

## Congratulations

The President of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, has congratulated Alexander Lukashenko on his re-election as the President of the Republic of Belarus.



His letter of congratulation reads: 'I wish you success and, to the brotherly Belarusian people, I wish peace and prosperity.'

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The Chairman of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, on behalf of the Government of China, of the Chinese nation and of himself, has congratulated Alexander Lukashenko on winning the presidential elections, writing: 'China and Belarus are good friends and partners. Our states have a very high level of political trust and strong mutual support in all key matters of common interest. Equal co-operation in trade, economics, science, technology, military, humanitarian and other spheres has been increasingly fruitful. We interact

and co-operate closely on settling international and regional problems, with a view to protecting the common interests of our two states.'

Hu Jintao appreciates Alexander Lukashenko's considerable personal contribution toward the progress of Chinese-Belarusian relations, stressing: 'China attaches great importance to relations with Belarus and is prepared to work closely, investing a great deal of effort into supporting continuous progress of bilateral co-operation.'



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The President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chávez, and the President of Georgia, Mikhail Saakashvili, also sent their congratulations to the Belarusian President.

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President Abdullah Gül of Turkey has congratulated Alexander Lukash-

enko on his re-election as the President of the Republic of Belarus, writing: 'It is my sincere belief that friendly relations between our countries and people will continue to expand further'. Mr. Gül wishes Mr. Lukashenko good health and happiness and hopes for prosperity and well-being for the people of Belarus.

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Alexander Lukashenko has been congratulated on winning the presidential elections by the Leader of the Great Al-Fateh Revolution, Muammar Gaddafi, as well as by the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the President of the Palestinian National Authority — Mahmoud Abbas. Other heads of state also sent their congratulations.

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Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov has expressed his conviction that traditionally friendly relations between our countries and mutually beneficial co-operation will continue to expand and strengthen.

## India remains a priority partner

By Galina Shirokova

**President Alexander Lukashenko announces interest in strengthening Belarusian-Indian ties on meeting Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of India to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Ramesh Chander, as he completes his diplomatic mission**

The meeting was the first by the Head of State following the elections, although

such meetings with ambassadors — who have done much for the development of inter-state relations — are traditional.

The President praised the work of Mr. Chander in Belarus saying, "You've done much for Belarusian-Indian relations. Via your personal contribution, many Indian companies have invested in Belarus. We are setting up joint ventures in India in the most important spheres: primarily, machine building."

Mr. Lukashenko also noted the

significant growth of Belarusian-Indian turnover last year (which exceeded \$0.5bn). The President sees this as a good result, especially taking the global crisis into consideration. Mr. Lukashenko stressed, "When we were reproached on our isolation, I used to say: 'we have ties with such large states as India.'"

The President noted that Belarus is interested in developing relations with India and is confident that Mr. Chander will continue contributing to this.

## Cultural wealth should become more accessible

Government adopts 2011-2015 *Culture of Belarus* state programme

By Mikhail Groshev

The programme aims to enhance the social and economic efficiency of the cultural sphere, with the major accent placed on innovation. A system is to be set up to stimulate extra-budgetary funds for cultural projects. These include the Republican *Patron of Culture* Contest, as well as the establishment of trustee boards for the most significant cultural institutions, and information support for patrons. Additionally, funds are to be directed towards the restoration of landmarks, such as the castles of Lida, Golshany and Novogrudok.

A National Electronic Library is planned, to supplement that dedicated to Frantsisk Skorina — Belarusian and Eastern Slavonic First Book Printer and the Radziviliana electronic libraries. State museums and libraries are being completely computerised, with new concepts generated for the State Museum of Great Patriotic War History and the National History Museum. A 'Museums of Belarus' website is also to be launched.

A national museum festival — *Inter-Museum-Belarus* — is being launched, as is the *National Theatre Award* and *National Musical Award for Pop Art* (annual competitions). Scientific research is to be conducted to determine



Museum complex in Nesvizh is Belarusian cultural treasure

further strategies for cultural development.

Additionally, four cultural centres are to open abroad and the *Belarusians Worldwide* governmental programme is to be developed and realised. Special programmes for the training and internship of Belarusian university stu-

dents abroad are also planned.

According to the Culture Ministry, the implementation of the programme will help promote the accessibility of our cultural wealth — allowing rural and urban residents wider opportunities to enjoy our treasures — while educating others about our culture.

## Belarus' Central Commission for Elections and National Referenda reports on results of elections for President of Republic of Belarus

**On December 24th, 2010, the Central Commission for Elections and National Referenda — after studying the data collated by regional and Minsk city commissions — defined the following presidential election results**

The total number of voters in the Republic of Belarus was 7,105,660, with 6,444,776 attending polling stations. In line with Part 3 of Article 79 of Belarus' Election Code, the elections have been acknowledged to have taken place, since 6,441,031 people cast their ballot (90.65 percent of the total number of voters).

According to Part 4 of Article 79 of Belarus' Election Code, Alexander Lukashenko was elected the President of the Republic of Belarus, receiving 5,130,557 votes — or 79.65 percent (chosen by more than half of eligible Belarusian voters).

Other candidates saw the following results:

Grigory Kostusev: 126,999 votes — or 1.97 percent of voters;

Alexei Mikhalevich: 65,748 votes — or 1.02 percent;

Vladimir Neklyayev: 114,581 votes — or 1.78 percent;

Yaroslav Romanchuk: 127,281 votes — or 1.98 percent;

Vitaly Rymashevsky: 70,515 votes — or 1.09 percent;

Andrei Sannikov: 156,419 votes — or 2.43 percent;

Nikolai Statkevich: 67,583 votes — or 1.05 percent;

Viktor Tereshchenko: 76,764 votes — or 1.19 percent; and

Dmitry Uss: 25,117 votes — or 0.39 percent.

416,925 Belarusians — or 6.47 percent of voters — supported none of the candidates.

62,542 (0.97 percent) of ballots were invalid.

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