



**Belarusian geneticists not only study the DNA of the country's population, but also help them be healthy**

5



**Participants of the 16th Verona Eurasian Economic Forum in Samarkand widely discussed the future of Greater Eurasia**

6

INTERNATIONAL

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Pavel Bogush

More than 200 people took part in the subbotnik, which took place on the day of the start of work at the Republican Patriotic Centre of the Kobrin Fortification of the Brest Fortress

## Memory. Patriotism. Future

On November 11th, at the Kobrin Fortification of the Brest Fortress, the construction of the Republican Centre for Patriotic Education of Youth was officially launched. The symbolic event was attended by Deputy Head of the Belarus President Administration Igor Lutsky, Education Minister Andrei Ivanets, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, First Deputy Defence Minister of Belarus Viktor Gulevich, other officials, as well as personnel of the Brest garrison, Brest border group, representatives of the Belarusian Republican Youth Union BRSM, public and veteran organisations, students and schoolchildren.

Three stages of construction of the centre are planned. The first involves the reconstruction of the barracks. The second is the modernisation of the casemates of the shadow front. The third is the reconstruction of the Western Fort. It is also planned to develop areas for summer tent camps, military sports and playgrounds, and improve the surrounding area.

It is expected that by 2025, the anniversary date of the Great Victory, the planned volume of work will be completed and the educational buildings and surrounding area will be put into operation.



# The task of parties is to unite society in the face of modern challenges and threats

## The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, held a meeting with leaders of political parties. The conversation was about the development of party building in the country.

The Head of State reminded that he announced the plans for such a meeting back in March as he addressed the nation and the parliament:

"Back then we agreed that we will meet with leaders of the political parties, which have passed the reregistration process. Three political parties have been reregistered: the Communist Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Republican Labour and Justice Party. A new party has been registered as well — Belaya Rus.

*Let's be frank, in the course of reregistration we cleansed the playing field of decorative associations and of those, whose efforts are aimed at undermining the foundations of the constitutional system of our country. Belarus is a young sovereign state. The government system we've chosen — a presidential republic — is optimal for our society taking into account historical traditions and the geopolitical location. And specifically because our nation accepts this form of government. People should not just understand it. They should accept it as an axiom,"* Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

The President also noted that essentially extremist groups bent on undermining the statehood had been operating for a long time under the guise of 'democratic forms of political participation'.



However, Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that he has nothing against sensible and constructive criticism of various actions of the government, "I don't mind discussing the problems that exist today, including in a critical manner. I don't even mind if the authorities are criticised constructively and businesslike for various errors or faults... There are plenty of problems, but criticism should be sensible and constructive. For the sake of creation instead of destruction."

The Head of State stated that right now the Belarusian society does not put much trust in political parties, "Not only because of the kind of the nation we have. But also because we have not seriously taken care of development of the political party system. Time will tell. Nevertheless, we have the most important thing: active people, who are willing to participate in the country's political life and show interest in matters of societal and political development. All of us should work with these people," Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

The President added: when discussions about the development of the political party system began several years ago, he formulated one condition: it has to be done exclusively taking into account national peculiarities and specifics of the domestic political process.

"We should not copy all kinds of topics from Soviet history, Russian history. Even more so, we should not copy

Western experience. We are not going to recreate the Soviet Union's Communist Party. We are not building the party of the state. However, we will not split the society according to party affiliation. We will use positive practices.

*Instead of fighting against the state political parties are supposed to compete with each other at the level of projects and legislative initiatives. Everything that is geared towards creation. This is why political parties have to accomplish yet another goal: they are supposed to unite the society instead of disuniting it, particularly in the face of modern challenges and threats. It is very important for us to be united nowadays. Because the situation is extremely tense, very dangerous. Particularly if we look into the future, at perspectives,"* Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

The Head of State believes that Belarusians have a long way to go in matters of party building. At the same time, the state has created the necessary legal conditions, and parties have been given ample opportunities to participate in the electoral process.

Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the current issue, especially before the upcoming parliamentary elections.

"I've sincerely said that the entire power vertical has been mobilised to organise sensible, neat, and decent parliamentary elections, elections to the Belarusian People's Congress. Well, and the presidential election a year later. I want you to also understand that we have another peculiarity: the ongoing change of generations.

*As for my attitude to political parties, which leaders are present here, you are all equal for me. You are patriotic. And I'd like to express my huge gratitude to you, to all the leaders for the position you demonstrate. Looking at it, some people say that Lukashenko has once again come up with something special. I was not the one to invent it. We are truly special. We don't fight with each other over something,"* the Belarusian leader stressed.

## How is party building going in Belarus?

Taking into account the upcoming important election campaign, Aleksandr Lukashenko proposed to discuss at the meeting the participation of political parties in it, as well as the vision of the prospects for party building.



### The first to speak was the Chairman of the Belarusian Party Belaya Rus Oleg Romanov.

He, in particular, noted that this new party was created on the initiative of the public association of the same name and works in close conjunction with it, so people on the ground do not always distinguish between a public association and a party. "The solution to this problem is that it is necessary to implement such a strategic task that will allow, on the one hand, to benefit the Belarusian people, gain authority among our citizens, and on the other hand, to clearly define our place in the political field of our country. We believe that such a task can be the political education of society and the formation of its political culture."

Oleg Romanov named the party's participation in the upcoming election campaign as another area of work. Party members will be nominated to election commissions, become observers at polling stations and, of course, will be nominated as candidates for deputies at all levels. The nomination of candidates for deputies of the House of Representatives will be carried out by the party congress, which will take place on December 23rd this year."

**Chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus Oleg Gaidukevich** agreed that the parties themselves are largely to blame for their low popularity among the people.

Addressing the Head of State, he explained, "Trust in parties is not great. And why? 1994, when you were nominated as a presidential candidate and all the people were with you. How did the party leaders behave? I remember it very well, even though I was at school. How did party leaders behave in 1995–1996 in the Supreme Council, when all the people were for you? This is where this trust comes from. How did the leaders of the parties, which are now liquidated, behave in 2020?"

According to Oleg Gaidukevich, he was always surprised by the position of radicals who say: how is it that all four parties support the President? The leader of the LDPB noted, "I cannot understand, if the President was elected by the people, how can the party not

support the President? This means that this party does not support the people. And the fact that each party has its own view on how to move towards the goal you set is also absolutely normal."

Oleg Gaidukevich is convinced, "The parties still need to prove their need for the country'. We are at the beginning of our journey. Unfortunately, the history of our country has shown that party leaders were not always with the people, and they did not always hear these people."

The LDPB Chairman also proposed annual meetings of party leaders with the Head of State.



### First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus Aleksei Sokol

outlined the main directions of party political work. Among them are widespread agitation and propaganda work among the masses, including young people, and the further development of the party's organisational structures.

One of Aleksei Sokol's proposals is to invite representatives of left-wing parties from EU countries to the elections as international observers. "Taking into account the upcoming election campaigns, the Communist Party can work together with the Foreign Affairs Ministry on inviting foreign experts as international observers in the person of deputies of the united left factions in PACE and the European Parliament who stand in our positions and support Belarus.

Another of the Communist Party's initiatives is to hold an anti-fascist forum every year."

During a conversation with journalists, **Aleksandr Khizhnyak, Chairman of the Republican Party of Labour and Justice**, expressed the following idea: if a party works and conveys its position to the population, only then will it find a certain response, "Time forces us to work more intensely than ever. You see what's happening in the world. People are becoming more enlightened in terms of access to information and analytics. And this has to be taken into account, because today you can't just go out to people. And the Head of State drew attention to the need for professionalism: people must know what they are doing, have the appropriate information, competence — then there will be a result."



Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



# Foothold in Latin America

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, met with the Cuban Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz

“I am happy to welcome the envoy of the Island of Freedom in Belarus. We have always maintained warm and friendly relations. You should know that we will continue to adhere to these approaches,” the Head of the Belarusian State emphasised.

The President noted that at the diplomatic and political level the countries share similar views.

“But you, as a practical person who heads the government, understand perfectly well that the basis of all this is the economy. Preparing for this meeting and studying the entire range of trade and economic relations, I understood that we need to work harder to raise economic and trade co-operation to the level of political relations. There is only one conclusion on my part: trade and economic relations are lagging far behind political and humanitarian ones,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed.

According to the President, some issues have not been resolved for decades. They are being discussed at various levels, but no progress has been made so far.

*“We need to take stock of our relations and identify the areas in which we will co-operate and solve the problems have remained unaddressed so far. What remains unchanged is that we, as a high-tech country, will keep building relations with Latin America. While doing so, we will rely first and foremost on Cuba, Venezuela, and Nicaragua.”*

Furthermore, we are viewing your visit from this standpoint. We really hope that we will be able to significantly intensify our trade and economic relations. We are

not happy that our trade slightly exceeds \$10 million,” the Belarusian leader believes.

The President suggested that Belarus and Cuba use their best endeavours to deepen trade and economic interaction so that it will catch up with the level of political and humanitarian contacts.

In turn, Manuel Marrero Cruz thanked the Belarusian Head of State for the opportunity to meet and for the warm welcome for the Cuban delegation. “We appreciate the cordiality that we have felt from the moment we arrived; your warm reception makes us feel at home,” he added.

The prime minister also conveyed greetings to Aleksandr Lukashenko from

the leadership of Cuba and personally from President Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel Bermudez, who, according to him, cherishes memories of his visit to Minsk in 2019.

“I have listened to you very carefully, and I completely agree with what you have said. Your analysis of bilateral trade and economic relations is very accurate. I share your opinion. We are also determined to change this situation,” Manuel Marrero Cruz said.

According to him, the prime ministers of Belarus and Cuba need to undertake comprehensive efforts to improve the situation and flesh out co-operation with specific projects.



Cuba is a significant partner of Belarus on the international stage and one of the most important allies in the Western Hemisphere.

After the collapse of the USSR, Belarus remained practically the only republic that maintained relations with Cuba in the same way. In October 1997, a decision was made to transform the Belarusian trade mission in Cuba into an Embassy, which became the first diplomatic mission of the Republic of Belarus in Latin America and the Caribbean.

In April 2022, the countries celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, but the history of fruitful interaction goes back many decades. Since the times of the USSR, Belarus has been a reliable supplier of various products to the Island of Freedom. In the 1960s–1980s, Cuba received more than 30 thousand Belarus tractors from the Belarusian SSR, as well as more than 700 thousand refrigerators, potash and nitrogen fertilisers, as well as food.

In July 1972, Fidel Castro visited Belarus. The leader of the Cuban communists then walked around the main square of Minsk, visited Khatyn and the Mound of Glory. In 2000, the President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko flew to Cuba and met with Fidel Castro. The heads of the two countries signed an agreement on friendship and co-operation. The Cuban leader then called Belarus ‘the most friendly of the countries in the post-Soviet space’ and awarded the Belarusian leader the Order of José Martí. This is one of the three highest awards on Liberty Island. Then visits took place in 2006 and 2012.

In January–September 2023, trade turnover reached \$10.5 million, the growth rate compared to the same period last year was 307 percent.

The main volume of Belarusian exports to Cuba are tractors, trucks, internal combustion engines, tires, spare parts, agricultural machinery and equipment. The leading exporters of Belarusian products were such enterprises as Belagromash, MTZ, MAZ and others. Medicines are mainly imported from Cuba.

## ‘In the light of recent developments it is extremely important to have reliable and proven allies’

New promising areas of business co-operation were discussed at the meeting of the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, with Governor of Russia’s Stavropol Territory Vladimir Vladimirov

The Head of State noted that more than five years have passed since their previous meeting.

“I think you are well aware that in the light of recent developments it is extremely important to have reliable and proven allies. For us, you are exactly like that — our supporter and ally, on whom we can rely,” the Belarusian leader stressed. He also thanked Vladimir Vladimirov for his personal warm regard for Belarus.

The President noted that during Vladimir Vladimirov’s last visit to Belarus, a number of promising areas for the development of co-operation were outlined. Foremost, they relate to the creation of joint ventures to manufacture machines and units, the expansion of the supply of Belarusian equipment, construction and finishing materials, the exchange of food products, partnership in agriculture and co-operation in science.

**“There are successes. This is eloquently evidenced by trade statistics. Last year, the trade increased by more than 75 percent. The results of the first eight months of 2023 are encouraging: 30 percent up over the high-record 2022. Nevertheless, I believe that we have not yet used a significant part of our potential to expand co-operation,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said.**

Belarus, for its part, is also ready to offer co-operation in a number of areas: the latest technologies in crop



Stavropol

production and breeding, the supply of seeds and planting material, the exchange of experience and training of professional personnel for agriculture.

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that Stavropol Territory makes a wide use of Belarusian farm machines.

“We decided to gain a more serious foothold in the south of Russia, which has a predominantly agricultural specialisation of the economy, and to set up a multi-brand trade and maintenance centre in Stavropol Territory. Such

a centre will allow farmers and utility companies of the region to get better acquainted with the products that Belarus produces, purchase machines without unnecessary intermediaries and receive professional maintenance in a timely manner,” the Head of State emphasised.

Belarus is interested and ready to participate in the local programs to upgrade the fleets of passenger, special-purpose and utility equipment, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

Speaking about the creation of joint assembly plants in Stavropol Territory (this possibility was discussed during the previous meeting with Vladimir Vladimirov), the President stated that the parties have not made much progress in this direction. In this regard, the Head of State proposed to instruct the governments to put forward specific proposals by the end of the year regarding the organisation of facilities to make certain types of engineering products in the region.

Another area of co-operation discussed during the meeting was tourism and tourism infrastructure.

“We have the opportunity to supply prefabricated wooden frame and panel structures and eco-friendly furniture for guest houses and hotels to the region,” the Head of State said.

In addition to the economy, Aleksandr Lukashenko highlighted many other areas where the parties can and should closely co-operate: science, culture, education, and sport.

Vladimir Vladimirov stressed the high dynamics of the development of co-operation with Belarus: various agreements are being implemented, and trade surges every year. Belarusian equipment is in demand in the region. Polesie harvesters are actively purchased to renew the fleet of agricultural machinery.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



**The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,**

*"For three decades now the people-oriented economy has been the foundation of our state policy. This policy is successful, and the nation supports it. Judging by all the indicators that characterise social equality, Belarus is one of the best countries. We've created a state without oligarchs. We have prevented a concentration of capital and properties in the same hands. All the national riches are owned by the people."*

In Address to the nation and parliament on March 31st, 2023

# Income and expense matrix

## Caring for people is a core element of the 2024 draft republican budget

Recently, the draft law on the republican budget for 2024 was adopted by the House of Representatives of the National Assembly in the first reading. The abundance of figures is impressive, but they all speak about one thing: the key tasks for the development of Belarus next year will be maintaining the stability of the budget system, using budget funds in accordance with the priorities of socio-economic development and increasing the well-being of the Belarusian people on this basis.

More than one billion rubles will be allocated to support citizens in need of improved housing conditions. Over a billion rubles will also be allocated from the budget for the construction of rental housing for security forces workers. The consolidated budget provides Br26.2 billion for remuneration of public sector workers, including pensions for military personnel. About Br1.9 billion will be allocated to the Republican Road Fund. More than Br2.6 billion are planned for the implementation of state support for the agro-industrial complex, with an increase of 18 percent compared to the approved plan for 2023. And this is just a small fraction of the facts from the main financial document of our country.

By Anastasia Tselyuk

### THE STATE IS FOR THE PEOPLE

The draft budget 2024 was formed on the basis of the parameters of the socio-economic development forecast, taking into account the current economic situation, as well as the implementation of tax policy measures, **Finance Minister Yuri Seliverstov** explained. He especially emphasised, "In the structure of the consolidated budget for 2024, expenditures on financing the social sector amount to 42.2 percent. At the same time, of this, healthcare costs amount to Br11.6 billion, or 4.7 percent of GDP, and education costs Br11.8 billion, or 4.8 percent of GDP." **Consolidated budget revenues for 2024 are estimated at Br67.5 billion, or 106.3 percent of the current year. Revenues from the draft republican budget for 2024 are provided in the amount of 39.9 billion, or 102.8 percent of the estimated revenues for 2023. Expenditures of the consolidated budget for the coming financial year are determined in the amount of Br72.7 billion, or 112.1 percent by 2023, of the republican budget — 44.7 billion, or 113.9 percent.**

### PENSION GROWTH BY 15 PERCENT

Another landmark bill was adopted in two readings at once — On the Budget of the State Extra-Budgetary Fund for Social Protection of the Population of the Republic of Belarus for 2024. As noted by **Labor and Social Security Minister Irina Kostevich**, the fund's budget revenues are calculated in the amount of Br28.226 billion (113 percent of the fund's budget for 2023), expenses — Br27.8 billion (Br3.7 billion more than the expected level for 2023).

**The main amount of the Social Protection Fund expenses — more than Br22 billion (almost 80 percent of the fund's budget expenses) — is planned to be used to finance pensions. It is planned that in 2024, on average, old-age pensions will increase by 15 percent.**

Br32 million are allocated to finance the payment of professional pensions.

### SPECIAL ATTENTION TO SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Supporting families with children is a national priority. To achieve this, the state is implementing a number of measures with a special emphasis on large families. One of these measures is the Family Capital programme, which has been operating in our country since 2015. In this regard, Yuri Seliverstov drew the attention of deputies to the fact that for more than eight years, the state has credited over Br3 billion to the deposit accounts of families, **"It is planned to allocate about Br383 million to pay off family capital in 2024."**

### REGIONAL ACCENT

Issues of regional development have always been and remain the focus of attention when developing budget bills. Estimated indicators for expenses and income in local budgets are formed according to the same approaches as the republican budget.

**The volume of local budget revenues for the next year is calculated on the basis of forecast parameters of economic development and is determined in the amount of Br38.9 billion (an increase of 12.4 percent compared to the 2023 estimate). Of these, own income is Br29.7 billion, or 111.6 percent compared to the current year.**

"Resource support for local budgets at the expense of the republican budget in 2024 will increase by 14.8 percent and amount to Br9.2 billion. At the same time, the emphasis is on strengthening the targeted nature of the funds provided. In the total volume of targeted funds for the repair of local roads, Br700 million are provided, or with an increase of 4.7 times compared to the current year level. For the construction of engineering and transport infrastructure — almost Br590 million, an increase of 8.3 percent. Br756 million are allocated for expenses related to providing citizens with loans for housing construction, an increase of 5.6 percent," Yuri Seliverstov notes.

### TARGETED FUNDS TRANSFERRED TO FINANCE THE AGRO-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The consolidated budget for 2024 provides for more than Br2.6 billion rubles for the implementation of state support for the agro-industrial complex, with an increase of 18 percent compared to the approved plan for 2023. Of these, about 65 percent, or Br1.8 billion, are direct measures of state support, which will include targeted funding for regions from the republican budget in the amount of Br645.3 million.

### REAL SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY

About Br1.1 billion are provided for providing state support to organisations in the real sector of the economy in the form of compensation for interest rates on loans. Of these, more than a third is to support

exports and almost a quarter is to create conditions to support the financing of the purchase of modern machinery and equipment.

### NATIONAL DEFENCE

Spending on national defence and law enforcement is increasing significantly. It is planned to allocate about Br8.3 billion from the republican budget for these purposes in 2024, or with an increase of almost 22 percent compared to the current year.

### ROAD PROGRAMME

Expenditures of the Republican Road Fund are planned in the amount of Br1.9 billion with an increase of 28 percent

compared to the expected execution of the current year. Of this, Br812 million come from the fund's revenue sources, and Br1.1 billion from the republican budget. Centralised acquisition of road equipment by the Ministry of Transport — Br40 million.

### INVESTMENTS IN SCIENCE

Br633 million will be allocated for scientific and scientific-technical activities, and Br765.7 million for scientific development (funds from innovation funds).



Belarusian geneticists not only study the DNA of the country's population, but also help them be healthy

# What gene will bring

SCIENCE



Sheiko Dynasty of Belarusian genetic scientists

By Vera Arteaga

## Editing correctly

Genome editing? Exactly. Belarusian scientists not only know everything or almost everything about genes, but also edit plant genomes. And, of course, potatoes are among them. The goal is to make it resistant to late blight. This is the next level of selection. Previously, the best plants were selected by hand and long work was carried out to develop a new variety. Today this is the task of geneticists.

“Genome editing allows us to do the same thing more efficiently and quickly. Moreover, the gene replaced using CRISPR/Cas9 technology can even be synthetic: one was cut out and another was inserted in its place,” the scientist explains.

The institute's project continues for the second year. In the very near future, new plants will be planted on the test site. In addition, in a few more years they will head to the fields of our farms and delight us with the harvests.

“Genome editing technology is the same for plants, animals and humans. Already today in Belarus there are methods of combating oncology using our own edited cells. CAR-T therapy is used at the Alexandrov National Cancer Centre,” the interlocutor introduces the matter.

Belarusian scientists have mastered the technology of whole-genome sequencing. The point is to study the entire DNA sequence, including both protein-coding regions (exome) and non-coding ‘silent’ regions of the genome. This kind of research has been carried out, including on cattle, the interlocutor notes. Moreover, this knowledge is applied in practice.

“We have developed screening methods for various hereditary diseases. Thanks to this, today in the country's farms their frequency has decreased from 1.8 to 7 times, and for some items has completely disappeared. Problem animals do not interbreed and do not produce offspring. After our testing, each animal receives a genetic passport. Such documents are one of the institute's brands,” Pavel Morozik says.

By the way, bison also received certificates. It was thanks to this that it was possible to improve the population of the forest giant. There are corresponding agreements on cooperation between geneticists and the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park. The fact that the bison is doing well is evidenced by the constantly growing population. Now scientists are preparing such documents for resettlers in the reserve of Bashkortostan.

## The most popular research topic is humans

Nevertheless, humans are one of the most popular topics for research, says the deputy director of the institute, “Almost half of the research of Belarusian geneticists is devoted to the study of the human genome. From the prevention of socially significant diseases to the identification of dangerous mutations. We work very closely

Today, the development of genomic research is a priority task for many countries around the world. In addition, this is not surprising, because we are talking about the need to personalise medicine and nutrition, highly productive agriculture and much more. Largely, there is a lot of work for geneticists. Our reporter learned about how Belarusian scientists are working in this direction from the Deputy Director for Scientific Work of the Institute of Genetics and Cytology of the National Academy of Sciences, PhD in biological sciences, Associate Professor Pavel Morozik.

Subsequently, the result is also subjected to bioinformatics research. This is another direction for the future, he emphasises. “The institute has already studied approximately 600 genomes. And each of them is a large array of data that needs to not only be saved, but also analysed. However, bioinformatics helps with this. A specialised sector was created at the institute several years ago. At BSU, in the master's programme of the Biology Faculty, a new specialty has appeared for our tasks. The first graduates have already come to us. The plan is to open this specialty in graduate school so that the guys can defend themselves. We are planning a number of separate scientific projects on this topic.”

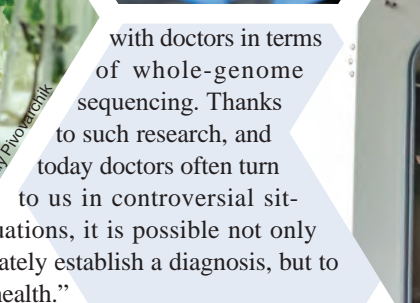
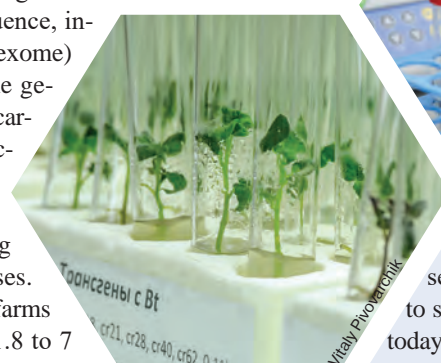
## The mystery of the genome

Scientists are also working to analyse the available data to establish the genetic profile of Belarusians, which will make it possible to form risk groups and carry out predictive planning of the morbidity structure in the future. So far, there is only fragmentary data. For example, we can say that Belarusians are characterised by the Leiden mutation - a predisposition to thromboembolism, thrombosis, preeclampsia, which increases the risk of thrombosis. The interlocutor notes that it occurs especially often among athletes. Often up to seven times higher than in the general population.

In more detail, within the framework of the Union's DNA Identification programme, scientists were able to work on an ethnogenomic portrait of a compatriot. The resulting software and information complex, created on the basis of materials from Belarusian and Russian researchers,

is already being used by investigators in the investigation of criminal cases. Today the complex accommodates more than 150 ethnic groups. By the way, this study showed: Belarusians and Russians are genetically very close. Similarities are also observed with our other closest neighbours.

Personalisation is also moving into the pharmacological direction. There is, according to Pavel Morozik, a technique that allows you to determine the effectiveness of medications for different people, “If earlier this was determined empirically, today there is an opportunity to save



Cell biologist Nadezhda Bobrova in the laboratory, where a cell product for CAR-T therapy is grown

with doctors in terms of whole-genome sequencing. Thanks to such research, and today doctors often turn to us in controversial situations, it is possible not only to more accurately establish a diagnosis, but to save life and health.”

Geneticists collaborate with the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre ‘Cardiology’. Together, we identified a number of pathogenic mutations leading to cardiovascular pathology, shares Pavel Morozik, “The problem is that the symptoms of many genetic diseases are similar, but they are treated differently. Not long ago, we were contacted for advice regarding a four-year-old patient, and with the help of genetic research, we were able to correct the diagnosis — Barth syndrome. Thanks to this, the necessary treatment was prescribed. Relatives were also examined for carriage of the disease. Another patient, a 17-year-old girl, was able to avoid leg amputation thanks to timely treatment after identifying a pathogenic mutation and making an accurate diagnosis.”

In general, per year, to help doctors, says Pavel Morozik, scientists conduct about 30 whole-genome sequencing. Research is expensive and time-consuming.

time. For example, bisphosphonates are the gold standard in the treatment of osteoporosis. Nevertheless, their effectiveness in practice can only be determined after two (!) years. Together with our fellow doctors, led by Professor Emma Rudenko, we have developed a technique that allows us to identify resistance to drugs in this group in advance and select an alternative medication.”

In general, the institute conducts a great deal of research. In particular, it issues genetic passports to our citizens for one or another group of diseases. By the way, thanks to this opportunity, more than 80 percent of patients with miscarriage were able to become mothers.

The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
November 16  
2023

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In November, Samarkand for two days became a platform for a large-scale discussion about the future of Greater Eurasia. The 16th Verona Eurasian Economic Forum was held here. The event was organised by the Conoscere Eurasia non-profit Association (Italy) with the assistance of the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of Uzbekistan. Delegates and guests were invited to discuss new mechanisms for trade, investment and technological co-operation, prospects for the development of raw materials and energy markets, the restructuring of logistics and transport routes taking into account changing global realities, the role of Uzbekistan in the development of international economic relations, prospects for industrial and technological co-operation in the Greater Eurasia space, the development of the agricultural sector and ensuring global food security, the possibilities of ecological agriculture, as well as humanism and the value foundations of the future world.



# Eurasia in a changing world: we need bridges, not walls

By Marta Astreiko

## Man as the main goal of the economy

The forum was held under the motto ‘Economy of Trust and Business Diplomacy from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific’. It promoted communication and contacts between representatives of business, financial institutions, political and public figures from 27 countries. During the panel sessions and discussions, a lot was said about the current problems and challenges of our time, as well as the fact that many states still use the policy of sanctions and restrictions to achieve their selfish goals. This affects not only individual countries, but also entire regions.

The ideological inspirer and founder of the Verona Forum, President of the Conoscere Eurasia Association, Professor Antonio Fallico, noted that the topic of the current meeting — ‘Eurasia in a changing world: an agenda for co-operation’ — was not chosen by chance, “At the Forum in Samarkand, one of the main cities of the Eurasian macro-region, we will continue to promote the development of multilateral economic, social and cultural co-operation.

*At the same time, it is necessary to put people at the forefront as the main goal of the economy. Greater Eurasia, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, has enormous potential, and the task of the Forum is to put this potential at the service of creative and peaceful economic and cultural development, overcoming hegemonic logic and building bridges for the development of constructive dialogue between the current players of the geopolitical blocs dominating the world arena.”*

The professor recalled that last year the Verona Forum was hosted by Baku, Azerbaijan.

“Even then we were seriously alarmed, trying to understand where the world and the economy were heading. Today the situation has not become any clearer. We can say that only the predictability of unpredictability has increased. Whether we like it or not, we are in the midst of an epochal transition to a new global, economic and political governance: we are experiencing a confusing, contradictory and still long but inevitable transition to a pluralistic and multipolar world. In this regard, the



Antonio Fallico

business world must be aware of and be prepared not only for passive adaptation, but also for forecasting, and possibly for active participation in the development of the new economy during and after the maturation of this process,” the Italian expert emphasised.

Antonio Fallico again drew attention to the futility of sanctions,

*“Ultimately, it is easy to discover that these political decisions are dictated by the economic interests of the hegemonic countries, the protagonists of the world economy and politics, seeking to both weaken and humiliate the economies of geopolitical adversaries, and to suppress the commercial competition of their allies, subordinating their economies and national interests to their economic ones, and political interests. This is a destructive economic logic, often ideologically and politically justified by noble social and humanitarian reasons.”*

Despite this, entrepreneurs must respond to it with great human, professional and social responsibility. In a multipolar and globally interconnected economic world, the role of economic diplomacy becomes extremely important. It has the right and obligation to force the principles of solidarity, inclusive economic growth, based on the genuine interests of the human community, to prevail, breaking the chains of national egoism.”

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk noted that Europe and Russia have become even further apart over the past year, “Nevertheless, we are open to co-operation and hope that there is still some remnant of common sense in Europe... Under the conditions of sanctions, our economy has learned not just to survive — we have learned to develop. The truth is that sanctions have become a powerful impetus for the development of the Russian economy. Last year, at the beginning of the sanctions, we were predicted that the economic decline would exceed 20 percent. In fact, our economy quickly adapted, and the fall in GDP at the end of the year amounted to 2.1 percent. Over the nine months of this year, Russia’s GDP grew by 2.8 percent. The quality of this growth is important — not at the expense of energy resources or hydrocarbons.”

The Deputy Prime Minister also emphasised that Western sanctions should have stopped the Belarusian economy. But in 2023 it shows growth,

*“We are especially pleased, and we would like to point out, that the countries that maintain allied relations with Russia are growing along with us. In Belarus, also under sanctions, the economic decline last year (despite the fact that in ‘theory’ the economy there should have completely stopped) amounted to only 4.7 percent. And in 2023, their economy moved towards strong growth.”*

Together with the EAEU countries, we fully ensure our food and energy security and stimulate the development of technology.”

## Europe must wake up

President of the Foundation for International Co-operation, head of the European Commission in 1999–2004, ex-Prime Minister of Italy Romano Prodi is convinced that Europe must realise that its potential must be used in the name of unification, and not disunity of peoples and countries.

Speaking at the online forum, a well-known expert said, “We had relationships and bridges with China and Russia, but that’s all in the past, now the situation has changed dramatically. When Europe was together with Russia and China, this was the formula for the future necessary for Europe itself..”

*I mostly blame us Europeans for what is happening. The first thing we must do as Europe is to recognise what is happening. I hope we are still able to play an important role in the international arena... Europe was the first to think about developing rules common to the whole world, but it did not have the political will to do what it intended. Europe’s true potential must be unifying. This potential should not work for disunity.”*

Russian senator, former permanent representative of Russia to the European Union Vladimir Chizhov also spoke about the harm to the whole world of the policy of dividing lines, “Along with the OSCE, a new phantom with old goals has emerged, called the European political community. This is essentially an attempt to build an alternative European security system to the OSCE, which will be similar in many ways, but, most importantly, there will not be two countries — Russia and Belarus. I think everyone understands what the chances are for this system to become universal.”

From this, according to the senator, follows a task for all those who are sincerely interested in international stability and promoting co-operation in Eurasia, “This task is not to passively observe the erosion of a single space. I think that the current Verona Forum will play a role in this matter... Our world is going through a stage of tectonic shifts. At the same time, there is concern from the awareness of the fragility of our world. Once upon a time, about 90 years ago, a thesis arose — the world is indivisible. I believe that the conclusion about the indivisibility of the world is even more relevant now, in the 21st century.”

Summing up the results of the 16th Verona Eurasian Economic Forum, President of the Conoscere Eurasia non-profit Association Antonio Fallico noted,

*“At this time in history, when many seem to be calling for a clash of civilisations, the Samarkand forum pointed to an alternative path, demonstrating the widespread need for pluralism of views and the desire for integration. In this search for new solutions and mechanisms, the business world offers a special diplomacy based on real economic and social needs. This path takes more into account the real needs of peoples striving to build rather than destroy, to find new solutions in a world undergoing profound changes.”*

# Money does not stink

## An alarming factor: the world economy is increasingly being restructured on a war footing

The global confrontation is definitely dragging on. Apparently, for a long time and seriously. The military-political situation itself is alarming. Tensions are rising in many parts of the world. Frozen conflicts, one after another, develop into confrontation and transform into hot spots. But there is another worrying trend: the world economy is moving along the track of militarisation. The production and sale of weapons and military equipment, dual-use goods have always played a fairly important role in both the public and commercial sectors in many countries. But today this industry is almost the engine of the economy of some states. Demand for military goods generates investment in these industries and expansion of production. And serious financial and economic interest is added to the geopolitical discord.

By Vladimir Volchkov

### Militarisation of all countries

*Last year, global arms spending rose 23 percent, breaking a Cold War-era record of more than \$2.2 trillion. This is almost 2.5 percent of global GDP.*

*Experts note: the demand for weapons is only growing. And the only problem of the global military-industrial complex is increasing capacity. There is no end to consumers in the geopolitical situation.*

The Persian Gulf countries remain the leaders in consumption of military-industrial complex products. Ukraine came in third place in the world. But if in the past decade the countries of the Asian and Pacific regions were major buyers, now the emphasis is shifting towards European countries. They are also given priority by specialised international corporations, redistributing supplies in favor of NATO partners, postponing the fulfillment of orders for other buyers.

### Guns before butter

The conflict in Ukraine has significantly increased the demand for both weapons and ammunition. And today, companies in the military-industrial sector and the production of dual-use goods demonstrate some of the best financial and economic results on the market. Recently, large companies reported their profits, which increased significantly. And their leaders have only positive forecasts. Moreover, the war between Israel and Hamas will only push up demand. In particular, Lockheed, General Dynamics and RTX corporations recently announced that their financial results exceeded all expectations.

“We’ve gone from 14 thousand artillery rounds per month to 20,000 very quickly. We’re working ahead of schedule to accelerate that production capacity up to 85,000, even as high as 100,000 rounds per month,” General Dynamic Chief Financial Officer Jason Aiken said on a call with *Wall Street* analysts last week. “And I think the Israel situation is only going to put upward pressure on that demand,” he added.

It would take a long time to list the financial successes of the military industry around the world. By the way, almost half of the leading companies come from the USA. And today, corporations that have ‘combat’ divisions are among the most attractive to in-

vestors. Stock quotes are also turning in their direction. This means that the circle of beneficiaries of militarisation is gradually and steadily expanding. To this we must also add the interest of the financial sector, which issues loans and credits for the production and purchase of weapons.

*There is another alarming trend: weapons are being produced at the expense of civilian products. It turns out that the growth of the global military-industrial complex does not provide a ‘pure’ advantage to the economy, but a substitutive one.*

*In other words, the famous formula begins to work: guns before butter. More precisely, not butter yet, but civilian equipment and products. However, if this trend continues, militarisation, at least in the Western Hemisphere, may also affect food.*

### Diseases of military confrontation

The world is definitely overheated with numerous contradictions. Unfortunately, they are rapidly moving from the diplomatic plane into the hot phase. Undoubtedly, in many conflicts there are objective and subjective factors. It may not always be possible to directly blame the West (collectively or one of the individual states) for initiating conflicts. However, we admit: given that the United States and the EU laid claim to world leadership, regardless of the circumstances, part of the responsibility lies with them. At least part of it.

*In fact, tension began to hover in the planetary air already in the last decade. And the degree of confrontation constantly increased.*



**The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,**

*“Expenditures [of Western countries] on armaments are growing at an unprecedented pace and reaching terrifying levels. NATO governments, egged on by Washington, are eagerly spending billions on the supposedly growing threat from the East, while stimulating the US military-industrial complex. All this is happening against the backdrop of concerned statements by individual representatives of these same countries about impending problems in the field of global food, energy and other security.”*

At the CSTO summit in Yerevan on November 23rd, 2022

*However, we have to admit: the main beneficiary of the current international solitaire is the United States. To a lesser extent, France and Germany.*

Washington has not given up on promoting either democracy or liberal values around the world. But now it acts according to the formula not of Wilson, but of Hamilton. The first assumed the active participation of the United States in world affairs, acting as an arbiter. Including with weapons in hands. The second version of foreign policy involves comprehensive assistance to all forces friendly to Washington: money, weapons, diplomacy — anything you like, but without direct armed support. The last transition chord was the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. Meanwhile, support from allies (old and new) for arms supplies and financial assistance has increased significantly.

As well as income from arms supplies. Today, physical security of sovereignty is a national security priority for most states. Accordingly, defense spending is rising around the world. And a lot of these funds end up in the accounts of American companies. In fact, the military-industrial complex is becoming one of the leading industries in the United States

*We must not forget that the arms market is not simple commerce, but a factor in big politics. Recipient countries of military equipment one way or another become dependent on the supplier, who must provide them with spare parts, maintenance, and ammunition. And this fact is a significant trump card in the formation of foreign policy.*

However, despite all the benefits, excessive enthusiasm for the militarisation of the economy also entails threats for the United States, and systemic ones at that. Today we are witnessing a flow of qualified labor resources from the civilian to the military-industrial sector. Indeed, a decent portion of military production is exported. But the question is different: with the proceeds, will the United States (given its sanctions policy) be able to purchase consumer goods needed by its market?

*Will the arms race cause American inflation to rise? There is a significant risk, and a systemic one at that. Promoting military production is not an easy task. But even more difficult is to return industry to civilian lines. Conversion is an expensive proposition. And in this context, no one learned the lessons of the Cold War.*

# Machinations and manipulations

Looking at Biden and even Trump, it is difficult to imagine that they can accelerate anything. However, the pace of American political life is indeed becoming almost frantic. A year later, on November 5th, the presidential elections of the United States will take place. The fight for the place of head of this state is entering its most fierce phase.

By Ph.D. in History Vadim Gigin

## The course of the race is determined by customs

Despite all fair assessments of the decline in US influence in the world, this country still remains a superpower with the largest economy and the most powerful armed forces. At least with the largest expenditures on the military sphere.

*And Americans are ready to fight for their hegemony in the world, and not one of their leading politicians questions the leading position of their native country. Therefore, attention to even the smallest details of the presidential election race is especially close.*

However, it has not decreased for the last 80 years, that is, since the World War II. Throughout American political life, written rules and decades-old customs are very closely intertwined. They determine the course of the presidential election race. The elections themselves are always held on the first Tuesday of November in a leap year, but always after the first Monday of the same month.

*In fact, there are many more political parties in the country (more than 30), but their role is extremely small. Since 1852, the presidency has alternated between representatives of either the Republican or Democratic parties.*

Only in the elections of 1912, former President Theodore Roosevelt, who quarreled with his native Republicans and ran for the Progressive Party he created, almost destroyed the usual two-party system. Then he received more than 27 percent of the vote. In 1992, billionaire Ross Perot caused a stir by running as an independent candidate. The charismatic businessman even made it to the national debate, with his final result being 19 percent.

## So this is what 'democracy' looks like

*In general, candidates from other parties have no chance of success. Why? Official US doctrine claims that this is how democracy develops.*

They often refer to a pattern that was derived by the French scientist Maurice Duverger. Here is what the Voice of America propaganda manual says about this, "The scientist argued that the 'winner takes all' principle motivates voters to vote for the parties that have the greatest chance of winning. And small players completely lose interest in an obviously hopeless race and join the large participants. Thus, political coalitions are essentially formed even before elections. Politicians are driven by the desire to win and gain power, and this desire is stronger than petty differences."

*This explanation is, to put it mildly, unconvincing. In fact, it is simply more convenient for the ruling oligarchy to decide on the CEO it hired with the 'President of the United States' title from the two proposed options.*



The election race in the United States demonstrates the deep political and ideological crisis in which this country finds itself. American elections are a big show. Its main task is to present to citizens the illusion that they are the ones who determine the future of the country.

## The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

*"We have seen how they hold elections in the United States. People can vote by mail or can vote in exchange for money. It's a nightmare! We are saints. Our 'dictatorship' is holy in comparison to their 'democratic' elections... But if Trump wins... Everyone can say nice things when campaigning. But speaking is one thing while solving issues is a whole another story."*

Answering questions from journalists during a working trip to the Minsk Region on June 13th, 2023

*And just like that, some socialist or other troublemaker will break through.*

Thus, the two leading parties are determined with a group of candidates from each of them. This must be done no later than a year in advance, otherwise they will not have time to form election funds. After all, finances play a key role in elections. Then the primaries unfold, that is, the election of the final candidate from each party. It's a whole show! And the beginning of a big cash harvest for the horde of political strategists. Then (most likely in July) the electors will gather for party conventions (congresses). They are held in a form

somewhat reminiscent of music festivals. There are minimal clashes of opinions and ideological discussions, but there is more than enough fun, music, and enthusiasm.

*At the next stage, the main candidates from the two leading parties are fighting. The peak of this period is considered to be television debates. Since the 1960 election, when Democrat John Kennedy utterly defeated Republican Richard Nixon during such debates, it is this form of election campaign that is considered almost decisive.*

And then – the elections themselves. Interestingly, American politicians are very fond of criticising early voting in other countries. And in the United States itself, it is allowed in person in 32 states and the Federal District of Columbia, and by mail in 27 states and the same Colombia. Moreover, you can cast your vote before the election date in a period of 4 to 50 days, it all depends on state law.

Well, the subject of general criticism is the system itself for final determination of the winner. As you know, this does not happen on voting day. After 41 days, the electoral college meets, now consisting of 538 members. They are delegated proportionally by the states from members of the party whose candidate received the most votes. This two-stage system leads to periodic paradoxes: the candidate who won the national election lost in the collegium.

## American 'miracle'

And this is just the general scheme for electing the owner of the White House. There is still an overwhelming darkness of

all sorts of nuances. And the current campaign is generally a wonderful miracle. Take, for example, the very respectable age of the two main contenders. Democrat Joe Biden is about to turn 81, and Republican Donald Trump will turn 77 in June. If only that!

Donald Trump became the first US President to have his own prison photo. In the midst of the election campaign, he is facing criminal prosecution on several charges. And the other day he testified in a New York court in a civil suit for fraud. True, Trump turned the court hearing itself into a rally. Almost no one doubts that the ex-President's problems with the law were inspired by his political rivals.

Now many things are happening for the first time in American political history. Let us at least remember how the US House of Representatives recently dismissed its speaker, Republican Kevin McCarthy. And also for the first time.

*This whole heap of scandals and black PR is unusual even for US politicians caught in the pre-election fever. Before us is a reflection of the deep political and ideological crisis in which this country finds itself.*

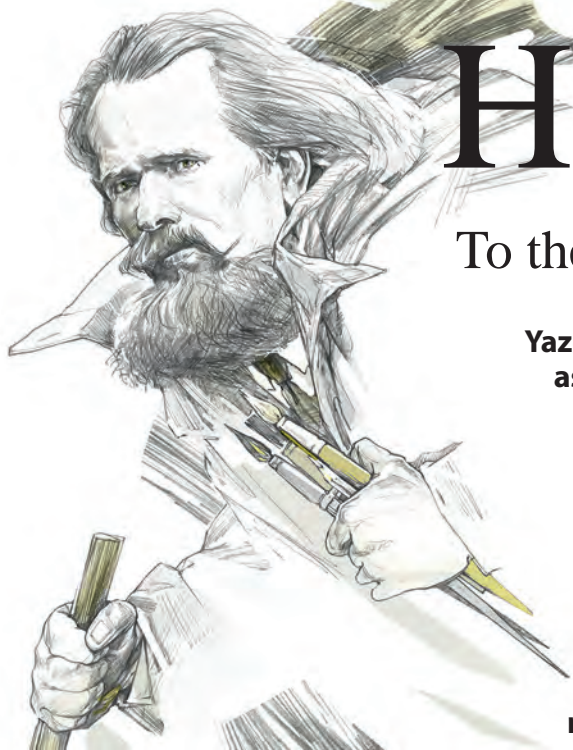
It is interesting that both Biden and Trump are not competing in terms of popularity, but in who is hated less. This is clearly evident in the latest poll conducted by *The New York Times*. Still, Biden is mistrusted by a larger number of citizens who believe the country is on the wrong track. This state of affairs made it possible for Trump to beat the incumbent President in five of the six swing states.

Now more and more similar election statistics will appear, as well as other interesting news on the topic of the election campaign. This should not be misleading.

*The American elections are a big, drawn-out show. Their main task is to present to citizens the illusion that they determine the future of the country. In reality, power remains in the hands of a narrow circle of oligarchy, consisting of owners of large corporations and politicians close to them.*

They determine the course of development of the most influential power in the world. Only now this course has gone astray and the US leadership in the world has been called into question, which, in turn, is seriously changing the internal political situation. As well as vice versa. And therefore, not only the United States, but the whole world is entering a very dangerous period, fraught with various surprises.





# Heavenly pilgrim

To the 135th anniversary of the birth of Yezep Drazdovich

**Yezep Drazdovich — a traveller in his native land, artist, teacher, discoverer-astronomer, archaeologist, folklorist. Wandering and pilgrimage in our tradition were never condemned, and the wandering artist, who painted bright 'dyvans' to decorate huts, and in his free time looked at the stars, was, of course, revered as a person with oddities, but harmless.**

**Yezep Nartsizavich Drazdovich was born in 1888 on the Punki farm in the Vitebsk Region, into a poor noble family, which, as usual, had many children. He lost his father early, and Yezep's mother raised her six sons alone as best she could. What did he get from his mother? A naive saying from an exhausted woman who dreams of a good future for her children: 'Study and experience the orbits of heaven...' This is exactly what Yezep Drazdovich later called the first and most famous book on astronomy — *Orbits of Heaven*.**

By Irina Ovsepyan

## Humanist

He received little education — three classes of primary school in the city of Disna, Drazdovich's studies continued in Vilna in 1906, he studied what attracted him most — drawing. The Vilna Drawing School, where the famous Itinerant artist Ivan Trutnev taught, became his home for several years. In 1908, to his luck, he made acquaintance with publishers who published Belarusian books in Vilna. This is how Drazdovich first declared himself as an artist, designing the book of poems by Konstantia Builo *Kurgannaya Kvetka* and many other publications, made drawings for the Belarusian primer... Communicating with writers, he himself began to compose a little — all this would later result in the creation of the stories *Garadolskaya Pushcha*, *Relics of the Past...*

In 1910, Drazdovich was drafted into the army, he, being kind and compassionate by nature, took paramedic courses and served in an outpatient clinic. The World War I finds him in a reserve battalion, where every day the wounded are delivered from the front, on some days half a thousand people at once. Bloody bandages and amputated limbs, typhus and Spanish flu, the endless measure of human suffering caused by the war, forever turned him away from any militarism. All his life he then dreamed of an era of mercy, "And the time will come when most of the inhabitants of our planet will refuse to participate in wars.

**And all the technology and scientific achievements will be spent not on shedding blood, but on the opposite. To support life..."**

## Enthusiast

After the World War I, he ended up in Minsk — he taught drawing, worked as a book illustrator and decorator in the theatre, and made sketches of the city, which preserved for us the appearance of the capital of that time. In Minsk, his passion for archaeology develops: Drazdovich studies the bed of the Nemiga River, conducts excavations in Zaslavl and Svir. Upon returning to Western Belarus, the artist finds himself in territory actually occupied by Poland. On the other side of the demarcation line, where the Belarusian was mercilessly eradicated for about 20 years, his ideas and aspirations are not only unnecessary — they are recognised as harmful. He is trying to open a school for Belarusian children in the village of Stolitsa — the Polish authorities close it three months later. He teaches drawing at the gymnasiums of Glubokoye, Novogrudok, Radoshkoviichi — and everywhere he finds a trail of unreliable rebel.

At the same time, Yezep immerses himself in the history of his native land, collects folklore for the Vilna Belarusian Museum, describes the life of peasants, makes sketches with his precise artist's pen, and participates in archaeological excavations of Slavic settlements. It is these years, despite all the difficulties, that become fruitful for literary work and for his development as an artist. From his expeditions he brings dozens of unique graphic albums, makes archaeological discoveries, plunges headlong into the life of the Belarusian peasantry — and is horrified by the poverty and misery in which people live under the lords.

Drazdovich publishes prose and paints pictures, and for the first time gathers together his ideas about astronomy — and begins to dream about space travel and the fact that man is not alone in the Universe. This dream is reflected in his paintings — this is how the paintings *Life on Mars*, *Life on Saturn* and *Life on the Moon* appear...

## Prophet

Yezep Drazdovich is called everyone today — both the Belarusian Tsiolkovsky and our Leonardo da Vinci. But during his lifetime he remained an unrecognised prophet: his brilliant insights as a tal-

## Traveller

The Great Patriotic War horrifies the middle-aged artist. These years he lives on a distant farm, hiding in the friendly house of Yanka Pochupka from the Nazis, whom he perceives as evil incarnate. Back in the 1930s, when Hitler broke through to power in Germany, Drazdovich painted two paintings *The Spirit of Evil* and *The Spirit of Darkness*, foreseeing the troubles that would befall the world.

In occupied Belarus, he painted pictures and composed his last fundamental work on astronomy, *The Theory of Motion in Cos-*



**Landscape Under the Rings of the Planet Saturn (Saturland). 1931**



**Welcoming Spring Coming on Saturn. 1932**

ented amateur, decades ahead of official science, seemed to his contemporaries to be either naivety or madness. He himself said,

**"Most of my visions are not a creation of fantasy, not self-deception, they are a real gift of clairvoyance."**

Having completed short-term teaching courses after the annexation of Western Belarus to the BSSR, he works in schools in Glubokoye and Luzhki, teaching everything from drawing to astronomy and from history to botany. And in his free hours, plans for an expedition to the Moon, a diagram of a multi-stage rocket and various aircraft appear on the pages of his diaries. Many of Yezep Drazdovich's insights are now recognised discoveries of other scientists: such is the fate of all amateur geniuses who draw horizons for science that are too distant, boundless in the present.

*mological Meaning*, for the first time setting forth a concept close to the later theory of black holes. True, after the war, the Soviet Union does not need fabrications about the celestial spheres, and even so fantastic and, in the eyes of that time, insane, but the working hands of builders and the strong backs of grain growers. He is refused publication in both Minsk and Moscow, and he takes this refusal hard. Drazdovich is also not accepted into the union of artists — his art is too strange and incomprehensible, too unusual, unusual.

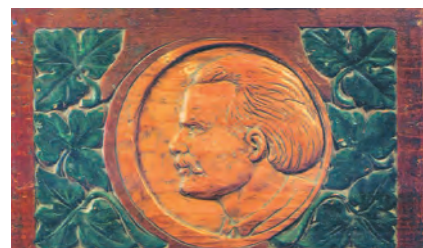
**In a changed world, it is increasingly difficult for him to fit into society: the old way of life is destroyed, swept away by a storm, smashed to pieces by bombs, and the new one, being built on ruins and ashes, is unfamiliar and alien to him.**



**Prophet. 1931**



**Ring of Prince Vseslav. 1940-1946**



**Box with a self-portrait image**

Drazdovich's friend, poet Maksim Tank, would later write about him in his memoirs, "This is an original and talented person. Unfortunately, he could not find his place in our living conditions... His original paintings, written in ink, watercolour and oil, not only surprise with their vision of the world, but also make us think about topics that have not yet been solved that surround a person."

In 1954, peasants find the wandering artist unconscious on the road and send him to the hospital, where he dies. Yezep Drazdovich is buried in the village cemetery in the village of Leplyany. The heavenly pilgrim and homeless person returned to his home...

A resident of Kobrin told why she returned to Belarus after living abroad for a decade and a half



Italy or Belarus? The answer is obvious to Anna Marach. Having lived abroad for a decade and a half, she returned to her native Kobrin and is happy.

“I’m proud that I was born and raised in this city,” says Anna, to whom we came for fragrant wheat bread. A year ago, she learned to bake loaves and is glad that baking, which has become her favourite business in her life, is gaining momentum.

## To the shore of Mukhavets River for a round loaf

By Valentina Kozlovich

### She felt her roots

“Remember the finale of the *And Quiet Flows the Don* film, the episode when Melekhov returns to the small village? Grigory, worn around the edges, stands at the gates of his home, and his feelings overwhelm him. There are tears in the eyes. A dream has come true — he is in his native land, he is happy, despite what he has experienced. So am I. In Italy, I really missed my loved ones, the quiet streets of Kobrin, the park, Mukhavets River, the Dnieper-Bug Canal... If those who left say that they are not sad for Belarus, don’t believe it — it’s not true,” Anna begins answering a ‘why did you come back?’ question that is already familiar to her.

*In Italy, she had a settled life. They lived in a family mansion. Her husband is a cardiologist. Surrounded by care and love, Anna gave birth to a daughter. They named her Raquel in honour of her mother-in-law, with whom she developed friendly relations.*

During her life in a small town on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, the Belarusian graduated from the culinary academy in Florence and even organised a small business — during the season she rented out rooms to tourists and fed them.

“What went wrong?” I’m still trying to get a specific answer out of Anna.

Gesturing like a true Italian, she expressively continues, “Bright, warm, passionate! Sun-dried tomatoes, limoncello, lasagna. Yes, this is Italy. But this is how tourists see her on vacation in the summer. And then there is winter, when the wind blows garbage all over the coast, when trees fall, and you can be left without electricity for several days... But there are many serious problems that are unusual for us, which are impossible to ignore.”

Then Anna talks about children growing up early who can smoke drugs when gathered in a group in a crowded place. About gays who do not hesitate to demonstrate their relationships...

“You still remain Belarusian there, no matter how hard you try to assim-

ilate. When I came to my parents in Kobrin, the first thing I did was run to the grocery store to buy Belarusian products. Someone, perhaps, missed the birch trees, but I missed this store,” Anna believes that she did not take root in a foreign country because she felt her roots.

When Raquel grew up and the question arose about which school she would go to, Anna decided: to Kobrin. The husband did not argue. By the way, Gianni and Anna are still married, despite the two thousand kilometres that separated them. They go to visit each other.

The first thing Anna was pleasantly pleased with upon arriving in Kobrin with her daughter was the visit of a paediatrician,

*“In Italy, the paediatrician does not come to your home. You have to go to a private office, not even a clinic with all the ‘delights’ in the form of flu or pneumonia.”*

If you want, you won’t forget Italian, she says, even in Kobrin, especially since there are natives of the Apennine Peninsula in the city, “There lives with us an Italian married to a Belarusian woman. After the events of 2020, he left for his homeland, and recently I met him in a store — he returned. He says it’s more comfortable in Belarus.”

### One day she decided to try

One of the loaves that were presented at the regional festival of grain growers of the Brest Region in Gantsevichi was baked by Anna Marach. Sunny, like a grain field, decorated with sunflowers and poppies made of dough, and at the base there are stylised bags of grain with the names of farms. Many people paid attention to it, because in the loaf the story of the harvest was read and praise was given to the hands of the farmers.

“This was an order from the Zhabinka District. But not the first. I baked 12 loaves for the combine oper-



Pavel Bogush



ators in the summer. I was very worried, but I promised and did it within 24 hours!” Anna clarified.

It took Anna a long time to get into the baking craft. Remembering that my mother’s side of the family loved to bake pies, she decided to try it one day, “I baked it and put it up on the Internet, but no one bought it. Then I cut it up and distributed it to the neighbours.”

Flour, butter, egg, yeast... It’s only at first glance that it seems simple to create a loaf, says the nice baker,

*“The Internet is full of recipes, but there are secrets that nothing is said about. I learned them step by step, having fed more than one defective loaf to my aunt’s chickens. For example, all decorative petals must be of the same weight, otherwise the loaf will grow crooked during the baking process.”*

Anna was convinced that a loaf of bread has a soul, and you only need to take on baking in a good mood: with a smile, with gratitude to the Universe for the gift of the day and the opportunity to create. The process is completely absorbing.

“I keep an eye on everything — from kneading the dough to baking. I’m not distracted by anything,” the woman admits.

This year she baked quite a few loaves for grain growers. Very proud of this. But the favourite ones are still wedding ones. Rich and lush, which sometimes takes up to three days. Here Anna tries to strictly observe, or rather, recreate, Belarusian traditions,

*“People watch other people’s films and adopt other people’s things. Like, for example, the bride throwing a bouquet. In the end, one girl catches it, and she is happy, the rest are sad. But in Belarus, since ancient times, things have been done differently. Wiser. They baked beads and decorated the loaf with them. Then the matchmakers distributed beads, as well as flowers, cones, and various dough figures to all the unmarried girls, and no one was offended.”*

Next year Anna plans to attend the most hospitable Belarusian festival called *Batskava Bulka*. With her own loaf, of course.

The harsh political ban that Western adventurers tried to impose on Belarusian sports did not put our athletes out of action or psychological balance, but forced the entire system of industry development to reorient and change priorities: pay closer attention to the development of internal infrastructure, children's and youth schools, youth and their patriotic education. Perhaps somewhere there really was a lack of top-level competitions and extreme competition, in the hot cauldron of which class and skill grow faster, however, as the results of the Belarusian wrestlers this season have shown, patience and work will grind everything down, and luck favours the diligent.

## Despite the sanctions, young Belarusian wrestlers had an unprecedentedly successful year



Arina Martynova (in blue) showed herself well at each of the starts this season

# Young. Daring. Promising



Abubakar Khaslakhonov (left) during a fight with Olympic bronze medallist Mohammadhadi Sarawi

By Sergei Kanashits

### The 2nd CIS Games. Belarus

At the tournament, athletes under the age of 23 competed for medals — a show of talent in conditions as close as possible to combat. For the Belarusians it was a prestigious, but in many ways a warm-up start: the main championships were expected a little later. Nevertheless, the level of competition in Soligorsk turned out to be quite high. Let's celebrate those who later loudly declare themselves at the world championships. In Greco-Roman wrestling, Gomel resident Hleb Makaranka, the son of the bronze medallist of the 2004 Athens Olympics Viachaslau Makaranka, claimed a medal in the up to 60 kilogrammes category.

Alas, home ground did not help: in the 1/4 finals our athlete lost to the representative of Tajikistan and retired from the race. According to the chairman of the Belarusian Wrestling Federation, Alim Selimov, he underestimated his opponent, and Hleb himself will talk about an injury to the adductor muscle of the thigh. Subsequent events will show that these circumstances really played a negative role.

The Games did not go well for Pavel Glinchuk, who competed in the up to 130 kilogrammes category and started wrestling in Molodechno. Although he won bronze in magnificent style (a clear victory with a score of 9:0), he aimed for more. Alim Selimov, however, reassured us here too, "Pavel fought to the best of his ability. Considering that he only recently moved to a new weight

category and that he is underweight (he is only 103 kilogrammes), defeat by the Russian in the semifinals was expected. Glinchuk will still take his toll, Belarusians will hear about his victories." He must have second sight!

However, Abubakar Khaslakhonov (up to 97 kilogrammes) became our main growing star after the Games! In the final of the Greco-Roman style tournament, he met with the Azerbaijani wrestler, the current European champion, and literally smashed him on the carpet — 9:0! But many of the opponents were 5 years older than Abubakar! Our girls also performed well. Gomel resident Arina Martynova showed herself especially brightly and, as it later turned out, it was no coincidence.

### World Championship U20. Jordan

Belarusian wrestlers continued their triumphal march. Abubakar Khaslakhonov once again proved to everyone that his dreams of Olympic heights have a basis in reality and at his age this guy has no equal on the planet. In the final, the charge of the Minsk wrestling school did not seem to notice his opponent — the opponent from Georgia was destroyed with a score of 8:0!

Arina Martynova (up to 55 kilogrammes) endured the tournament no less brilliantly. In the final, the Belarusian defeated Romanian Carla Lirchi in 10 seconds, winning an early victory — 10:0! Moreover, at the preliminary stage, Arina met with rivals from Uzbekistan, the USA and Ukraine and did not allow them to take a single point, winning gold with

a total mind-blowing and delightful score for all her fights — 41:0! Incredible! Our team also won three more awards at the championship: silver was won by Alesya Getmanova (up to 59 kilogrammes) from Bobruisk, and bronze medals went to another Bobruisk woman Alina Shevchuk (up to 68 kilogrammes) and Kseniya Terenya from Minsk (up to 65 kilogrammes). Let's take note of these beauties.

### World Championship U23. Albania

This tournament ended two weeks ago and capped such a tense and eventful season. If the elite championship of the planet is considered the major league, then this is the second division. Here, in fact, ready-made masters fight for victory, for whom only a little is missing in order to confidently step into the pool of the main stars of the world wrestling pantheon.

With this understanding, they moved to results. The best among the Belarusians was Pavel Glinchuk, who returned home with a gold medal! In the first round, our wrestler defeated the Pole Jakub Antoszewski (11:0), then defeated the Norwegian Marcus Warren (9:5),



Pavel Glinchuk brought the Belarusian team its first gold at the U-23 World Championships

in the quarterfinals — the representative of Germany Lukas Lazogianis (9:0), and in the semifinals — the Armenian Aik Khloyan (9:0). The final turned out to be more intense, but even there the Turks Mustafa Olgun found no arguments against the Belarusian hero — 4:3 in favour of Glinchuk! Handsome!

Hleb Makaranka, who also reached the final, could also become a champion. In the decisive battle, the Belarusian was opposed by the representative of Russia Rakhman Tavmurzaev, who, alas, turned out to be stronger — 6:1. The Belarusian girls were not left without medals either. Alina Shevchuk won silver in the up to 68 kilogrammes category, and Arina Martynova and Victoria Radkova

won bronze in the up to 55 kilogrammes and up to 72 kilogrammes categories, respectively. Remember these names, you will hear them more than once.



Hleb Makaranka did not perform very well at the 2nd CIS Games, but reached silver at the World Youth Championships

### Adult World Championship. Serbia

The current world forum was pre-Olympic, and for this reason the level of competition was simply off the charts. The five best wrestlers from each Olympic weight category received direct admission to the 2024 Games, and therefore only mature, experienced masters could break through and prove themselves in this meat grinder. Not everyone among our youth had the opportunity to participate in such a representative championship. But those who fought in Belgrade not only earned a place in the national team, but literally bit it out with their teeth. Among those whose names have already appeared in this material are Hleb Makaranka, Abubakar Khaslakhonov and the ubiquitous Arina Martynova.

Makaranka and Martynova can regard participation in such a forum as an invaluable experience: they are still far from medals. But Abubakar (don't forget that the guy is only 19!) stormed into the cohort of the main favourites. Showing a stubborn but spectacular fight, Khaslakhonov reached the semifinals and only at this stage lost, as it later turned out, to the future winner Gabriel Rosillo from Cuba. I also didn't have enough strength for the match for bronze (the costs of my youth) — the seasoned Iranian Mohammad Sarawi turned out to be a little stronger. But this is not the main thing. And the fact that in the battle for fifth place and the Olympic license, the Belarusian young man managed to pull himself together and win! Thus, Abubakar Khaslakhonov became the only one from the entire men's team of Belarus who returned home with the coveted ticket to the Olympics! A man, not a boy!

**TOTAL**  
You can evaluate the intensity of the season and the success of our most promising wrestlers yourself. As well as give your own forecast for the further development of the career of each talent. We will end with the words of the head of the BSE, Alim Selimov, "Wrestling has been, is and will be in our country!" Truer words were never spoken.

## Photo of the week



BELTA

**Great Patriotic War veteran Valentina Baranova turned 100!**  
The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, congratulated this beautiful and active woman on her anniversary.

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



**On November 9th, 1818,** Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883) was born, a world famous Russian writer. He was a member of the circle of major French writers — Gustave Flaubert, Emile Zola, Alphonse Daudet, and the Goncourt brothers. He is the author of the *Notes of a Hunter* series of essays, the *Mumu* story, the *Rudin*, *A Nest of the Gentry*, *On the Eve*, *Fathers and Sons*, and *Virgin Soil* novels, etc.

**November 10th** is World Science Day for Peace and Development. The annual celebration was established in 2001 at the initiative of participants in the World Conference on Science, convened by UNESCO. The purpose of the holiday is to increase public awareness around the world of the benefits of science. Progress in science leads to the progress of society as a whole and each person individually.



**On November 10th, 1888,** Andrei Tupolev was born (1888-1972), a Russian scientist and aircraft designer, academician of the USSR Academy of Sciences, colonel general engineer, three times Hero of Socialist

Labour, Honoured Worker of Science and Technology of Russia. Under his leadership, over 100 types of military and civil aircraft were created, including ANT-25, Tu-104 (the first passenger jet), Tu-134, Tu-154. Tupolev aircraft set 78 world records and performed 28 unique flights.



**November 10th** is International Youth Day. On this day in 1945, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) was founded.

WFDY fights for peace, youth rights, independence of peoples, international unity of progressive youth; against colonialism, neo-colonialism, fascism and racism. WFDY has consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.

**On November 10th, 1918,** an armistice was concluded in the Compiègne Forest (France) between the USA, England, France and other states of the anti-German coalition and defeated Germany, ending the First World War. It lasted more than four years and claimed the lives of almost 10 million people. The armies of 38 states were involved in it. Four empires — Russian, German, Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian — ceased to exist.



**On November 12th, 1833,** Alexander Borodin was born (1833-1887), a Russian composer and chemist, doctor of medicine, associate professor, full professor and academician. One of the creators of Russian classical symphony. The most significant work is the opera *Prince Igor* — an example of a national heroic epic in music. The pinnacle of Russian and world epic symphony is the *2nd (Bogatyrskaya) Symphony*. He is the author of more than 40 works in the field of chemistry.

**On November 12th, 1918,** Vitebsk Regional Museum of Local History was founded as the Vitebsk Provincial Museum. The museum's funds contain materials from archaeological excavations in the Vitebsk Region, collections of numismatics, sphragistics, porcelain, weapons, early printed books of the 17th-18th centuries, tools and household items of the 18th-20th centuries.



**November 14th** is the national holiday of Kuzma in Belarus — the patron saint of blacksmiths. Therefore, this day is also called the professional holiday of these masters — Blacksmith's Day. Blacksmithing

is one of the oldest and most respected crafts. Despite the fact that modern industry has replaced handicrafts, the profession of a blacksmith remains very respected. And forged products today are expensive luxury items.



**On November 16th, 1965,** the USSR launched the unmanned spacecraft Venera 3, which successfully landed on Venus. Important scientific information about outer and near-planetary space was obtained. The Venera 3 station became the first spacecraft to reach the surface of another planet.

**November 16th** is International No Smoking Day. It is carried out in many countries of the world on the initiative of the International Society of Oncology with the support of the World Health Organisation. The purpose of No Smoking Day is to help reduce the prevalence of tobacco addiction, prevent tobacco smoking and educate the public about the harmful effects of tobacco on health.

