

RUSSIAN PAVILION READY FOR 11TH ARCHITECTURAL BIENNALE OPENING IN VENICE

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ПРАВОВОСТН

The Russian Pavilion is technically ready for the opening of its exposition at the 11th Architectural Biennale which will be held in Venice on September 14 – November 23, still the building that is almost a century-old requires a major overhaul, Vassily Tsereteli, the Pavilion Commissar, told RIA Novosti.

The Russian Pavilion built in 1914 by Alexei Shchusev, famous architect, became one of the first national pavilions in the Venice Giardini where since 1895 Contemporary Art Biennales have been held, and since 1975 – exhibitions of contemporary architecture.

ALL SYSTEMS GO

Prior to putting there the exposition named “Chess Game. Playing for Russia” that includes projects of both Russian and Western architects another repair job had been undertaken in the two-story building.

In particular, “this year the curators carried out great and complex work on making the pavilion fit for its purpose: the roof has been strengthened, leaks plugged, walls painted.”

The last year maintenance job done for the Contemporary Art Biennale also helped. Then all feasible support has been provided by Sergey Gordeyev, Russian Avantgarde Foundation President, Senator from the Perm Territory.

“Thanks to Mr. Gordeyev’s help a lot of things were put in proper order which has allowed the Pavilion, which used to be in a terrible state, to function. The work done at that time still pays off this year,” Mr. Tsereteli said.

As for the technical equipment, “a special attention has been paid to the Pavilion lighting, since this element is important for showing essential particulars of the architectural exhibits.”

According to Mr. Tsereteli, “the exposition which will be presented this year is a kind of unique – for the first time not architecture on paper is shown but the projects already built. So, everything should be at the best possible level.”

He also added that “after all the work mentioned the Pavilion is truly ready for the new exposition,” though “all the jobs done by now are actually stopgaps and one has to admit that the Pavilion is in a critical state and badly needs a complete overhaul.”



PROSPECTS

Mr. Tsereteli noted that after the complete refurbishing the Pavilion should get “all the modern facilities, such as a developed ventilation system and means of access for the handicapped and a high-tech roof and a lot of other things.”

According to him, he has already consulted with three different architectural firms and expert groups who have prepared their estimates, compiled work schedules and offered their ideas concerning the restoration.

But it can be started only after ROSIZO, the State Museum and Exhibition Center administering the Pavilion now, gets the required funds from the State.

At that, Mr. Tsereteli does not rule out that not just the State will finance the project – in particular, Russian Avantgarde Foundation “that has by its actions proved the accountability of its words” has already expressed its desire to help in the matter.

According to the Pavilion Commissar, it would be much easier to find partners and do the restoration, if they had passed a law on patronage and sponsorship in Russia allowing to claim tax benefits and other privileges.

“Should we get unofficial funding, we will be talking about philanthropic objectives only, since the Venice Biennale is a cultural project. No commercial profits can be gained here,” Mr. Tsereteli concluded.

The Venice Biennale aims at developing international vanguard artistic trends. It is in several parts comprising the Contemporary Art Biennale, the Contemporary Architecture Biennale, the Contemporary Music Biennale, festivals of contemporary theater and dance as well as the famous Venice Film Festival. ■

