

Bright light of young talents

In late May, the cleverest and most talented children met the President at the Palace of the Republic

By Igor Kolchenko

Alexander Lukashenko admits that this is one of the most pleasant presidential missions, saying, "At present, our country needs talented and energetic people. Grand plans can only be realised by those who generate new ideas and implement them in life. Our support of talent is an investment into the future."

Sisters Anya and Alesya Galushkevich, from Mozyr, conquered Ukrainian Lugansk with their acrobatic show. In autumn, the city hosted the *Circus Future* Festival and our girls took third place. They recollect that their path to the circus was accidental. Five years ago, they saw an advertisement in the street, inviting children to the specialised Arena studio. Since then, they've been thankful to their teachers, who have helped them reveal their talent. Their circus life feels like 'a holiday'.

It seems wonderful that a strong circus school appeared several years ago in a small town. Arena is already known far beyond Belarus. Two 11 year old boys — aerial acrobats Nikita and Stas — won the Russian *Minute of Fame* TV contest with their unique show....

The President believes that each child has their own talent, which must be noticed and supported in due time. "With this in mind, an efficient system has been established in Belarus, helping identify and develop skills in children and young people. Talented youngsters can rely on targeted support and attention from the state," Mr. Lukashenko stresses. "Dozens of Olympiads, festivals and contests open wide possibilities for them to reveal themselves. The country provides you with a unique start. Make use of it, to the benefit of yourself and your homeland. Let your medals and prizes bring real benefit to Belarus."



Guests at Palace of the Republic have much to share about their achievements at a young age

"How can the level of Belarusian schooling be assessed?" ponders Education Minister Sergei Maskevich. "We can use average points from testing or can look at how many talented children live in our country. This year, 650,000 pupils took part in subject Olympiads, with 26 winning international Olympiads. This is very prestigious. For example, 80 countries participated in the Physics Olympiad but our boy won." The Minister easily recollects the name of Andrey Klishin. A database of talented young people has been established in Belarus, with almost

5,000 already listed. All have their progress followed by the state: if any problems arise regarding employment, assistance is then offered. However, Mr. Maskevich admits that these young people can enter the most prestigious universities worldwide and tend not to need to go job hunting, since employers are queuing up to take on these promising specialists.

One of the youngsters invited to the Palace of the Republic was an 11th grade pupil from Minsk's Polytechnic Gymnasium #6 — Dima Kabak. He won a silver medal at the

International Conference of Young Scientists. His hobby of informatics began in early childhood and later transformed into serious study. Many of us have heard of 'smart house' technology, developed by western scientific-research institutions. Dima has his own flat set up in a similar fashion, all paid for on a tight budget. He runs his electrical devices via a computer or via the Internet. Light turns off when Dima leaves, while many other options are available.

Children must be loved. They are talented. All of them!

Exchanging opinions on wide range of topics

Another round of Belarusian-French inter-ministerial consultations takes place in Paris.

Belarus and France have discussed issues of political, trade-

economic and investment co-operation, in addition to liaisons in the sphere of culture, education and law. Opinions were also exchanged on Belarus-EU relations,

including the *Eastern Partnership* initiative, while tackling the collaboration of European and international organisations and acute regional problems.

Knowledge contributes to mutual understanding between states



Opening of Korean Language and Culture Centre

By Anastasia Golovleva

Korean Language and Culture Centre opens at Minsk's State Linguistic University

Speaking in front of guests, students and teachers of the Linguistic University, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea to Belarus, H.E. Mr. Kang Weon Sik, noted that the creation of the Centre is a step towards mutual understanding between our two states. "The economic, political and cultural potential of co-operation between our countries is huge;

the Centre will enable students and teachers, as well as entrepreneurs and politicians, to better understand one another."

Naturally, to truly understand another nation, you need to be aware of its national trends, characteristics, culture and history. The Rector of Minsk's State Linguistic University, Natalia Baranova, tells us that 14 Korean citizens are currently taking courses in Russian language, with five studying within the Interpreters' Department.

The State Linguistic University added Korean language to its cur-

riculum last year, with 13 Belarusian students from the English Language Department choosing the option as part of 'contemporary foreign languages'.

Ms. Baranova notes that the Korean Embassy has been actively involved in the development of the Korean language teaching school in Belarus. In the near future, the Linguistic University is planning to introduce Korean as a second foreign language, as part of the 'contemporary foreign languages' speciality. It is also considering adding Korean to its core curriculum as a major language.

The Minsk State Linguistic University is now drafting agreements with three universities in Korea, with co-operative agreements already signed with another three. "Our University aims to achieve two goals: to establish a school of translation (to / from Korean language) and to set up a scientific and methodological school of teaching the Korean language," adds the Rector.

Korean language may also be added to the curriculum of the MSLU Institute for Advanced Studies and Retraining and to the Linguistic and Humanities College.



Friendship Without Borders Youth Forum's participants meet at Zubrenok

Youngsters to unite under shared interests

By Galina Vesnina

National Children's Zubrenok Education and Recuperation Centre hosts International Friendship Without Borders Youth Forum

The forum — organised annually by the Belarusian Education Ministry with support from the Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Co-operation — gathered representatives from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

The Deputy Head for Youth Affairs at Belarus' Education Ministry, Lilia Protas, met *Friendship Without Borders* participants, saying that, every year, CIS states jointly organise over 20 projects. As part of their agreement on co-operation in the field of youth work, the parties render mutual experience exchange between state bodies overseeing youth affairs and between youth public associations. Additional-

ly, member countries take part in joint scientific research, seminars, symposiums, conferences and consultations on youth policy.

CIS youngsters actively participate in events aiming to strengthen neighbourly relations and expand young people's experience of the culture and history of CIS states. The Baltic Artek Camp and the International Slavonic Commonwealth Camp promote friendships while the Russian *Seliger* Educational Forum is also popular, being situated on the lake of the same name in Russia's Tver Region.

Belarusian youngsters also take part in the international Be-La-Rus Camp (not far from the Mount of Friendship, at the intersection of the borders of Belarus, Latvia and Russia in the Vitebsk Region's Verkhnedvinsk District). Meanwhile, Belarus hosts the International *Slavonic Unity* Festival every year, near the Monument of Friendship on the border of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.