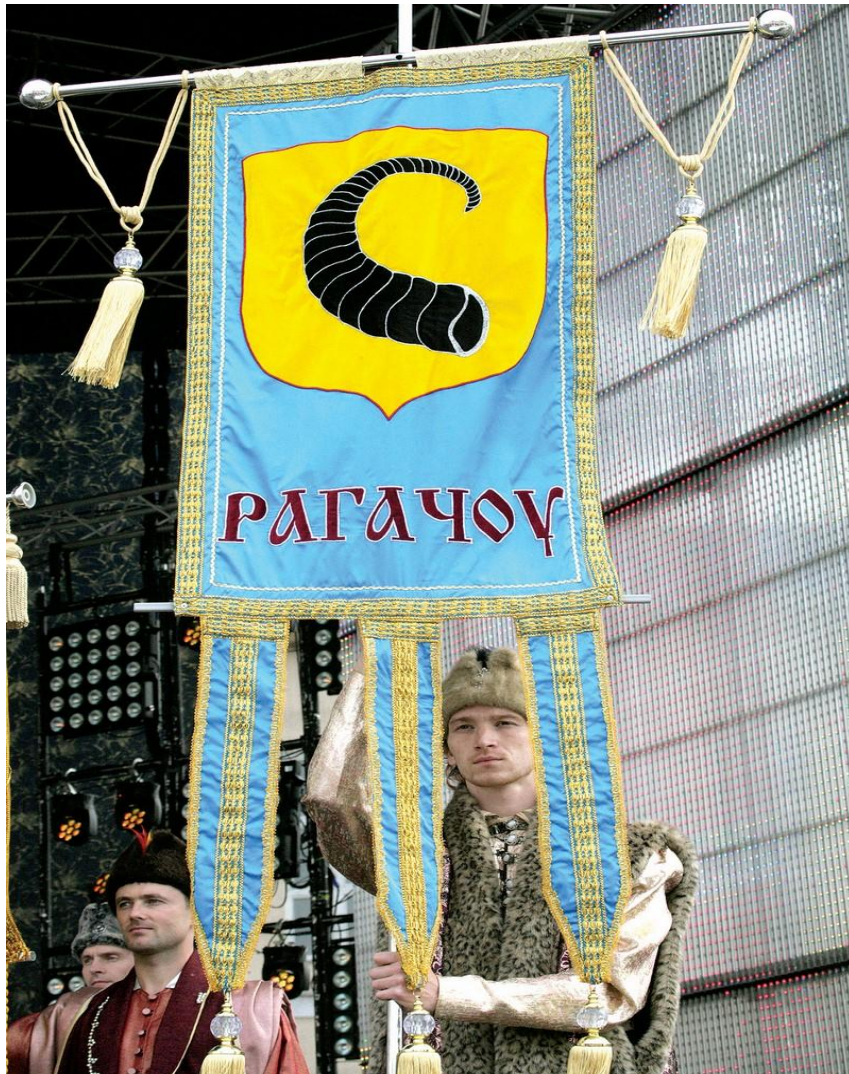


Written word lives through the ages

Belarusian Written Language Day is a lasting gift for Rogachev residents

According to Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister, Natalia Kochanova, who took part in the solemn ceremony opening the festival, the holding of the Belarusian Written Language Day in Rogachev is a gift to local residents that will remain with them for many years to come.





Ms. Kochanova noted that, during the preparations for the holiday, the district centre has been changed beyond recognition, with all the important social and cultural sites being renovated. She stressed that lots of work has been done thanks to the initiatives of the Chairman of the Gomel Regional Executive Committee, Vladimir Dvornik, and the efforts of the Chairman of the Gomel District Executive Committee, Sergey Denisenko, as well as numerous local residents.

“The holiday will end, but the town will remain clean and beautiful for many years. Of course, everything is in the hands of local residents and the way this will be preserved depends on their efforts,” added the Deputy Prime Minister. She reminded the audience that immediately after the festival in Rogachev is over, the organisers will begin preparations for the next Day of Belarusian Written Language that will take place in the homeland of Frantsisk Skorina — ancient Polotsk. In line with the new tradition (begun this year) Ms. Kochanova donated a book about Polotsk — her native city — to Rogachev during the solemn opening.



Over 70 events held in Rogachev as part of Belarusian Written Language Day

“This is a holiday that leaves spiritual traces, as well as material things. The most important thing is that everyone who was here thinks about the importance of the experience and wisdom accumulated by our ancestors, which is transferred to their descendants,” noted Belarus’ Information Minister, Lilia Ananich. She admitted that competition exists regarding the hosting of this holiday. However, the selection is based on one main criteria: it should be one of the cities which has made a considerable contribution to the history and culture of Belarus. “The Rogachev region has brought many talented writers. This is a worthy place and the festival was organised to a very high standard,” summed up the Minister.

The Information Ministry has released a book to commemorate the event entitled Literary Rogachev Land, collecting the works of poets and prose writers born here. Ms. Ananich said that this is the state contribution to the spiritual life of the region.

After the opening ceremony of Written Language Day, there was the National Literary Awards — the highest prize for Belarusian authors, with seven nominations this year.



The Day of Belarusian Written Language was also attended by representatives of diplomatic missions, accredited in Belarus, delegations of Belarusian diasporas from 19 CIS and non-CIS states, alongside writers and literary representatives from Belarus and elsewhere. The festive programme included around a hundred events, with thematic pavilions and exhibitions organised in the town, dedicated to the 75th anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Mulyavin, the 95th anniversary of the birth of Ivan Melezh, the 120th anniversary of Kondrat Krapiva, and 125th of Maxim Bogdanovich. The National Library of Belarus offered an exhibition, entitled 500 Years of Belarusian Printing, showcasing unique examples of Belarusian 17th-20th century books.

Over 11,000 book titles are released in Belarus annually, with 33m copies sent to shops and libraries in the country