

# New house for books

Most difficult stages of National Library construction over

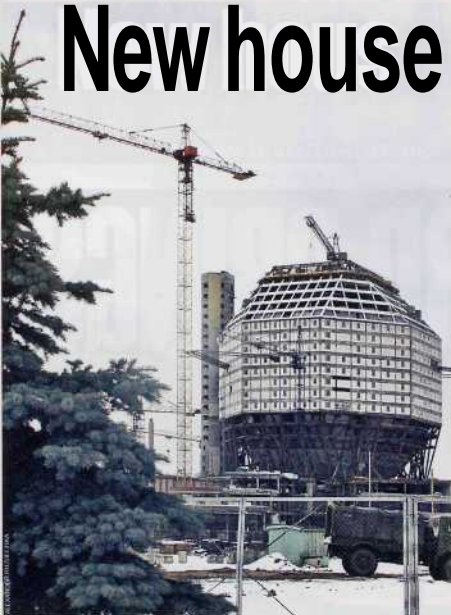
Constructors are finishing the reinforced concrete framework of the new building of the National library. It has been difficult and labour-intensive, but, the stairs and elevator stem have now been concreted. In the second half of January, the upper level concreting, to form the 23rd floor, will be completed and the building will have its finished shape. Dismantlement of the support framework will become the next stage. The heating system will be installed at the same time. An impressive atrium will host the reading halls, conference hall, cafe, exhibition areas, administrative and technical rooms. A quarter of the glazing is complete and partition walls, floors and false ceilings are in place, along with ventilation, heating and smoke exhaust systems.

Improvements to the grounds of the library are under way. The new library complex was launched in 2002 and is due to be fin-

ished by September 2005. The project envisages the creation of two thousand seats for reading and the library will be a home to 14m books. The reading halls of the new building will be comfortable for all visitors including the physically-challenged. Reading seats for people with poor sight or hearing will be specially equipped. There will be rooms giving open access to documents, for groups and individual rooms for scientists. In the information centre, visitors may order books — to be delivered to the reading hall by a system of lifts. A panoramic elevator will take visitors up 72 metres, from where they can enjoy the view of Minsk from a comfortable platform.

The new National library is to use the latest information technology to give visitors unlimited access to the world's information resources.

By Olga Sredneva



As each day passes, the library takes on its final diamond shape more clearly