

People play most important role at High-Tech Park innovative complex

Five years ago, the President signed a Decree 'On the High-Tech Park', envisaging a range of privileges and preferences for companies involved in software manufacture. The document deterred talented technician scientists from leaving the country in search of work, while bringing programming to the fore and promoting a fully-fledged IT industry. Unlike other industries, IT needs few materials and little energy, since intellect is its most vital element.

By Vladimir Vasiliev



Alexander Lukashenko talks to a young programmer from the High-Tech Park

Alexander Lukashenko began his tour of the High-Tech Park by viewing the construction site. Although dozens of programmers are currently working in the HTP office building in 1 Kuprevich Street, the President was very strict in analysing the construction of new HTP buildings. The interests of investors, customers and a whole range of state authorities are involved, making the issue a very complicated one, but the President urges that the site be complete by January 1st, 2014.

It will be a challenge, but HTP General Director Valery Tsepkalo is confident that construction will be finished by the stipulated date.

The most important part of the visit was the Belarusian President's personal acquaintance with the 'creative laboratory' and those who are currently promoting the IT industry in the country. It was interesting to see the advanced programmers' behaviour: friendly, yet not ingratiating, free and

relaxed while being respectful. All are clever, competent and serious. I couldn't help but think of them as 'engineers of the future', having recently seen them as cheerful students at the Belarusian State University's neighbouring departments. I was pleased to see their serious professional growth. The President's fondness for these young and creative programmers was apparent; many already have an excellent reputation in professional circles.

The Head of State was primarily interested in the technical aspects of their creative activity, but also showed eagerness to learn more about their personal lives and prospects. The dialogue was interesting and we may assume that Mr. Lukashenko was satisfied with his conversations with the programmers. These are the people who will determine the trends of our economy and our country's reputation in the dynamically developing world of

IT technologies. The Park is like an incubator, ever expanding its successful role in training qualified and advanced specialists.

Mr. Lukashenko spent time chatting with the heads of HTP resident companies, listening to their concerns, as well as their wishes and suggestions. The Chairman of EPAM Systems' Board of Directors, Arkady Dobkin, noted that he is more concerned about people than buildings, since it's not easy to find a qualified programmer. "We currently have 200 vacancies in our company," he complained. Mr. Tsepkalo noted that this is a system-wide problem, since our universities continue to train many economists, lawyers and accountants, although engineering programmers are more in demand. Isn't it time we master the spirit of the time? Belarus' First Deputy Prime Minister, Vladimir Semashko, explained that the Education Ministry is likely to increase the number of places for technical specialities next year. Mr. Lukashenko believes this to be a sensible move and promised, "We'll increase the number of people trained for the HTP, to meet your needs." He assured the HTP residents that the state will continue creating favourable conditions for IT business in future.

The MT's reference:

Last year, HTP residents developed \$110m of software for export, with \$94.4m developed in the first nine months of this year.

Diverse issues under discussion

Belarus' Foreign Minister, Sergei Martynov, negotiates with the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Daniel Russell, in Minsk

On the agenda was the development of Belarusian-American relations and bilateral interaction in areas of mutual interest, alongside the normalisation of political relations and the expansion of co-operation in the fields of international security and counteracting human trafficking. The political election campaigns of the two countries were also a talking point.

"We're trying to achieve a great deal in a limited period of time," Mr. Russell stressed, speaking of his short visit to Minsk, at a press meeting at the American Embassy. The guest from Washington met representatives of political parties and civil societies in Minsk.



Final results match hopes



Interested people attend Frankfurt-am-Main Forum

By Vitaly Volyanyuk

President Alexander Lukashenko notes that 'all spheres of the Belarusian economy are open for investment' on addressing the Belarusian Investment Forum, giving clear signal to foreign investors that we welcome their capital and are ready to ensure its safe protection and every possible support

The first Belarusian Investment Forum in London coincided with the height of the global crisis. Meanwhile,

this year's event in Frankfurt-am-Main has been organised just as Europe and the rest of the world is overcoming the recession. More financial resources are now available, bringing a greater likelihood of concrete results.

During the Forum's opening, Prime Minister Sergei Sidorsky explained in detail why it is profitable to invest in Belarus: our high pace of GDP growth, successful overcoming of the crisis, a stable banking system and an advantageous transit position. Special emphasis was placed on the Customs Union of Be-

larus, Kazakhstan and Russia, which is aiding transit transportation volumes and other possibilities. Moreover, legislation is being prepared to establish a single economic space from January 2012.

Klaus Mangold, Chairman of the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations, believes that it's worth investing into Belarus. Those in Germany believe plans for the country's economic development are ambitious.

Over 800 representatives from 36 countries took part in the Belarusian Investment Forum, representing over 160 investment projects, worth over \$14bn. Pleasingly, 22 agreements and protocols on intentions were signed at the Forum in Frankfurt-am-Main, worth \$2.7bn. According to Mr. Sidorsky, these refer to the development of the Belarusian economy — with the participation of German capital and with money from other EU states.

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