі ў школах, дзяжурствы прадстаўнікоў улады каля царквы, асабліва на Раство і Вялікдзень. Некаторыя традыцыйныя святы маглі ўключаць рытуальныя свавольствы і шкоды, варажбу. Нецяжка заўважыць, што ў народным календары такія дні мелі і свае адметныя вобразы, сімвалы (як папараць на Купалле, фарбаваныя яйкі на Вялікдзень, галінкі на Вербніцу).

Падчас экспедыцый вяскоўцы дзяліліся з даследчыкамі, што пасля вайны ўсе рады былі, што жывыя засталіся. Дзень працавалі ў калгасах, а ўвечары ішлі на танцы. Часам і апануць не было чаго. Мылі тую вопратку, у якой вярталіся з працы, і бывала нават у мокрай беглі на вячоркі, маўляў, на цэле дасохне...

Таццяна Кухаронак заўважыла, што амаль у кожным апаведзе людзі падкрэслівалі, што раней жылі весела, а цяпер гэтай радасці ўжо няма. Сабраныя ёй у экспедыцыях запісы захоўваюць яшчэ і эмоцыі. “Людзі з любоўю ўзгадвалі мінулае, бацькоў. Гэтыя добрыя пачуцці застануцца ў гэтых апаведках”, – заўважыла Таццяна Кухаронак. Для чытачоў, асабліва прадстаўнікоў старэйшага пакалення, выхадцаў з вёскі, гэта цудоўная магчымасць вярнуцца ў сваё маленства і маладосць.

Таццяна **Бузіноўская**
Фота БелТА

ЗДАБЫТКІ “ЗАЛАТОГА ДЗЕСЯЦІГОДДЗЯ”

100 гадоў таму пры Інстытуце беларускай культуры было створана Цэнтральнае бюро краязнаўства. Гэта быў першы навуковы цэнтр у нашай рэспубліцы, які адказваў за разгортванне даследаванняў ў самых розных кірунках.

Дзякуючы падтрымцы вучоных, якія ажыццяўлялі метадычнае кіраванне, давалі парады і складалі інструкцыі па зборы культурных здабыткаў, фальклору, адказвалі за выхад спецыялізаванага выдання “Наш край”, краязнаўчы рух імкліва развіваўся. Па ўсёй рэспубліцы ствараліся раённыя, акруговыя таварыствы, гурткі пры школах, даследчыя цэнтры пры ВНУ. Так да 1929 года, калі праводзілася другая краязнаўчая канферэнцыя, колькасць членаў такіх арганізацый ў Беларусі дасягнула дзесяці з паловай тысяч чалавек (для параўнання: па ўсім Савецкім Саюзе ў той час агульная лічба краязнаўцаў была ў 50 тысяч). Краязнаўцы актыўна далучаліся да дзейнасці па зборы матэрыялаў жывой беларускай мовы, звестак пра метэаралагічныя з’явы, сельскія промыслы і хатнія рамёствы, да рэгістрацыі помнікаў археалогіі, гісторыі і культуры. Яны збіралі калекцыі раслін, вывучалі глебы, стваралі эканамічныя карты раёнаў. Пры гэтым дакладна размяжоўваліся функцыі краязнаўцаў і прафесійных вучоных. Так, першым давяраўся збор звестак, а іх апрацоўка была справай спецыялістаў. Такая магутная падтрымка на месцах спрыяла развіццю розных кірункаў навуковых даследаванняў. Той перыяд становлення і росквіту арганізаванага краязнаўства ў гісторыяграфіі прынята называць “Залатым дзесяцігоддзем”.

Менавіта папярэднікам і стагоддзю Цэнтральнага бюро краязнаўства была прысвечана навуковая канферэнцыя, арганізатарамі якой выступілі Інстытут гісторыі, Цэнтр даследаванняў беларускай



■ Старшыня Прэзідыума Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук Уладзімір Гусакоў вітае ўдзельнікаў канферэнцыі

культуры мовы і літаратуры і Аб’яднаная галіновая прафсаюзная арганізацыя работнікаў НАН. Яна сабрала больш за 120 удзельнікаў: акадэмічных вучоных, выкладчыкаў, супрацоўнікаў музеяў і бібліятэк, краязнаўцаў, студэнтаў і школьнікаў. Падчас канферэнцыі працавалі тэматычныя выстаўкі архіўных дакументаў і кніжных выданняў з фондаў Цэнтральнага навуковага архіва НАН і Цэнтральнай навуковай бібліятэкі імя Якуба Коласа.

Звяртаючыся да ўдзельнікаў канферэнцыі “Гістарычнае краязнаўства Беларусі: вопыт, праблемы і перспектывы развіцця”, старшыня Прэзідыума Нацыянальнай акадэміі навук Уладзімір Гусакоў заўважыў, што ў 1920-я гады Інстытут беларускай

культуры адначасова з'яўляўся і навукова-даследчай, і культурна-грамадскай установай, а праца Цэнтральнага бюро краязнаўства спрыяла культурнаму і нацыянальнаму будаўніцтву маладой краіны. Ён заўважыў, што і ў сучаснай Беларусі роля краязнаўцаў вельмі важная: “Традыцыйныя каштоўнасці, правяраныя часам духоўная і матэрыяльная культуры ляжаць у аснове дабрабыту дзяржавы”. На гэта накіравана і дзяржаўная палітыка, у краіне вялікая ўвага надаецца развіццю рэгіёнаў, шмат было зроблена ў гады Малой радзімы, Гістарычнай памяці, Народнага адзінства.

Сёння вучоныя на новым узроўні працягваюць справу папярэднікаў. Дзякуючы беларускім мовазнаўцам выдадзены 37-томны гістарычны слоўнік – аналагаў такога выдання няма ні ў кога з нашых суседзяў. У фундаментальнай працы выкладзена 75 тысяч слоў, зафіксаваных у літаратурных помніках XIV–VIII стагоддзяў. У гістарычным слоўніку прадстаўлена лексіка Францыска Скарыны, Сымона Буднага, Іпація Пацея. Як заўважыў акадэмік-сакратар АДДзялення гуманітарных навук і мастацтваў НАН Беларусі Аляксандр Каваленя, сёння можна назваць каля сотні выданняў, якія атрымалі шырокае прызнанне айчынай і замежнай грамадскасці, не маюць аналагаў і з'яўляюцца гонарам нашай краіны. Сярод іх – фундаментальнае чатырохтомнае выданне “Вялікі гістарычны атлас Беларусі. У ім больш за 400 карт Беларусі, якія знаёмяць з гістарычнымі і сучаснымі назвамі ўсіх населеных пунктаў, таксама ён змяшчае першыя ўзгадкі пра іх, варыянты



змяненняў назвы. На дзяржаўным узроўні была адзначана праца вучоных над шматтомным навукова-энцыклапедычным выданнем “Гарады і вёскі Беларусі”. У гэтым шматтомніку ўпершыню ў айчынай навуцы адлюстраваны асноўныя звесткі аб гістарычным, сацыяльна-эканамічным і культурным развіцці ўсіх гарадоў, пасёлкаў гарадскога тыпу, вёсак, аграгарадкоў з часу іх заснавання і да нашых дзён.

Як падзяліўся дырэктар Цэнтра даследаванняў беларускай культуры мовы і літаратуры Аляксандр Лакотка, акадэмічнымі вучонымі сабрана ўнікальная калекцыя фальклорных запісаў, народных





песень, вершаў, балад, паданняў, звестак пра традыцыйную культуру. Яна налічвае больш за 4 тысячы тэкставых і 70 тысяч гукавых запісаў фальклору з усіх рэгіёнаў Беларусі і ўключана ў дзяржаўны рэестр аб'ектаў, што складаюць навуковы здабытак. Калекцыя твораў мастацтва і прадметаў этнаграфіі, таксама прызнаная нацыянальным здабыткам,

складае больш за 12 тысяч адзінак захоўвання прадметаў, сабраных з усёй тэрыторыі Беларусі. Дзякуючы рабоце цэнтра зроблены вялікі ўнёсак у рэалізацыю дзяржаўнай праграмы адраджэння тэхналогіі традыцый вырабу слупкіх паясоў і развіцця вытворчасці нацыянальнай сувенірнай прадукцыі.

Пры ўдзеле супрацоўнікаў Інстытута мовазнаўства ажыццяўлялася падрыхтоўка да выдання факсімільнага помніка беларускага пісьменства, такіх як “Жыцце Ефрасінні Полацкай”, буквар Спірыдона Собаля, Баркалабаўскі летапіс. Вучоныя Інстытута гісторыі за апошнія 30 гадоў напісалі шмат прац па рэгіянальнай гісторыі Беларусі. Асабліва ўвага ўдзяляецца арганізацыі і правядзенню рэгіянальных канферэнцый у партнёрстве з мясцовымі органамі ўлады і краязнаўчымі музеямі. Гісторыка-краязнаўчыя форумы прайшлі ў Оршы, Браславе, Шуміліна, Расонах, Глыбокім, Лепелі, Лідзе, Ашмянах, Карэлічах, Шклове, Стоўбцах, Бешанковічах і іншых гарадах. Такія форумы садзейнічаюць папулярызацыі малавядомых старонак гісторыі, па выніках друкуюцца зборнікі серыі “Беларусь праз прызму рэгіянальнай гісторыі”.

Яўген **Кручкоў**
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Silhouettes-symbols in the capital's park near the embankment of Svisloch

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