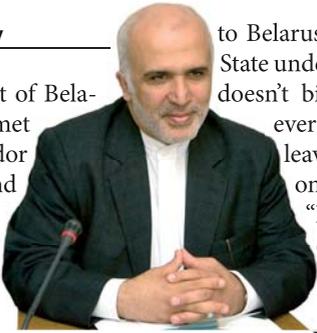


Ambassador leaves in good mood

Belarus hopes to continue expanding economic collaboration with Iran, with new results achieved

By Denis Krymov

The President of Belarus has recently met the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Seyyed Abdollah Hosseini. On accepting the diplomat on his completion of his diplomatic mission



to Belarus, the Head of State underlined that he doesn't bid farewell to every ambassador leaving Minsk — only to friends. "I don't conceal this and I'd like to say that it's very sad to part with friends," noted Mr. Lukashenko. He also passed the warmest wishes to the Presi-

dent and spiritual leader of Iran.

"As far as our political relations are concerned, we have absolutely no problems," stressed Mr. Lukashenko. "We have similar views on the world order and on the way the world is developing. As far as the economy is concerned, despite the huge problems which currently exist in the world and the unprecedented pressure

facied by Iran economically and financially, we enjoy a healthy volume of bilateral trade." Although several Belarusian-Iranian projects are yet to be implemented, the Belarusian President emphasised, "Please, tell the leadership of Iran that we're counting on seeing our collaboration invigorated and are ready to accept investments from Iranian businesses and from the state, in

a manner beneficial to Iran." Mr. Hosseini summarised his achievements briefly, noting that Iranian investments into Belarus have increased from about \$6m to over \$960m during his term of office, while mutual trade turnover has tripled. Interaction has expanded from 10 to 75 areas, covering trade, science and culture, with 38 inter-state and inter-departmental

agreements signed.

The results are obvious. The Belarusian President noted, "I hope that the Iranian leadership will find a similarly worthy ambassador with whom we can develop relations with the Iranian state and with its people. We're very eager to do so: not just to develop our relations in the same direction but to add something new. I hope to see this."

No trifling in important affairs

Moscow hosts Union State Council of Ministers session

By Vladimir Khromov

The prime ministers of Belarus and Russia, Mikhail Myasnikov and Dmitry Medvedev, first held an hour long personal meeting at Government House's Chimney Hall. They then continued their dialogue on the Union State and Belarusian-Russian bilateral relations in an expanded format, joined by their ministers in charge of economic and financial issues, industry and transport.

"We have various forms of integration. The Union State's value lies in its experience, positive and negative, as this will prove useful for the future creation of the single Eurasian Economic Space," noted Mr. Medvedev. "Trade-economic co-operation is developing, with trade turnover over the first nine months of this year rising by 15 percent; by the end of the year, we plan to achieve a figure of around \$40m." He added that it's important to strengthen these positive dynamics and demonstrate the advantages of Union State integration via concrete projects. He believes that it's possible to take five definite economic projects involving Belarusian and Russian companies and implement them.

Mr. Myasnikov spoke of current obstacles to Union State



Union State Council of Ministers session held in Moscow

construction, saying, "We need to eliminate the barriers which are preventing the participation of Belarusian manufacturers in state tenders within the Russian Federation, alongside other restrictions regarding the recognition of certificates, licenses and approval documents for medications, and construction and transport services. Decisive steps must be taken to avoid our companies being viewed as outsiders. If necessary, let's sign bilateral agreements to solve these problems." Mr. Medvedev supports Mr. Myasnikov's proposals to reduce 'red tape'

regarding accreditation and certification.

The agenda comprised 36 issues, with most of the Union State draft budget for 2013 approved: the major issue of the meeting. A report was delivered on the fulfilment of the Union State budget in 2012 and a plan of action for 2013-2015 was approved for the further development of small and medium-sized entrepreneurial activities within the Union State. Other debate covered the Treaty Establishing the Union State for 2012-2013, as well as collaboration between Belarus and Russia in

counteracting illegal migration, and a draft joint action plan on the regional group of forces of Belarus and Russia for 2013. Additionally, a plan on battling terrorism within the Union State in 2013 was discussed.

Various issues relating to the implementation of Union State programmes came under debate, relating to healthcare and the agreed ecological policy (part of the social development plan until 2015).

Afterwards, the Prime Minister of Belarus emphasised that a serious contribution had been made for the future.

Minsk Mayoral Office studies Minsk's opinions

Minsk City Executive Committee studies residents' opinions on branding of Belarusian capital, asking for suggestions on Minsk associations

The Minsk brand is being elaborated until the end of 2012 — by British INSTID Company. The latter won a tender announced by Minsk City Executive Committee's Tender Centre in mid-July, from a total of ten applications.

The first visible results for Minsk's branding should be the appearance of the city's logo. Moreover, experts are to conduct master classes and give lectures to Belarusian specialists in the spheres of design, photography and city decor.

A repeating pattern of white lines against a blue sky has been chosen for Minsk's graphic symbol while the city's colour will be azure. The developers of the brand have even invented an original title: Minskaya Lazur (Minsk Azure). This stresses the city's aspiration to be innovative, which some may find unexpected. The design will adorn everything from postcards and bags to road signs and public transport, being recognisable to Minsk's residents and guests of the Belarusian capital, including foreigners.

'Think Minsk' will be the English language slogan for the city. In fact, the IBM Corporation invented the 'Think' advertising slogan before WWII and, in 1997, Apple Corporation used 'Think Differently'; however, it should work positively with a foreign audience, feeling familiar. The working variant of the Russian language slogan is 'Минск. Интересно' ('Minsk. Interestingly'). A slogan in the Belarusian language hasn't yet been decided.

The British company has also created a unique aroma for the city and plans to approve a list of 'a-la Minsk' dishes, which will be offered at affordable prices.

Children are our most important treasure

By Polina Olkhovskaya

16th New Year Our Children charity event launched countrywide until January 11th

As is traditional, the eve of Christmas and the New Year sees the heads of Republican state run public authorities and local executive and administrative bodies visiting orphanages and children's hospitals, trustees and foster families, as well as family-type orphanages, handing out gifts of computer technology and toys, clothes and footwear, furniture and sports equipment: everything which may be useful.

This year's charity event features the President, members of the Government and employees of

the Presidential Administration, the Constitutional Court and the National Bank. They are joined by the State Secretary of the Security Council and representatives of public associations such as Belaya Rus, the Belarusian Union of Women, the Belarusian Children's Fund, the Belarusian Republican Youth Union (BRYU), World Without Borders, and Independent Assistance to Children. Some businessmen are also giving their time and resources. During the year, over 130 organisations have taken part in visiting over 170 boarding schools, orphanages, child care centres and large families.

A spectacular New Year's party is scheduled at the Palace of the Re-



One of the New Year holidays: Our Children

public, for December 27th, involving over 2,000 children: the most gifted and talent youngsters (winners of Olympiads, artistic contests and sports competitions), leaders of children's organisations and associations, those with physical or men-

tal disabilities, orphans and those left without parental guardianship, children from large families and from families on low incomes.

In addition, New Year performances for the above are to be held countrywide.