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The international motorcycle rally in honour of the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory finished near the Mound of Glory memorial complex

Heirs of the victors' generation

A motorcycle rally in honour of the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory gathered over 120 bikers from Belarus and Russia who covered more than 10,000km along the roads of the neighbouring country's hero-cities. In Belarus, the rally started in Brest. Members of the Harley Owners Group international motorcycle club visited the Brest Fortress-Hero memorial complex, laid flowers and held a minute of silence in memory of the victims. The bikers then headed to the Minsk Region, visited the Nikolaevshchina boarding house for the elderly and Istoki children's village. The large-scale event ended with a visit to the Mound of Glory memorial complex where the ceremony of placing capsules filled with soil from memorable places and a message to the heirs of the Great Victory took place.



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Belarus will not live under others' scenario

Seven stages of the scenario to destroy Belarus: Aleksandr Lukashenko revealed opponents' genuine plans

The President of Belarus met with the country's high-ranking officials to discuss not only the domestic political and economic situation, but also international issues

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that a step-by-step analysis of events in the country unearthed genuine plans and tactics of Belarus' external opponents and aggressors. The Head of State said that, over the last decade, they have been scrupulously preparing for this 'zero hour'. "To remove all deception, let's name these players. At the level of global centres, this is primarily the USA — or, to be exact, their network of foundations designed to support so-called democracy. American satellites — Poland, Lithuania, Czechia, and unfortunately our close Ukraine — worked on the European continent," Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

Each of these countries played its own role, he stressed. Czechia has been a resource hub for a long time. Poland initially worked as an incubator of media channels (Belsat, Nexta, and others) and then as a platform for an alternative government in exile. "Wounded by the Belarusian nuclear power plant construction project, Lithuania worked as a battering ram of Belarusian-European relations. Despite our unwavering support for the country (for instance, in matters of territorial integrity amongst other things), Ukraine became an outpost of political provocations contrary to the spirit of our mutual relations," Aleksandr Lukashenko added. "The organisers built their tactics in accordance with the classic American textbook on colour revolutions by the notorious Gene Sharp."

Stage one. Preparations

The President noted that foiled attempts to stage colour revolutions in 2006 and 2010 changed the approach to influencing Belarus. Foreign parties moved from direct-action technologies to methods of soft power and transformation of the government system from within.

"They started using new ways to shake up Belarus by targeting the unwavering supporters of the President: residents of the regions, hardworking Belarusians, public sector employees, pensioners. Tactics of this kind were actually applied in Syria and Venezuela. You may recall how methods of so-called social protest were tested in response to Ordinance No.3. It was these protests that later gave rise to dozens of bloggers, who started brainwashing various social groups via YouTube and Telegram channels under the guise of the fight for people's interests," Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

In his words, after attempts to shake society were suppressed in 2017, the strategists started working to create permanent hotbeds of disaffection in the regions.

Stage two. Parliamentary elections

Half a year before the Presidential election, the destabilisation technologies created were tested in the course of the parliamentary elections, Aleksandr Lukashenko stated. It was then that a network of specialised Telegram channels with clear-cut roles started working at full capacity in order to besmirch the Government and undermine the foundation of state ideolo-

gy, primarily by resorting to fake news and forgeries, the President added.

New forms of street activities were tested in addition to pumping up the information channels during the period of the parliamentary elections. A 'youth bloc' was specifically created ahead of the elections which actively shaped the mood of disaffection in various social groups under the guise of nominating candidates for parliamentary seats. It exploited topics that were seemingly removed from politics: the law on military draft deferment, mandatory jobs for university graduates, legalisation of drugs, and others.

Stage three. Preparations for Presidential election

During this stage foreign strategists carefully selected keys for every social stratum, while creating 'heroes' for various target audiences in Belarus, said Aleksandr Lukashenko. He remarked that a certain blogger, who wanted to become a Presidential candidate and tried to look



like a fighter for people's interests, started travelling all over the country. Major Internet platforms were created and mass media presence was stepped up to highlight a certain banker, thus sending a message to the private sector and the 'new strata'. Speaking about the nomination of his former aide as a Presidential candidate, Aleksandr Lukashenko stated that foreign strategists tried to exploit it by sowing dissent among the Government elite and tried to assess their loyalty towards the Head of State.

Aleksandr Lukashenko said, "In this complicated period the Government was fully engrossed by the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which unexpectedly took over the world. Instead of standing together in this global battle, the so-called independent mass media and Telegram channels did everything to complicate the work and destroy people's trust in the state."

Stage four. Presidential election campaign

Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out that when Belarusian society was warmed up by Internet assaults, a barrage of colour revolution technologies was launched. They were borrowed from protests in Armenia, Poland, Hong Kong, and other areas. "By using the tactics of a parade of pickets (recall the collection of signatures) it allowed several aspirants at once to get voters' signatures. Trips of candidates to regions were accompanied by 'carousel-like' queues (similar to those in the Baltic States) and hype from street art — just as happened in Poland in the past," Aleksandr Lukashenko stated, add-

ing, "Various modern political technologies were employed later on in order to convert politics into a show — aimed at the mass audience." For instance, the joint staff of the opposition's Presidential candidates built its tactics by exploiting the image of the woman, which is traditionally revered by Belarusians, but this time new styles were added to it.

The war of sociologies has become an interesting example, believes the Head of State. "All the resources were employed to win the virtual majority by means of fake news in the mass media and by creating confidence that the results of the Presidential election would be falsified and the current Government will lose," Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

Stage five. Maidan revolution scenario

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, the ballot day was used to try to stage a maidan blitzkrieg. Mistrust in results of the election was stimulated by appeals

for voters to cast their votes only on August 9th and for voters to participate in shady initiatives. The joint staff used appeals to voters to create artificial queues and raise tensions at polling stations.

Then the joint staff published preliminary vote count figures, which gave a reason to aggressively defend the 'stolen votes'. "The previous brainwashing heated up the outrage of the protesters on August 9th-11th," Aleksandr Lukashenko noted, adding that they intended to simultaneously deploy thousands of protesters in streets of Belarusian cities and capture administrative buildings and landmarks.

The Head of State is convinced that if law enforcement agencies had been passive, further maidan revolution technologies would have been activated. History says that such actions often result in multiple human casualties and always end in tragedy for the country.

Stage six. Post-election protests

Aleksandr Lukashenko said that actions by law enforcement agencies prevented the protests from escalating. "Then the puppet masters suddenly changed tactics and made the protesters look like innocents with flowers, white clothes, so-called carnival rallies on Saturdays and Sundays being used. They also created the image of an allegedly nationwide protest that has no visible leaders and does not depend on their will," he said. The focus was made on the scale of events, their length, and the broad geography of the actions.

"At the same time — this fact is not always highlighted by mass media

— the policy of creating a radical wing of protesters was adopted. Step-by-step instructions were created for them (you can see this on the Internet as well), in addition to recommendations on what to wear and what to use, there were ways to counteract law enforcement officers, instructions on making and using Molotov cocktails and fireworks. Basic rules for staying in touch are advertised, including when Internet or mobile service are unavailable. 'Hong Kong' technologies for gathering crowds in predesignated places, for spontaneously changing routes, for protesters to work in sync are being polished," Aleksandr Lukashenko added. Massive information impact is reaching new heights. Protests are co-ordinated in real time 24/7.

The President noted that attempts are being made to make protests part of the nation's daily life. "Instructions on creating people's militia or self-defence groups are being copied. Tactics of backyard protests is implemented by means of setting up mini groups and chats for individual districts, residential complexes, individual backyards. Today the co-ordinators are trying to organise backyards, tomorrow they will come into your apartments. It is their goal. It won't work," he said.

Stage seven. An attempt to legalise the infrastructure of changes

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, the creation of the so-called Co-ordination Council did not justify the hopes of the protest organisers. After the organisers fled the country, they had to find and promptly advertise new smaller faces, preferably those with a scandalous reputation.

The Head of State noted that the war of symbols, the fight for memorable places that every Belarusian reveres is being actively exploited. New mechanisms and schemes of financing are being built. Warsaw-controlled channels are working hard to spread word about the so-called Plan B which provides for setting up parallel (allegedly people's) ministries, for sabotaging the economy and the social sphere.

"Accordingly, the Belarusian scenario for 2020 is a mixture of the most effective colour revolution technologies of destabilisation tested in various countries. It is obvious that they are focused on the scale and length of the protests, the exhaustion of strength and the depletion of resources. We know who the masterminds are, who wants what in Belarus, and therefore we aren't relaxing and are ready to respond to any challenge," Aleksandr Lukashenko concluded.

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When developing a new Constitution, it is important to form a common vision of what the country should be in the future, the President of Belarus believes. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, the new Constitution should prescribe checks and balances to the balance of power. "The draft of the new Constitution is probably the third. It's being worked on," he said. When the discussion process is completed, the final draft of the new Constitution will be submitted to a referendum.

It's necessary to keep together

The President met with the Russian Defence Minister

The Russian delegation has arrived in Belarus on a working visit to discuss with their Belarusian colleagues issues of military co-operation and in connection with the *Slavic Brotherhood* joint exercises that are taking place near Brest.

Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised at a meeting with the Russian Defence Minister, Sergei Shoigu, “We welcome this exercise and it’s good that it is proceeding very well, they tell me. We need to consider holding the second stage of the exercise and other military drills and work out a plan without caring about what others might say. We are not going to make anyone nervous or do anything blatantly, but we should take care of our own interests.”

The President added that he recently spoke with Vladimir Putin about new types of weapons, “I told him that when you come, we’ll see what we need to do to strengthen the Union State. There is nothing to be afraid of; we’re ready to go for it. The recent events suggest that we should step up efforts to protect the interests of Belarusians and Russians.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko said that thoughts that Belarus has become weaker, that we will not survive, and that Russia will step aside, are ‘speculations for fools’.

“We’re capable of maintaining control over the situation not only in Belarus, but also along our borders. Do not doubt our capability to defend our common Fatherland — from Brest to Vladivostok. The recent developments give us more grounds to stick together and to frustrate the plans of those who intend to drive a wedge between us in the future,” stressed Aleksandr Lukashenko.

In turn, Sergei Shoigu said that, this year, the Belarusian and Russian military had planned about 130 joint events: exercises, meetings, and sessions both in the format of bilateral co-operation and at international venues.

“Unfortunately, the programme was only 30 percent fulfilled. We need to reach at least 70 percent by the end of the year. For this, it is necessary to condense and carry out the second stage of the exercises, which are going on now. We will have the next exercises in October,” he said.



The *Slavic Brotherhood* joint exercises are being held for the sixth time. They began near Brest at a local military training ground. Usually they are held in a triune format; in addition to the military of Belarus and Russia, units of the Serbian army took part until this year. However, on September 9th, the Serbian side announced a six month moratorium on participation in any military games, so its representatives did not come to Belarus.

The two countries’ defence ministries note that the *Slavic Brotherhood* exercises are exclusively anti-terrorist and are not directed against third countries. On the Russian side, they are attended by three hundred paratroopers

from the Pskov Guards Air Assault Division, in addition to 70 pieces of equipment: the latest generation combat vehicles BMD-4M and armoured personnel carriers BTR-MDM ‘Rakushka’.

Belarus is represented at the exercises by units of the 38th Brest Independent Guards Air Assault Brigade with equipment. The main task, as explained at the headquarters of the manoeuvres, is to teach the ‘blue berets’ of both countries to act together when performing tactical tasks. The *Slavic Brotherhood* exercises will end on September 25th. After that, the Belarusian military will leave for Russia and take part in the strategic command and staff exercise *Kavkaz-2020*.

Foreign Ministry believes the European Union demonstrates total unwillingness to even try to objectively investigate the ongoing processes — as noted by Belarus’ Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei, in response to the speech made by the European Union High Representative, Josep Borrell, at a session of the European Parliament

Vladimir Makei started by pointing out that Josep Borrell had said ‘Ukraine’ while referring to Belarus. In particular, Josep Borrell said that Aleksandr Lukashenko is not a legitimate President of Ukraine. “I’d like to ask you right away not to interpret my response as interference in Ukraine’s domestic affairs... Although certainly judging by this slip of the tongue Brussels knows little of events in Belarus. Maybe it is our fault. Everyone can make errors,” Vladimir Makei noted, adding, “But in this case we are also saddened by the fact that the European Union has shown a complete unwillingness to even try to objectively investigate the ongoing processes. This is why I believe Josep Borrell’s remarks to be opinionated and biased.”

According to Vladimir Makei, Josep Borrell said that sanctions must be adopted prior to the next session of the Council of the European Union. In Josep Borrell’s words, it will confirm the authority of the EU. The Belarusian Foreign Minister stated, “I can hardly believe that it is nearly a direct quote. We were confident that the European Union’s authority relies on things other than sanctions. Let’s talk about categorical demands to start some inclusive nationwide dialogue. From a professional point of view, I believe that demanding something that has already been planned and announced is a testimony of undoubtedly good bureaucratic experience and analytical calcu-



Belarus is always ready for mutually respectful dialogue

lations. I’d like to remind you that Belarus’ President has recently once again reaffirmed readiness to initiate the process of reformation of the political system in the country by amending the Constitution. To read or quote the Belarusian Head of State would suffice.”

“Or is the dialogue understood as a different algorithm that can quench the thirst of the geopolitical revenge of the European Union?” Vladimir Makei asked.

He also spoke about the EU’s repeatedly stated position that the organisation of another Presidential election is the best solution. “The best solution for whom? For the European Union, which failed the win the election in Belarus? Are you confident it will be the best solution? Can you quote examples of when such ‘best solutions’ of the European Union produced the best results? Or did Josep Borrell mean something different when his tongue slipped?” Vladimir Makei wondered. “Maybe it is what started the talks about the illegitimacy of the Belarusian President? The Presidential election in Belarus may not have been ideal but the majority of the nation chose the winner. It is difficult to doubt the fact today. I would love to understand on what grounds representatives of the European Union think themselves equals of the Belarusian nation and think they have the right to pronounce verdicts about the acceptability of election results for Belarusians at their sole discretion. These two figures are definitely not equal to me.”

“What will the world come to if every outside player starts directly contesting results of elections in other countries?” Vladimir Makei wondered. “We understand that democracy is all about accepting the

opinion of the majority instead of using all the means and technologies to manipulate opinions to suit one’s own desires,” he added.

As for the visit of the current OSCE presidency to Belarus, Vladimir Makei said he was surprised that OSCE representatives want to come to Belarus as fast as possible yet they had three weeks and still failed to send an ODIHR mission to watch the Presidential election in Belarus. “Are they worried about the lack of an invitation?” Vladimir Makei noted.

He stressed that Belarus’ stance had been clearly and unambiguously relayed to western partners via bilateral channels and via the OSCE platform. “Belarus respects the OSCE and believes this organisation to be an important tool for supporting peace and stability in the region. Yet we still have to see — and the contacts we’ve had so far have not been able to convince us — ‘an added value’ in the visit of the current presidency and mediator services of the OSCE for the sake of establishing a domestic political dialogue in Belarus,” the Foreign Minister added.

“Believe me, Belarusians will accomplish this mission on their own. However, we certainly don’t rule out a visit by an OSCE representative when the visit is deemed truly useful. Let me state once again that the Belarusian side is always ready for an open and mutually respectful dialogue with all the interested international partners, including the European Union. I have to admit that as a result of my previous personal contacts and phone conversations with Mr. Borrell I got the impression that the European Union thinks similar. I wouldn’t want to be ultimately disillusioned about it,” Vladimir Makei concluded.

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By Olga Korneeva

The glass furnace can produce 260 tonnes of liquid glass daily and the upgrade will improve the quality of the products the company makes, also increasing the output and reducing the consumption of natural gas (by up to 17 percent) and electricity. It will definitely have an effect on the enterprise’s profitability.

The enterprise’s Director General, Nadezhda Dubovets, said that the glass furnace was commissioned in September 2008. It has been in use continuous-

ly since then due to the peculiarities of the manufacturing process. The constant wear and tear had a negative effect on the state and capabilities of the equipment as time went by. The glass furnace is the only one in the post-Soviet space to have worked for 12 years. The upgraded furnace is expected to work for at least that long. The service life of a glass furnace is 8–10 years on average.

The upgrade did not affect the design of the glass furnace. Instead, it focused on using more economical materials from reputed manufacturers in order to reduce the consumption of electricity

Modern technologies

BelStekloProm commissions upgraded glass furnace

and natural gas. The materials were imported from India, Bulgaria, and Italy.

Several quality insurance procedures are triggered in the course of the manufacturing process.

The upgrade project took two years from when the documents were created and consultations with partners began. The operation of the glass furnace was halted in late July and it resumed operation in early September.

“Glass is the best type of container and the most environmentally friendly. Brown glass is optimal for bottling beer since it enables the amber-coloured beverage to keep its taste qualities and other parameters. It does not allow beer to oxidise. Beer stays as good as the day it was bottled,” said Ms. Dubovets.

Over Br10m was invested in the upgrade project which is expected to be recouped in four years.

BelStekloProm resides in the free economic zone (FEZ) Gomel-Raton and specialises in making premium glass bottles. The enterprise uses only high-quality raw materials and modern technologies. BelStekloProm has considerable manufacturing potential. Equipment from Germany, Italy, and the USA is used.

The company primarily caters for breweries located in Belarus and abroad. The constant importers include leading breweries of Germany, Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Poland, Finland, Lithuania, and Estonia. Turkmenistan is the remotest destination.

Special food

Production of products for people with phenylketonuria will be launched in Maryina Gorka in October

By Dmitry Prokhorov

The new facility will produce instant cereals, pasta, mixes for baking muffins and biscuits, mixes for mashed potatoes and dumplings, buckwheat and corn grits, as well as dry dairy products with a reduced protein content. It’s planned to release 12 types of low-protein products according to recipes developed at the Scientific and Practical Centre for Food at the National Academy of Sciences.

The Healthcare Ministry noted that a number of tasting events were held and received good reviews. Children especially liked the products. Moreover, its price is 2-2.5 times lower than for imported analogues. Some permits have been given, enabling providers to purchase the products for educational institutions.



Lyudmila Makarina-Kibak, the Chair of the Standing Commission on Healthcare, Physical Culture, Family and Youth Policy, emphasised that the launch of mass production of such food is an example of solving a very difficult issue at state level. This is a positive result of work by the Academy of Sciences, Parliament and the Healthcare Ministry with representatives of an organisation representing the interests of patients with phenylketonuria.

More than 500 people in Belarus suffer from this rare genetic disease. Every year, 15-20 children are born in the country with this diagnosis. These patients suffer from the breakdown of phenylalanine (an essential amino acid), which accumulates in the blood and has a toxic effect on it. Low protein foods are an important part of the life support of these patients.

Support for Belarusian exports



By Igor Svetlov

“The pandemic is having and has already had serious effects, and our task is to look for new tools to support our exporters under these conditions. The BelCCI has developed a unique project, unmatched in the country: the ‘Academy of Export’ business course. As part of it, representatives of enterprises and individual entrepreneurs will get theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the field of foreign economic activity, management, finance, marketing, logistics, taxation, customs support and business communications with foreign partners, free of charge. In fact, the project gives fundamental knowledge in export activities,” announced the Chairman of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Vladimir Ulakhovich.

In addition, the Chamber has received a license for advanced training in foreign economic activity with the issuance of the state diploma, and also launched a new ‘certificate of conscientious partners’ to domestic enterprises free of charge. It has become an organisation that registers and forms a register of exporters for deliveries to countries

such as Norway and Switzerland.

The BelCCI has developed a platform for its business contacts — featuring name cards of the enterprises with contacts and ads. According to Mr. Ulakhovich, a hundred Belarusian companies are currently represented on the platform, and firms from other countries are starting to register.

Mr. Ulakhovich stated that the *Eastern Partnership Trade Helpdesk*, a project of the International Trade Centre (a joint institution of the WTO and UNCTAD), is almost ready. It envisages the development of an online partner to assess regional markets and trade statistics. BelCCI has been chosen as the national co-ordinator of the project. “It aims to expand trade between the member states of the EU *Eastern Partnership* initiative and also with the member states of the European Union. Participation in the project will let Belarusian enterprises monitor regional market trends, inform the business community about trade barriers, and improve the qualifications of specialists in market analysis. We expect to complete this procedure and start working in late September,” the official added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Belarus supports China’s Global Initiative on Data Security

The proposed initiative is in tune with Belarus’ President Aleksandr Lukashenko’s initiative on creating a digital good neighbourhood belt, as was noted by the Foreign Minister, Vladimir Makei, at a meeting with the Chinese Ambassador, Cui Qiming.

This is the Global Initiative on Data Security launched by the People’s Republic of China.

Moreover, the parties have discussed the schedule of contacts at the top and high levels, the development of trade-economic co-operation, and interaction between the countries on international platforms. The meeting also tackled issues of joint counteraction to the spread of COVID-19.



Belarus and Russia discuss necessary steps to cancel roaming

Representatives of Belarus and Russia had a constructive dialogue on topical issues of the implementation of the relevant roadmap in the format of a videoconference. The Belarusian side outlined a number of inter-operator interaction issues requiring prompt resolution — to be completed by October 1st in order to abolish roaming on the territory of the Union State, including testing the passage of roaming traffic and implementing joint measures to identify and suppress fraud on telecommunication networks. The Russian side supplemented and supported these proposals.

The operators were tasked with completing the work on testing the transmission of roaming traffic and concluding anti-fraud measures.



Rare purple mushroom spotted in Belovezhskaya Pushcha

The violet webcap (scientific name *Cortinarius violaceus*) was discovered in the protected forest. It grows in the northern temperate zone, but is rare, mostly growing singly or in small groups. Collecting this mushroom is not recommended, as it is on the verge of falling into the Red Book.

The violet webcap is considered a close relative of mushrooms. It got its name because of the cobweb fibres, which envelop the cap and leg of the mushroom like a blanket. This blanket represents a whole system of protection against damage and creation of optimal micro conditions for maturing spores. As the fruiting body grows, it breaks apart and disappears.



Belarus
nominated for
WHO Executive
Board



Members of the
WHO Regional
Office for Europe
unanimously
nominate Belarus
for the WHO
Executive Board

In view of the coronavirus pandemic, the 70th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe is being held virtually for the first time ever. Representatives of 53 member states of the World Health Organisation will discuss various health issues, with a focus on the coronavirus response and the new European Programme of Work 2020-2025.

The WHO Regional Committee for Europe approved two countries from the WHO Regional Office for Europe — Belarus and France — that will be able to appoint their candidates to the WHO Executive Board for 2021-2023. Previously, Belarus was a WHO Executive Board member only in 1948-1950.

The de-jure election to the WHO Executive Board will take place at the next session of the World Health Assembly in May 2021.

The WHO Executive Board is a key decision-making authority composed of 34 health experts.

European Mobility Week



68 Belarusian cities and towns, including Minsk, joined the campaign in Belarus held from September 16st-22nd. The capital featured an experiment to measure the concentration of pollutants in the air and noise levels, with the aim of demonstrating the difference in emissions and noise levels when residents of the city do not use their private vehicles.

The programme also included another traditional event: ‘To Office by Bicycle’. As the Deputy Chair of the Minsk City Committee of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, Tatiana Dubik, announced, Minsk residents who travelled to work by bicycle were offered fruit, coffee and tea for free at six points in the city.

A new cycling route opened during European Mobility Week to link three eco-routes in Minsk: ‘The City of Birds’, ‘Silver Valley’ and ‘Chizhovka’. Ms. Dubik says it will enable people to go for a bike ride and observe birds. It will feature information boards describing local bird species.

On World Car-Free Day (September 22nd), drivers enjoyed the right to use public transport free of charge upon presenting their driver’s license or vehicle registration document.

European Mobility Week also featured the *Transport 100 Years Ago* exhibition which comprised three sections — as an engineer-architect of the Belarusian Association of Transport Experts and Surveyors, Yevgeny Loiko, says.

A new cycling route, a bicycle race and an opportunity to use public transport free of charge introduced as part of European Mobility Week in Minsk

The first section demonstrated the beginning of urban mobility in Minsk in the early 20th century and public transport of that time. The second part was dedicated to green projects of the capital (eco-routes, a project of the bicycle green ring through the city’s parks and the Slepianka water system, an idea to transform Nemiga Street into a pedestrian tourist zone), while the third showcased photos promoting eco-friendly means of transport.

European Mobility Week is held annually in late September and aims to remind people of the negative influence of vehicles on the environment, while inspiring people to turn to alternative means of transport. Every year, it focuses on a certain topic related to sustainable mobility. In 2020, it promoted zero-emission mobility and was held under the ‘Choose your Move’ motto.

Saving a little heart

Belarusian cardiac surgeons of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Paediatric Surgery have performed a unique operation on a newborn weighing 1,200g

Newborn rescue stories always evoke awe and affection, as well as boundless pride in doctors, who, it seems, are able to cope with any difficulty. Our doctors prove their professionalism every day, giving patients a chance of happiness.

Yuri Linnik, the Head of the Centre’s Paediatric Cardiac Surgery Department, said, “A girl weighing 930g was born at the Mother and Child Republican Scientific and Practical Centre. She had a congenital heart defect. It’s quite common in babies who have extremely low birth weight. In addition, aortic coarctation was suspected. This means that the vessel that leaves the heart has been somewhat narrowed. If this problem is not diagnosed and eliminated in time, then such children have a very high probability of developing serious complications that are life-threatening.”

The doctors transferred the girl to the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Paediatric Surgery. The operation

took about an hour and a half. According to the doctor, the surgery is performed through a small incision in the back without artificial circulation. “The vessel, which normally would not function in all children after birth, is simply tied up. Now the child’s condition is stable, and her life is not threatened. The prognosis is extremely favourable. However, it must be borne in mind that the girl’s body weight is still low, so the baby needs additional special care. She is currently in the incubator, where the most comfortable microclimate is being created for her,” explained Mr. Linnik.

Valentina Simonova, the girl’s mother, said the operation was performed when the baby was three weeks and two days old. “When I learnt about the diagnosis, I was very worried, but the doctors promptly sent the test results and reacted quickly to have the operation. At the time of the surgery,



she weighed about 1,200g and was quite tiny — 34cm tall. Everything worked out well. Many thanks to the doctors. I only saw my baby during childbirth and in photographs when I went to see the doctor. I couldn’t have imagined that such small children have operations. I’m looking forward to seeing my daughter, I want her to get better soon,” she said.

Dmitry Leskovsky, who heads the Department of Anaesthesiology and Resuscitation of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Paediatric

Surgery, drew attention to the fact that when nursing such patients, everything is important: the ambient temperature, humidity, the amount of oxygen and the volume of noise. “This is a complex and high-tech job: to transport such a patient to the operating room, undergo anaesthesia, take back into the ward and take care of the child in the future. Medicine does not stand still, thanks to modern equipment and the skills of specialists, the weight of patients is now not as big a problem as it was 5-10 years ago,” he emphasised.



The Information and Educational Centre of the Belarusian State University in Izmir has become the third such branch of the University in Turkey, joining their centres in Antalya and Ankara. It will be based

Expanding educational borders

BSU’s Information and Educational Centre opens in Turkey

at the Atlas Private Educational Services Company to hold career guidance events and offer advice to aspiring students from Turkey regarding admission and study at BSU.

Jointly with the Turkish company, the University will provide organisational support to potential applicants in preparing paperwork for admission to the BSU. It will also provide the Centre with the necessary printed, video and multimedia materials, said BSU staff.

The Belarusian State University maintains academic contacts with ten Turkish universities, in-

cluding the universities of Ankara, Pamukkale, Bahcesehir, Karabuk, Istanbul Okan, Erciyes, Istanbul, Anadolu, as well as Istanbul Medeniyet. Twenty-seven Turkish citizens have previously studied at the Belarusian State University.

Since 2001, the BSU’s Department of International Relations teaches the Turkish language and runs a course in Turkish Studies. The Turkish Language and Culture Centre also operates here.

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Green wrapper for the product

Experts explain how the country is gradually replacing plastic packaging with eco-friendly

The dominance of polymer packaging is destroying nature. If we fail to control the process, an environmental disaster is inevitable. Belarus has taken the path of moving away from the use of plastic and, since early 2020, a comprehensive action plan has been realised to gradually reduce polymer packaging and replace it with environmentally friendly analogues.

By Yelena Kozlovskaya

Poly lactide instead of polyethylene



Aleksandr Kilchevsky Scientists are tasked with creating domestic biodegradable materials to replace the widespread polyethylene and polymer film which remain in the soil for several hundred years. According to the Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Doctor of Biological Sciences — Aleksandr Kilchevsky, the NAS is actively working toward this goal, aiming primarily to obtain a biodegradable film from polylactide (a material based on polylactic acid).

“It is not easy to produce polylactide,” says an academician and Doctor of Chemical Sciences — Vladimir Agabekov — who is directly involved in this scientific topic. He explains, “The manufacturing facilities operate in America and France but no company will share the technology since they don’t want competition. If they agree to sell it, then the entire line as a whole will be proposed.”



Vladimir Agabekov

With this in mind, our researchers have chosen another way: to test all foreign polylactides and modify the best of them — adding other substances to enhance the effect of decomposition. Lignin — a substance obtained from wood waste — is used. It is found in Belarus in large quantities and, as a result, packaging becomes cheaper: for now, polyethylene is much more expensive than polylactide.

“We bought 450 kilograms of American polylactide, added up to 10 percent of lignin and tried to make a bio-film for packaging,” says Mr. Agabekov. “We were successful. This film can be of different width and thickness, depending on the purpose. The material is much cheaper than polyethylene and even slightly cheaper than paper packaging.”

The film is currently being tested for bio-degradability. According to scientists, within a month, it will break down into carbon dioxide and water. The compost can then be used as a fertiliser. In addition, polylactide is planned to be used not only in packaging, but also in the production of disposable medical masks.

Paper and heat, but fat resistant

Belarusian scientists are working on creating another biodegradable material for packaging: paper with various properties. The Institute of General Inorganic Chemistry of the National Academy of Sciences has developed a paper packaging material that is fat- and moisture-resistant. It is already being produced at the Goznak Paper Mill in Borisov and 80 tonnes of paper is expected to be delivered annually. Scientists are also developing other types of paper: heat-resistant and biocidal.

“One circumstance hinders this process: there’s nowhere yet to test materials for biodegradability,” notes Mr. Kilchevsky. “Accordingly, in the near future, a laboratory should be set up in Belarus to enable all institutions of our country to test packaging materials for biodegradability. Such a laboratory is planned to be opened on the site of the Institute of Housing and Communal Services of the National Academy of Sciences by late 2020.”

In the meantime, our manufacturers test the packaging in foreign centres — which is very expensive. Accordingly, its cost is high.



Impossible to change the situation in one fell swoop

“The problem of plastic rejection is multi-faceted since it concerns the competence of many management bodies and industries,” says Olga Sazonova, the Head of the Main Department for Waste Management, Biological and Landscape Diversity of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. “However, the main step has already been taken and catering establishments will be the first to say



Olga Sazonova

‘no’ to disposable plastic: from January 1st, 2021, plastic disposable tableware will disappear in cafes, bars and canteens. To be more precise, almost all types: cups, stirring sticks, tubes, knives, forks, and so on, with the exception of cup lids.”

Our country has taken another eco-friendly step, initiating amendments to the Customs Union’s technical regulations ‘On Packaging Safety’. The document will restrict the use of PVC labels on PET packaging which make it difficult to process this popular type of polymer. The document will also reduce the use of light packaging plastic bags in retail facilities, as well as consumer packaging for food products made of expanded polystyrene. In addition, the possibility of introducing a ban on the import of polymer waste into our country is being studied.

Ms. Sazonova also recalls the strengthening of economic incentives for manufacturers and importers of eco-friendly packaging. Since April, the fee for organising the collection and disposal of packaging made of biodegradable materials has been reduced by half.

Speaking about the timing of implementation of eco-enterprises, the official notes, “The main part is planned to be completed by 2023, and the scientific research by 2025. Why didn’t we set the same goal for everyone — for example, to reduce the use of polymer packaging by 30 percent in all industries? This is because one industry can do it painlessly or even completely switch to paper packaging and, for another, reducing it by 30 percent is an impossible task.”

Valery Goncharov, the Director of the Centre for System Analysis and Strategic Research of the National Academy of Sciences, gives an example, “Smoked sausages need packaging with the specified properties to ensure their preservation and safe transportation. Before switching to biodegradable packaging, it is necessary to select a batch of goods, conduct experiments, and work out the technological scheme to prove that the new packaging is suitable for technological purposes and meets all food standards and regulations. For example, it must be resistant to external contamination. Our colleagues have made edible packaging for confectionery products but it also needs to be packed in something that can be delivered to consumers.”



Valery Goncharov

Another deterrent to the rapid transition to eco-packaging is its price. “Environmentally friendly packaging is currently 2-4 times more expensive than plastic packaging,” says Mikhail Zhigalo, the Head of the Department of Trade and Public Catering of the Ministry of Trade and Antimonopoly Regulation. “If we suddenly ban traditional packaging and force everyone to switch to biodegradable, this will negatively affect the inflationary processes in the country. Also, while introducing a ban on single-use plastic tableware in public catering, experts have previously calculated that the pressure on inflation will be only 0.02 percent, so changes have started in this area.”

In the near future, the transition to eco-materials is expected in the retail trade. A draft resolution regulating innovations in the use of plastic in retail chains has already been prepared. “We’d more likely promote a liberal scenario of bans,” adds Mr. Zhigalo. “At the first stage, consumers will be given an alternative: to use a biodegradable or traditional plastic bag. It will also matter whether it’s a thin or thick package since it is problematic to recycle thin bags.”



Secrets of Castle Hill

Glass beads, metal knives, bronze jewellery: how BSU archaeologists reveal the secrets of an ancient settlement

A mysterious place that promises interesting finds is located in the area of Vileika, near the village of Rechki — known as Castle Hill. As the legend says, there was once a castle where a very cruel prince lived. An unknown elder cursed him for his misdeeds, and literally the next day, following the curses, the castle fell into the ground and a cave was left in its place. An archaeological expedition by the Belarusian State University’s History Department is working near the huge boulders considered to be the remains of an ancient settlement. *The MT* reporter wondered what finds have come down to us from the depths of time.

By Oksana Nevmerzhitskaya

Castle or not, this hill is of a strange form and situated right in the forest near the village of Rechka. Its height is about 17 metres and resembles a pie in several layers, with a flat top and steep slopes. On its north-western side, there is a cave, and it is still unknown whether it is of natural or artificial origin.

“This monument has been known since the 19th century. It was first studied and described by a famous Belarusian historian and archaeologist, Adam Kirkor,” says Polina Kurlovich, an Associate Professor of the Department of Archaeology and Special Historical Disciplines of the BSU’s History Department. “He was interested in a settlement that probably existed on this hill. There is a legend that a researcher found a golden sword hilt in the cave, but this is just a beautiful fairy tale.”

More archaeologists later worked on the site but, until the present expedition, none of them has ever conducted such a major excavation — though this time it is not on the hill, but nearby.

“My investigative interests lie in the search for settlements of the Great Migration era which was time when Slavs were resettling on the territory of Belarus, when their relationship with other tribes and archaeological cultures were developing,” explains Polina. “This period, which lasted from about the 3rd to 7th century, is quite complex, little studied, and has many grey areas. We know that people settled not far from the ancient Iron Age settlements.”

To confirm their views, the archaeologists dug several pits in different places — both on the hill and nearby. These are so-called small 1x2m experimental excavations. “They then immediately came across the remains of a blast furnace in which our ancestors melted iron from raw ore. A lot of industrial waste was also found, for example, crucibles in which non-ferrous metals were melted. A very interesting 5th century rare fibula was discovered. It’s a metal clasp for clothing, which also served as a decoration. Pottery was also found, but its fragments are very small and difficult to date,” the expert adds.

Ms. Kurlovich draws attention to the flat terrain around the hill; probably its



Aleksandr Kushner



entire area was occupied by a settlement located next to a beautiful, well-fortified town. There is no doubt that the hill that arose during the passage of the glacier ‘improved’ the handmade structures since the ramparts are too smooth.

“This is a huge settlement for that time!” Polina notes. “Usually such monuments have a cultural layer about 40cm thick, but here it is much larger. Do you see the piles of black soil? It’s found in areas where people started their activities. Some waste and organic matter accumulated, things were lost, pots were broken, food leftovers were thrown out or lost — everything is as it is now, only garbage was not collected or taken out centrally. As a result, a cultural layer was



An entrance to the mysterious cave

formed, and the thicker it was, the more intense life went on at the site.”

However, some facts require historians’ special attention. For example, they found many animal bones at one of the excavation sites. What was there? Was it a ravine or a man-made stream, or maybe a drain? What does a fairly thick layer of ash and coal indicate? Does the discovery mean a military attack that set fire to wooden buildings, or a normal fire? Or maybe it’s the waste of metal production? Another mystery is where did the people of the large settlement get their water from, taking into account that hills are common here and the river is quite far away?

“We need to dig and think it over,” Polina concludes. “Our investigation is like detective work: like them, we are in search of traces and various minor artefacts to restore the past.”

The excavation is divided into 15 squares. In each one, the soil is carefully removed with a shovel, then sifted. Each find has its own ‘address’: it must be recorded in which square it was found. This is necessary to restore the picture of life at that time.

Among the finds of the archaeological expedition are a bronze temple ring and a small perfectly polished stone axe — possibly a children’s toy of the early Middle Ages. A beautiful glass bead is mysteriously blue, while a bronze clasp for clothing offers up surprising special polishing with engraving. A large knife, the handle of which has not been preserved, was probably used as a combat knife, while a smaller knife — of a completely modern style — served as a household appliance. A miniature bell could also be a decoration, as well as a magical amulet that drove away evil spirits by ringing it. Clay spindles and an awl indicate that in all ages people sought to make their work more comfortable. Judging by their age, the settlement near the Castle Hill existed in about 5th-10th centuries.



Polina Kurlovich is looking for settlements of the Great Migration era



Mexico reopens its ruins

Mexico's pre-Hispanic ruin sites begin reopening to tourists for the first time since they were closed due to the coronavirus pandemic in March

The ancient sites hadn't seemed so lonely since they were abandoned centuries ago. The few hundred visitors who will be allowed into most sites must line up for limited tickets, get their temperatures checked, wear face masks, get a dose of hand sanitising gel and stay 1.5m from each other. Admission will be limited to just 30 percent of the sites' capacities.

At the country's most-visited archaeological site, the pyramids of Teotihuacan just north of Mexico City, cash-strapped trinket vendors returned but there were few visitors. Visitors are limited to 3,000 per day and are not al-

lowed to climb up the Pyramids of the Sun or Moon, which used to draw tens of thousands of visitors for the Spring and Fall equinoxes each year.

Omar Gonzalez visited Teotihuacan with his family on the first day it opened, saying they had been looking forward to the trip since last year. "We had the package and everything else, but unfortunately due to the contingency we had to postpone it until now," he said.

Teotihuacan was perhaps the most important and influential city in the region during its apex between 100 B.C. and A.D. 750, when it had about 100,000 residents.

The city was abandoned long before the rise of the Aztecs in the 14th century.

Spanish tourist Mateo Garrosh came after a little research. "I looked up on Internet what places are open. But it wasn't all that easy, because each place opens a different day," he commented.

Mexico is desperate to reopen its tourism industry, and archaeological sites are a key part of the country's attractions. Tourism provides 11m jobs, directly or indirectly in Mexico, and many of those workers simply went home to wait it out after people stopped travelling during the pandemic.

Life on Venus?

A gas on Earth detected in the atmosphere of Venus. The 'entirely surprising' discovery of phosphine could hint at unknown processes occurring on Earth's 'twin'.

On Earth, phosphine is a flammable, foul, toxic gas produced by bacteria that doesn't require oxygen.

Venus is similar in size to Earth and often referred to as Earth's 'twin'. It's our closest planetary neighbour, but it spins backward compared to other planets. The planet's thick atmosphere helps to trap heat, and its surface is hot enough to melt lead.

Above its hot surface, which is 900 degrees Fahrenheit, the upper cloud deck that's 33 to 39 miles above the planet's surface is much more temperate. But Venus' clouds are very acidic, which should quickly destroy phosphine. So how did it get there?

"Something completely unexpected and highly intriguing is happening on Venus to produce the unexpected pres-



ence of tiny amounts of phosphine gas," said Sara Seager, a study co-author and astrophysicist and planetary scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Chinese vaccine ready for use in November

Chinese people will have access to locally developed coronavirus vaccines as early as November or December, according to a top scientist from the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Clinical trials of several vaccine candidates had been progressing smoothly and preparations were being made to go into mass production, Wu Guizhen, the CDC's chief biosafety expert, said. "I joined the experimental group and had a coronavirus shot in April. I've felt quite good in the past few months, nothing abnormal. The process of inoculation did not cause any localised pain," he noted.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), more than 30 vaccine candidates are undergoing clinical trials around the world. Of the nine to have reached the final, phase three, stage, five were developed in China.

Wu said she was optimistic about the vaccine candidates' efficacy and safety. "We expect them to remain effective for one to three years... [but] the results will need to be observed for a longer time."

On the subject of mass production, Wu said experts had been assessing the capabilities of various facilities. "Two [plants] have won approval and the appraisal of a third is under way," she said.

In an interview given last month, Zheng Zhongwei, the Director of the National Health Commission's Science and Technology Development Centre, said China had been administering a locally produced Covid-19 vaccine candidate to selected groups of workers, including medical staff and border inspection officials, since July.

He said the inoculation programme would be rolled out to include people who worked in the transport and service industries and at wet markets, with the aim of creating an 'immunity barrier'.

None of those who had received an initial dose reported a fever and only a few had any adverse reactions, he said.

Robots are stacking shelves in Tokyo convenience stores

Japan has the oldest population in the world, and that's causing an acute labour shortage. With almost a third of the population aged 65 and above, finding workers can be a challenge.

Increasingly, companies are turning to technology as a solution — including two of the biggest convenience store franchises in Japan, FamilyMart and Lawson.

Recently, Lawson deployed its first robot in a convenience store, in Tokyo. FamilyMart trialled the same robots last month, and says it plans to have them working in 20 of its stores by 2022.

Both chains are deploying a robot named Model-T, developed by Japanese startup Telexistence. Seven feet tall when extended to its full height, the robot moves around on a wheeled platform and is kitted out with cameras, microphones and sensors. Using the three 'fingers' on each of its two hands it can stock shelves with products such as bottled drinks, cans and rice bowls.

"It is able to grasp, or pick and place, objects of several different shapes and siz-

es into different locations," Matt Komatsu, the Head of Business Development and Operations at Telexistence, notes.

This sets it apart from other robots used in stores, such as those used by Walmart to scan shelf inventory, or the ones used in warehouses to stack boxes. Warehouse robots 'pick up the same thing from the same place and place it on the same platform — their movement is very limited compared to ours', says Matt Komatsu.

The Model-T robot — named after the Ford automobile that pioneered assembly line production in the early 20th century — is controlled by shop staff remotely. A human 'pilot' wears a virtual reality headset and special gloves that let them 'feel' in their own hands the products the robot is holding. Microphones and headphones allow them to communicate with people in the store.



The leather that’s my life

Master leather-worker from Kopyl — Vladimir Zenkovich — talks about saddle stitch, musical inspiration and all-round creativity

It is possible to make incredibly beautiful and sophisticated items from genuine leather: from a brooch and an openwork bracelet to a solid briefcase and a fashionable leather jacket. A resident of Kopyl, Vladimir Zenkovich, makes bright, stylish and durable handmade items: purses, coin cases, bags and much more. *The MT* reporter dropped into his workshop.

By Tatiana Shimuk

From musician to craftsman

In Vladimir’s garage, converted into a workshop, everything is non-standard: there are powerful musical drums, with speakers next to them, while a pipe hangs on the wall. Instead of wallpaper, there are many posters of music concerts. Our character explains such an original interior by the fact that all his life he has been passionately engaged in music.

He begins the conversation with vivid memories, “Music has accompanied me since childhood. I was born in the Kopyl District, but my parents travelled in search of high-paying jobs throughout the Soviet Union. I lived both in Barnaul and in Western Ukraine. After school I joined the army and served in the border troops. Before that I learned to play the trumpet well. I remember that I played it at musical performances in the orchestra at important city events. Just imagine, we opened even the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.”

“Do these percussion instruments work?” I look at Vladimir’s drums.

“Of course. I was a hot rock music lover, so became interested in playing drums. I wanted to be the centre of public attention, setting more rhythm and drive. After all, it is the drummer who is considered to be the heart, the engine of the band. I began to tour with various pop groups and played with Yakov Naumenko in the *Karusel* band, Aleksandr Solodukha and other popular musicians,” explains Vladimir taking the drumsticks and recalling his youth.

The original songs of the Belarusian rock group *Suzorye* sound especially for us. A short home concert by Vladimir Zenkovich attracts the attention of passers-by who walk by his house. It’s obvious they were interested in this impromptu lunch-time rock concert. However, we are switching from music to another, no less complex art form — handmade leather goods.

“How did you retrain as a craftsman?” I ask and glance at the exhibition of the master’s works.

“My sons Boguslav and Vladislav brought me into this interesting area. Thanks to them, I was lucky enough to get to know a real pro — the master of leather work, Andrei Protko, who creates clothes for bikers, musicians, famous people both in the country and abroad. My son, Boguslav, asked him if he could be an apprentice and he began to slowly comprehend the basics of the field. Now he’s an



Vladimir Zenkovich in his workshop

Tatiana Stolyarova

independent craftsman himself. Following his contagious example, I’ve got involved in the process. It was enough to feel the smell of genuine leather and to make a few stitches to understand that this is for me.”

Leather-working master

At first, working with leather was just an original hobby for Vladimir.

“My hands and fingers gradually got used to the awkward hammer blows, and to cuts and awkward first seams and glues. After a while, my hobby began to bring not only pleasure, but also income. Before that, I engraved portraits on monuments in the capital’s ritual bureau for four years. My son Vladislav is still doing this: he became an individual entrepreneur and



The craftsman views music as his main source of inspiration

received a state subsidy to buy a special engraving machine. I help my son. We carry out any portrait on hard material at the request of the customer,” Vladimir explains.

I notice drawing books and encyclopaedias on the book shelves in Vladimir’s studio.

“When I realised that, as a lover of handmade leather goods, I had mastered this topic step by step, I registered the craft. You can improve here endlessly, but I think that craftsmanship and mastery are different concepts. It takes inspiration, well-being, wit and time to make truly highly artistic pieces. Of course, you will also need personal savings to buy good-quality leather and paints,” the artist takes a special needle and thread in his hands and shows me how to do saddle stitch.



It was called ‘saddle’ because our ancestors used it to sew horse saddles and harnesses. It is believed that this is the most reliable way of piercing the skins. During the mini-master class, it turns out that the craftsman invented many boards and devices such as punches and sharp tools for the work himself.

“Why buy expensive tools when you can make them yourself?” muses Vladimir.

Prose for life and inspiration

In his work, the artisan uses the leather of horses, buffaloes, bulls and cattle. I wonder if one item is more expensive. Designer handbags and purses cost differently: simple — from \$8, with ornaments, complex elements and inserts — from \$30.

“In terms of the cost of products, everything is conditional these days. The coronavirus pandemic and the lack of various events for craftsmen this year have made adjustments to the price factor. I used to go to people, so the interest in the products was constant. Now I take into account the individual requests of clients. The time spent on the product, the complexity of the elements, and the cost of consumables play a role in price formation. The price also largely depends on the thickness and properties of the leather. I use special artistic acrylic for painting products. If, for example, a person asks to make a purse in two

days, then I, of course, work on the order around the clock. But, to be honest, I don’t like haste. I love to work with the Kultura [Culture] radio channel or my favourite music,” Vladimir turns on a properly working tube radio and tunes in to the waves of a sunny mood...

It’s time to create.

Belarus through artists' eyes

By Sofia Arsenieva

Get into the palace with Orda

Did you know that Belarus is a country of castles? In our time, only a few of the most enduring have been preserved: Mir, Nesvizh, Kossovo, Rumyantsev-Paskevich and others, while the majority of these architectural gems remain only in watercolours by Napoleon Orda. The self-taught artist from an impoverished Tatar family (his ancestors really came from the Golden Horde) was born in the town of Vorontsevichi in the Pinsk District. However, he spent more than twenty years in exile in Paris. The freedom-loving son of Belarus was on friendly terms with Balzac and Stendhal, Verdi and Liszt, and even played music with Chopin but found his true mission in painting. The collection of more than 1,000 landscapes gives a complete picture of what Belarus was like in the 19th century: luxurious palaces of magnates, unusual temples and charming estates of minor gentry. Based on Orda's drawings which are precise and detailed, some sites are being restored.

Go out to mow with Repin

Ilya Repin shared his first impressions after arriving in Belarus in May 1892, saying, "The land is warm, the people are diverse." The famous artist bought a small estate — Zdravnevo — on the picturesque bank of the Zapadnaya Dvina River and first of all turned not to painting but household routines. He rebuilt the classic wooden manor house into a fairy tale palace, laid a linden alley and got acquainted with all the neighbouring villagers. 'I am still here with nature, with cattle, with working people, at work. We get up at three o'clock in the morning, and sometimes at two in the morning and go to thresh the grain', he wrote to his friends in St. Petersburg. With a great

joy he told Tatiana Tolstaya about how he took manure to the fields. It was in those simple rural subjects that Repin drew inspiration for new paintings. The best of them — *A Belarusian* — can be seen in the permanent exhibition of the Russian Museum. It's hardly possible to pass by the portrait of a rosy-cheeked young man with bright eyes!

Zdravnevo still preserves the spirit of the great Russian artist. The manor near Vitebsk has become an art space where contemporary artists' works are exhibited and plein-air are held.

Fly over the city with Chagall

Avant-garde genius Marc Chagall achieved success in Paris, but it was all thanks to his native Vitebsk. Childhood memories, meeting his future wife Bella, the creation of art schools and experiments with protest art were fertile ground for Chagall's work for several decades.



Ivan Khrutsky's *Flowers and Fruit*



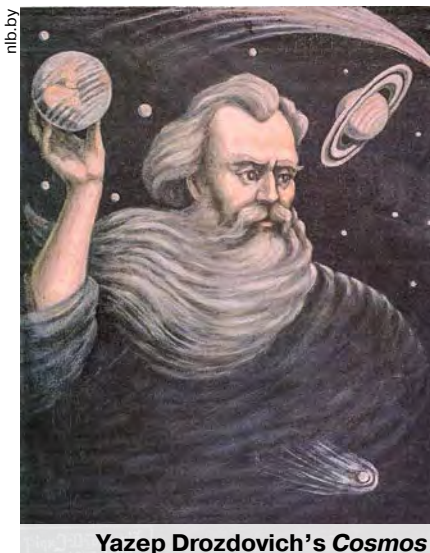
The art centre named after the famous painter welcomes guests at the same 'red house' depicted in his painting



Napoleon Orda's *Vitebsk*

Oddly enough, in Vitebsk, there is not a single original of his paintings, only graphics. There are also none of his personal belongings. However, the house in Pokrovskaya Street, where he spent his childhood and youth, has been preserved. Here, the novice artist painted a great deal: canvases featuring the views from these windows are kept in museums and private collections around the world.

Symbolically, the Chagall Art Centre in Vitebsk is located in the 'red house' on the banks of the Dvina River. This is the bright



Yazep Drozdovich's *Cosmos*

building depicted in one of the artist's most famous paintings: *Above the City*.

Eat an apple with Khrutsky

The most famous Belarusian still-life, undoubtedly, was painted by Ivan Khrutsky. A vase with autumn flowers and fruits decorated the 1,000-denomination Belarusian banknote from 2000 to 2016. However, not everyone knows that this is only a fragment of the portrait of the artist's wife.

Ivan Khrutsky didn't limit himself to the creative search. In 1839, he was awarded the title of Academician of Painting 'for his excellent work in portrait, landscape and especially in fruit and vegetable painting'. Despite the fact that his talent was recognised in the capital, he did not rush to live there and spent most of his life in the Zakharnichi estate near Polotsk. It has not been preserved but the local apples are still a great treat.

As for Ivan Khrutsky's masterpieces, these can be enjoyed at Belarus' National Art Museum, the State Tretyakov Gallery, and the Russian Museum.

Glimpse into the future with Drozdovich

Belarusians also had their own Leonardo da Vinci, who dared to dream of life on Mars in the early 20th century. Artist Yazep Drozdovich became famous for his amazing lunar landscapes and futuristic portraits of saturnians. His most famous painting — *Cosmos* — has adorned the history books in Belarus for a long time.

However, during his lifetime, Drozdovich's talent was not appreciated. He was viewed as an oddball and an inventor. To be able to buy food, the unrecognised artist created 'malyavanki' — painted carpets — for peasants. Paintings with fanciful patterns, fantastic flowers and animals and invented cities decorated many village houses after the war. Now collectors from all around the globe are hunting for these bright masterpieces and are ready to pay any amount of money. The largest collection of Yazep Drozdovich's works is kept at the Germanovichi Museum of Culture and Daily Life in the Sharkovshchina District.



In Zdravnevo, near Vitebsk, the manor where the artist had no time to sleep has been preserved

Reload!

With a new coaching staff and a changed methodology: how the women’s biathlon team is preparing for the season

By Tatiana Pastushenko

Last season, Oleg Ryzhenkov became head of the men’s biathlon national team. This summer, the expert was moved to work with the women’s squad. The decision, at first glance, is unusual: with the coaching duo of Oleg Ryzhenkov and Andrei Padin, our biathletes entered the top 10 of the Nations Cup for the first time in the last eleven years, and they took part in some spectacular races. State coach Yuri Albers clarified the matter, saying that Mr. Ryzhenkov — who speaks German well — can easily establish contact with the Austrian specialist, Reinhard Gösweiner, invited to coach our women’s team.

Mr. Ryzhenkov doesn’t hide the fact that, at first, he was a little confused by the decision. He knows men’s biathlon from the inside, and all his life he’s worked with the men... However, he agreed to a new challenge and right now is holding the sixth training camp with biathletes in Raubichi.

“We have already passed one of the most difficult stages of preparation,” says Mr. Ryzhenkov. “We’ve made changes to the training programme and are now working according to the method suggested by Reinhard Gösweiner. His pupils showed high and stable results, therefore, the correctness of the chosen training system is beyond doubt. Its direction was familiar to our biathletes: it is somewhat similar to the training methods of Klaus Siebert and Alfred Eder, but there are also some differences.”

What is the difference between the current method and the previous ones?

For example, the approach towards shooting training is completely different. The girls did not immediately adapt to the new system; there were turning points. We’ve completely changed the ready position when shooting prone and made adjustments to the same position when standing. Minor changes were also made to the design of the box itself: some more, some less. When movements have been developed over the years, it is difficult to change them later. Di-

nara Alimbekova and Irina Krivko — our most experienced biathletes — passed through the transitional period the quickest. We can see that the athletes have already made positive adjustments.

In general, the methods for preparing for the season around the world are not much different. The direction is the same for everyone: basic work, the development of aerobic potential, strength qualities, and so on, while the combinations of components and volumes are different. Gösweiner gave reasoned arguments that our biathletes currently lack cross training. In Soviet times, they really paid a lot of attention to it, but in recent years we have forgotten about it, placing more emphasis on working on



roller skis and movement techniques. The team is now doing more cross-country training. On the first day of the camp, the girls, for example, ran almost 20km! For them, this is not a shock: they understand the requirements, fulfil them and even suggest doing more.

We are also working hard on strength endurance this offseason, as the rules for preparing skis will be changed in the new season. The servicemen will not be able to use fluoride — harmful to health — and all lubricants will be without this component, which may lead to a decrease in the speed of movement over

the distance. Various studies have been carried out according to which the time to go 10km for men on skis treated with fluoride-free lubricants can increase by two minutes. Taking into account the fact that during the race there may be difficult weather conditions, the speed will be even lower. I think not a single team is ‘asleep’, everyone is adjusting to new conditions.

What form are our biathletes in now?

Let’s start with Irina Krivko. She is a very experienced athlete who has been showing consistently high results over several seasons. Her body is under constant stress, and not everyone can stand it. Last season showed that Ira, perhaps,

suffered slight strain from a psychological point of view. However, now it is clear that she has easily adapted to the new training method, everything is in order with her and with the shooting and she’s the team leader.

Dinara Alimbekova has had health problems in recent years. After shoulder surgery, she wasn’t always able to perform the full amount of strain. Certain difficulties still remain, but now Dinara trains practically without restrictions. Unfortunately, last month she was a little unwell, but is now ‘back in the ranks’. In terms of shooting, she

is one of the most confident athletes of the team. Dinara also had problems with her ankles which we are trying to solve. On roller skis, the problem was eliminated due to new insoles and changes in movement technique, but until she gets on the skis, we won’t know exactly how she’ll feel in winter.

I really like how Anna Sola works. Last year, albeit infrequently, she showed good results, and this gave her confidence in her abilities. She still has difficulties with shooting training, but in functional terms, Anya has added a lot.

What can you say about Yelena and Irina Kruchinkiny and Adelina Sabitova?

Although Lena and Ira are twins, they are very different. Lena is lively and aggressive in a good way, while Ira is calmer than her sister. In cross training they stand out. Functionally, Lena is a little stronger than her sister, while in terms of shooting, Ira performs her exercises more clearly and confidently: her peculiar calmness helps at the turn. Adelina Sabitova is a young athlete who understands all the information offered to her really well. In technical terms, there are no problems when moving on skis and roller skis, but so far she lacks functional training. There is still no basis in the idea that she needs to show some high results. We hope that gradually a strong and good athlete will grow out of her.

Last season, Alina Pilchuk showed herself great among the juniors. Was she involved in working with the main team?

She was with us at two training camps, enabling us to look at her level. This is a young promising athlete. So far, we decided that it would be better for her to train with her peers, so as not to harm her. After all, athletes always strive for the best, and it is important for us not to speed up the training too much.

Six people will definitely not be enough to fill the quota at the World Cup and IBU Cup.

This is a difficult question. It’s possible that the juniors will compete in the IBU Cup. Perhaps they will combine these competitions with the junior stages. But the question remains open, what kind of competition will be held this season. It is even possible that the stages of the World Cup will be held without spectators, and the International Biathlon Union will withdraw from the organisation of the IBU Cup and junior competitions.

Have you already discussed the tasks for the new season?

We don’t talk about them, but everyone knows perfectly well what needs to be done. The number one challenge is to return to the top 10 in the Nations Cup.



Oleg Ryzhenkov

ARENA

- **UEFA names contenders for the title of best players of Champions League and Europa League**

The shortlist of the Champions League includes three players in each playing role, and, of the 12 nominees, 9 are from the Champions League winners: Bayern Munich. Goalkeepers Keylor Navas, Manuel Neuer, Jan Oblak, defenders David Alaba, Alphonso Davies, Joshua Kimmich, midfielders Thomas Müller, Thiago Alcantara, Queen de Bruyne, and forwards Robert Lewandowski, Kylian Mbappé, Neymar compete for the awards.

In the decisive match of the Champions League, Bavaria defeated Paris Saint-Germain in Lisbon, with a minimum margin of 1:0.

Ever Banega, Romelu Lukaku and Bruno Fernandes compete for the title of best player in the Europa League. Sevilla won the Europa League for the sixth time in history, beating Inter in the final — 3:2.
- **Minchanka volleyball players win Belarus’ championship**

In the decisive meeting, Stanislav Salikov’s trainees defeated Zhemchuzhina Polesie from Mozyr — 3:0.

The final match took place dominated by the volleyball players of the capital’s squad, who secured a victory in three sets. The volleyball players from Mozyr tried to gain the upper hand through game discipline and reliable play in defence. As a result, Zhemchuzhina Polesie won silver, while bronze went to Brest Pribuzhie, leaving no chance for Mogilev Kommunalnik-MGU.
- **Belarus’ football team remains 87th in the world ranking — retaining its position during the match against Albania**





Anton Stepanishchev

A storks' nest in the village of Berkovich, Vitebsk Region

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.

On September 24th, 1910, the Slonim women's gymnasium was founded with a preparatory and 7 basic classes. In 1911, 338 girls studied there. Among the teachers were educators from the universities of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kiev, as well as the gymnasiums of Grodno and Gomel, who taught God's Law, Russian, German and French, alongside history, nature study, mathematics, physics, drawing, hygiene, geography, handicrafts, singing and dancing. During WWI (1915) the gymnasium was transferred to Kaluga. In 1918, it ceased operations.



September 24th is the World Maritime Day — one of the international holidays in the UN programme. Its goal is to draw the attention of the international community



to the irreparable damage to the seas and oceans caused by overfishing, pollution of water bodies and global warming.

On September 25th, 1765, Michal Kleofas Oginski was born — statesman of the Rzecz Pospolita and the Russian Empire, a diplomat and composer. Since

1789, he has been an Extraordinary Envoy to Holland. He also was an Ambassador to the Four-Year Sejm of 1788—1792 and the Grodno Sejm of 1793. In 1793—1794, he served as a state treasurer of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During the uprising of 1794, he was a member of the insurgent authorities in Lithuania and Belarus. He is the author of polonaise for piano, with his polonaise *Farewell to the Motherland* being especially popular. He wrote marches, waltzes, mazurkas, minuets, and romances. He died in 1833.



of nuclear weapons is one of the oldest goals of the UN; it was the subject of the first General Assembly resolution in 1946.

On September 27th, 1955, Viktor Tikhonov was born (village of Pukshino, Vitebsk District) — a Belarusian artist, who worked in



monumental and easel painting. His works include *Heritage*, *Meeting in the Village of Belaye*, *Autumn in the Braslav Area*, *A Warm Day*, etc. He died in 2018.

On September 27th, 1825, the world's first public railroad was opened in England on the 56km Darlington-Stockton line. A steam locomotive, designed by English inventor George Stephenson, carried a train with 450 passengers at a speed of 24 kmh.



country's calling card. Today they are supplied to more than 60 countries of the world. The products of MAZ, BelAZ, Atlant, BelOMO, Gomselmash, Minsk Tractor Works, Minsk Motor Plant, Mogilev Elevator Machine Building Plant are well known far beyond the borders of the Republic. This industry has been the leading sector of the Belarusian economy for several decades.

September 27th is World Tourism Day, established at the session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organisation in 1979 to promote tourism.



September 29th is World Heart Day. It was first organised in 1999 on the initiative of the World Heart Federation. The goal is to raise awareness in society of the danger posed by the epidemic of cardiovascular diseases in the world.



September 30th is International Translation Day, established in 1991 on the initiative of the International Federation of Translators (FIT). FIT itself was founded in 1953 in Paris and nowadays unites representatives of more than 100 associations of translators from more than 60 countries around the world with the aim of exchanging experiences and promoting translation as a profession and art. The date for the holiday was not chosen by chance; on this day, September 30th, 420, Saint Jerome of Stridonium — one of the four Latin Church fathers, writer, historian, translator — died. He is considered the patron saint of translators.

