



The revision of the Military Doctrine, the most important document in the field of military security is at the final stage

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Lida Castle — the harsh charm of the atmosphere of the Middle Ages

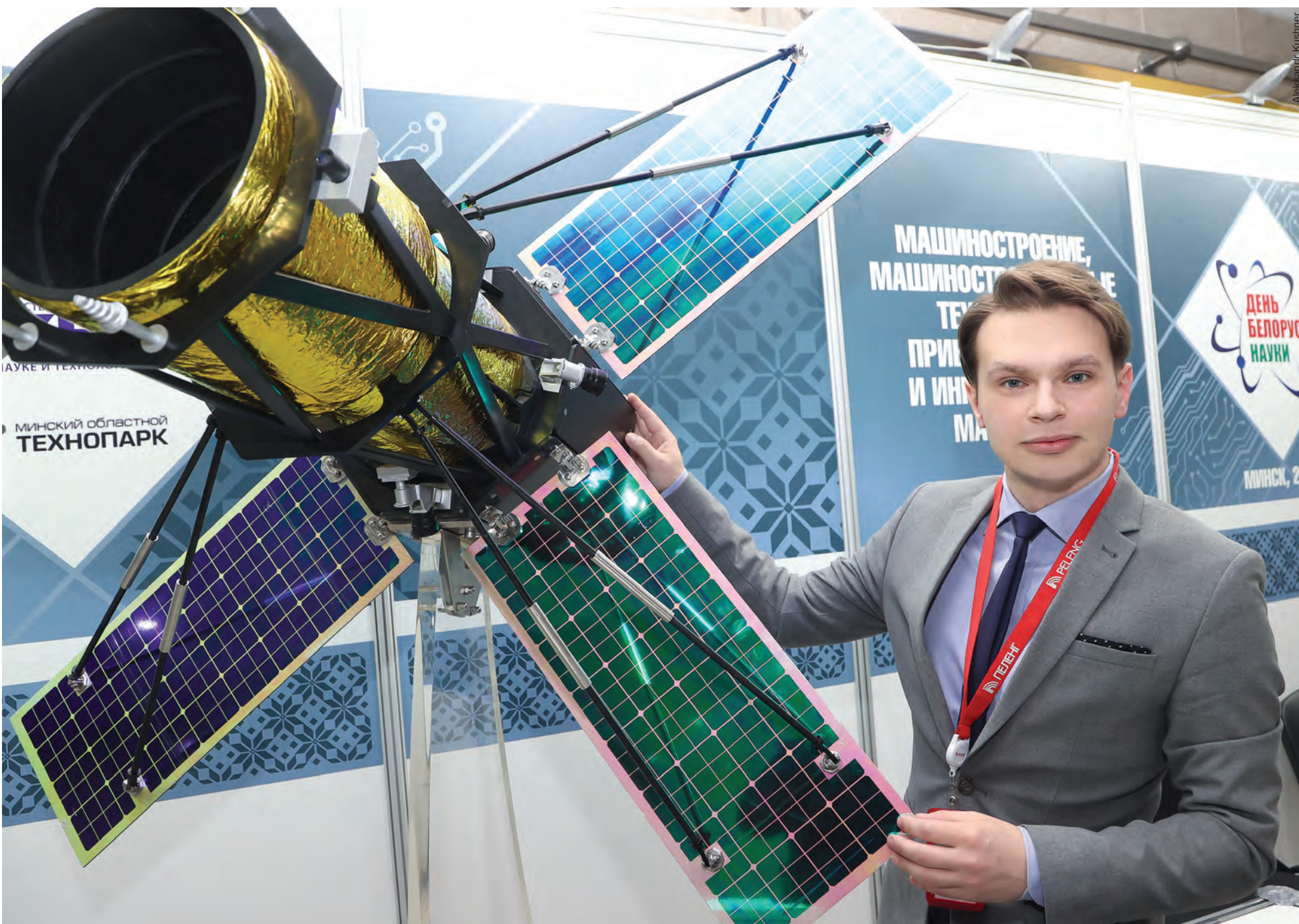
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At the exhibition of achievements of Belarusian science in the National Library. In the photo: Nikolai Starosotnikov, a leading R&D engineer at JSC Peleng.

## Science is meant to serve people

On Sunday, the country celebrated the Day of Belarusian Science. This is a professional holiday for scientists, academic figures, employees of R&D institutes and higher education institutions, as well as students and postgraduates engaged in research work. It is scientists and researchers who are able to change people's lives and the world around, to solve important tasks for humanity and respond to emerging challenges and threats. Belarusian scientists rightfully have something to be proud of. The results of their work meet high international requirements and are actively used in all sectors of national economy and social sphere of the country.

On the eve of Science Day, the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, met with scientists and pedagogical workers to grant Doctor of Science diplomas and professor certificates. → 4



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# President of Belarus: We cannot change the past, but we can protect the future

The plane of the President of Belarus landed at Pulkovo airport on Saturday, January 27th. It was on this day back in 1944 that the Red Army troops completely broke the siege of Leningrad. The feat of the city's residents, who survived almost 900 brutal days of deadly hunger, cold and constant air raids, is an eternal example of unsurpassed courage and perseverance. On Saturday evening, the Presidents of Belarus and Russia, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin, took part in the solemn opening ceremony of a new memorial in Leningrad Region — a memorial complex to commemorate Soviet civilians who fell victims of the Nazi genocide during the Great Patriotic War.

*"Today, on the anniversary day of the complete lifting of the siege of Leningrad, we are embracing the thoughts and feelings of people who experienced hell on Earth," said the Belarusian leader. "The price of the Great Victory is our common pain, and this pain is shared by all peoples condemned to death by Hitler's Germany. Belarusians feel it more than anyone else... Every such monument is a witness, a prosecutor and a judge. Every monument is an irrefutable proof of the genocide of the Soviet people... We cannot change the past, but it is in our power to protect the future."*

The Belarus President drew attention to the fact that the memory of the war victims today, the heroism of our fathers and grandfathers gives a hard



**The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has paid a working visit to the Russian Federation. The programme of the Belarusian leader's stay in St. Petersburg was very eventful. The key event was the bilateral talks with the President of Russia (the two heads of states had several face-to-face talks) and a meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State. Yet, no less important were Aleksandr Lukashenko's participation in the commissioning of a new wintering complex at Vostok station in Antarctica, the opening of a memorial complex to commemorate victims of the Nazi genocide, a visit to a requiem concert in honour of the 80th anniversary of the complete liberation of Leningrad from the Nazi blockade and to the SKA Arena sports complex in St. Petersburg.**

time to ideological followers of murderers and traitors.

"It is they who honour the executioners in their parliaments today. It was they who started the war with graves and monuments in Poland, the Baltic States and Ukraine. Complete madmen! Do they think that by destroying a monument, they can destroy the memory that lives in the heart of the people? The people who found the strength to build new peaceful relations with those states that just yesterday brought suffering and death to our lands. The memory of the heroism of the victors and their spiritual feat will be preserved forever."

Aleksandr Lukashenko

thanked Vladimir Putin, the entire Russian people and those who created this monument. The memorial was erected in Gatchina district of Leningrad Region. During the occupation, numerous camps for war prisoners were located in this place, as well as concentration camps for Soviet children, whom the Nazis used as blood donors for German soldiers. More than 8 thousand children died here.

On the same day, President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko and President of Russia Vladimir Putin attended a requiem concert in honour of the 80th anniversary of the complete liberation of Leningrad from the Nazi blockade.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stated that the exact number of victims of the Great Patriotic War is still unknown. Both in Belarus and Russia, the remains of murdered mothers holding their babies tight are still found, babies buried alive.



"We are peaceful people. We do not want war. Yet, we are faced again with the question of the right for our civilisation to live, to preserve traditional values and national cultures. We do not need anything that does not belong to us, especially those benefits that were repeatedly imposed on our ancestors with fire and sword. But still.

*Just like it was after the victory, today we also call for a peaceful dialogue. This is on condition that our historical memory and the truth about that war are respected. We are open to any friendly steps towards us — both in Russia and Belarus," the Belarusian Head of State emphasised. "I agree with the President of Russia who says, 'We would have lost our civilisation and would not be living on this land today if we had not fought for every piece of land'... May the memory of those who passed away inspire us to create for the sake of future of our peoples, for the sake of peace. We will preserve our civilisation, you can be sure of that."*

## On January 28th, the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, together with Russian leader Vladimir Putin took part in an event on launching of a new wintering complex at the Vostok station in Antarctica

At present, the work on the creation of a new wintering complex has been completed there. Vostok is a year-round intercontinental Antarctic research station in Russia, located in the central part of Antarctica. The works carried out there are aimed to research the Earth's climate and magnetic field, to make meteorological, geophysical, glaciological (for the study of natural ice) observations, to study the properties of materials at low temperatures, and more.

During the event, video communication was planned with the station where Belarusian polar explorers are based, but it was not possible due to the weather conditions.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stated that Antarctica is up until now the least explored continent on the planet.

"Russia is a leader in Antarctic exploration today. We had a great country, the Soviet Union. We worked together. If someone hoped that all achievements in this area would be lost, they were wrong. It turns out that we have reached a higher level, instead," the Belarusian leader underlined. The President of Belarus also thanked Russian friends who help Belarusian scientists with accommodation at their station, support their research, share scientific data, and provide equipment.

"I know that our equipment also operates in Antarctica. As I was informed, an ultraviolet photometer designed by the Belarusian University was put into operation here in 2018-2020. Once back to Belarus, I will draw closer attention to the development of this sector," Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

Belarus has been implementing its Antarctic programme for a number of years. With the support of the Head of State, the country began its journey in the development of Antarctica in 2006.

A Belarusian research station has been under construction in East Antarctica since 2015. The creation of its first stage was completed in 2021, and it is planned to complete the formation of its second stage by 2026.

After the meeting, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin had a long tete-a-tete conversation.

## One of the important points of the programme of the Belarusian President's stay in St. Petersburg was a visit to the SKA Arena with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin

SKA Arena is a hockey stadium of the SKA club in St. Petersburg. Construction works were completed in 2023. The arena can accommodate more than 21.5 thousand spectators for hockey matches, which makes it the largest hockey stadium in the world. The heads of states had a warm conversation with the SKA team players and watched the training on the ice. The leaders of the countries were presented with hockey jerseys with the team's symbols as a souvenir.

## NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PRESIDENTS OF BELARUS AND RUSSIA

During the communication and bilateral negotiations, the heads of two states dived deep into the economy and issues of military industrial complexes. The Belarusian leader drew special attention to this fact on January 28th at the beginning of negotiations with his Russian counterpart at the Konstantinovsky Palace in St. Petersburg.

"We do not hide anything. We have discussed many problems, opportunities for further development, as well as the kind of systems we will devise taking into account the bitter experience of a special military operation," Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

The Russian President thanked his Belarusian counterpart for coming to St. Petersburg on these days.

"In general, the situation is developing vigorously. Russia is the largest investor — our investments to the Belarusian economy stand at 4 billion US dollars. This work is going on in a bilateral mode — our business operates in Belarus, and our Belarusian friends are also more and more actively exploring the Russian market," Vladimir Putin pointed out. "The relations are developing in all directions. I am referring not only to industrial co-operation, but also to agriculture, science, education, and the cultural sphere."

The meeting agenda of the two leaders covered issues of bilateral co-operation and interaction within the integration associations — the CIS, the EAEU, the CSTO. Vladimir Putin also informed Aleksandr Lukashenko in detail about the situation in the zone of the special military operation.



# Key outcomes of the Union State Supreme State Council and high-level negotiations

On January 29th, Presidents of Belarus and Russia Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin took part in a meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State

The Head of the Belarusian state told about the serious joint work carried out with the Russian colleague over the past few days in St. Petersburg.

“We have indeed worked very seriously these days. I can put it this way — from the South Pole to the North. We have discussed the issues of Antarctica, too... The most important thing is that we do not divide anything. Belarusians work together with Russians. Belarusian specialists stationed there are provided with all kinds of support — both scientific and practical... Vladimir Vladimirovich and I moved from the south to the north in our discussions. We have analysed the events taking place in the world. Considering our aspirations — of Russia and Belarus, the People’s Republic of China... Russia is at the forefront of this because it bears the greatest burden. And it suffers more than anyone else.”

The President emphasised that the onset of a multipolar world and the reluctance of the current monopolist to surrender its positions has led to conflicts in various parts of the world.

**“The Houthis, the Middle East, and the South China Sea, problems with Taiwan — all of this stems from the fact that a multipolar world is coming. As the Russian Foreign Minister said, ‘the monopolist does not want this’. They are trying to maintain a unipolar world through various means. It has even led to armed conflicts,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stated.**



**The meeting of the Union State Supreme State Council in St. Petersburg ended with the signing of a number of documents. These include:**

- the main directions for implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on the Creation of the Union State for 2024-2026;
- the programme of coordinated actions of Belarus and Russia in the field of foreign policy for 2024-2026;
- the strategy of scientific and technological development of the Union State until 2035;
- the decision to create the Union State media company, which will include a TV channel, print media and a media resource centre for the creation and distribution of content in the digital environment;
- the Union State action plan for 2024 dedicated to the 80th anniversary of Belarus’ liberation from Nazi invaders;
- the action plan for the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty on the Creation of the Union State;
- the resolution on the establishment of the Union State award for young scientists.

period and for the future. The Head of State stated that by the end of 2023, the parties have renewed the historic peak of trade in goods and services.

“Vladimir Vladimirovich has mentioned a figure — over 40 billion US dollars in 10 months. Yet, if we consider the whole year, it

**“A lot has been done in this area. We have understood many things that we did not understand two years ago. No one has succeeded in bringing us to our knees. On the contrary, we have mobilised ourselves and achieved a lot. Basic intergovernmental agreements have been signed on the recognition of technological operations, the development of microelectronic technologies, the design and production of the electronic component base, electronic engineering, and a unified industrial policy,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said.**

“I am convinced that the prepared decree will provide mutual recognition of technological operations in practice. I believe that the governments should take measures for its implementation in the shortest possible time, without any deviations or exceptions.”

The Head of the Belarusian state also stated the need to eliminate anything that hinders mutual supply of goods, to level the operating conditions for businesses, to get rid of barriers in the public procurement sphere, and to remove restrictions on the transit of goods.

“These topics are not new, but we still have quite a few rough edges in this regard. I want to emphasise that we have not yet fully determined on the most important issues. This concerns the creation of a single market for gas, oil, and oil products. Now is the time when we can calmly make these

decisions. They will be beneficial for both Russia and Belarus,” the President said. According to him, these crucially important topics are regularly discussed in negotiations with the President of Russia.

“Agreements have been reached. I think the governments need to more actively implement them,” underlined Aleksandr Lukashenko. The President also mentioned the logistics of transporting Belarusian export goods through Russian ports. In this regard, there are proposals to increase the capacity of the October Railway in the direction of St. Petersburg ports.

**“Millions of tonnes of Belarusian cargo have been re-directed from the ports of the Baltic States to St. Petersburg, Murmansk, and the Black Sea ports. Yet, there is still some tension. Vladimir Vladimirovich and I discussed this problem three months ago. We decided that the October Railway towards St. Petersburg should work more intensively. At the first stage, it will require insignificant funds and minor work to restore the junctions,” the Belarusian leader shared the details.**

The XI Forum of Belarus and Russia Regions, which will take place in Vitebsk in June, is expected to bring new fresh ideas, and most importantly — breakthrough economic projects and specific proposals for the development of co-operation.

The Union State is set to celebrate several significant anniversaries in the current year. First and foremost, it marks the 80th anniversary of Belarus’ liberation and the 25th anniversary of signing the Treaty on the Creation of the Union State.

“These are powerful ideological reasons. We have no right not to leverage on them in order to promote our values and defend the truth about our shared history,” the President of Belarus emphasised.

The Head of the Belarusian state remarked that the meeting of the Union State Supreme State Council is taking place on the threshold of important domestic political events. For the first time in the history of Belarus, a single voting day will take place on February 25th this year.

“Following Russia’s example, we have also established a constitutionally unified voting day. On this day, deputies of the parliament and local councils will be elected. We have preserved regional, district, and rural councils, as it was in Soviet times. And on March 17th, presidential elections will be held in Russia,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted. “The period is not easy, but as you can see, it is passing quietly. I am confident that we will approach these dates calmly and will conduct these events just as calmly.”

President Vladimir Putin emphasised that Belarus and Russia will continue to deepen their socio-economic and humanitarian integration.

“With Russia’s direct participation, the construction of the Belarusian nuclear power plant was completed in 2023. This is a very serious step forward — that is not just a station built, but an industry is being created. In this sense, Belarus has certainly become a nuclear power. This is a major step forward in the development of the economy and the scientific sphere,” the Russian leader stressed.

Vladimir Putin also reminded that preparations are underway for a Belarusian cosmonaut to fly to the Russian segment of the International Space Station. It is scheduled for the spring this year.

According to Vladimir Putin, today Russia and Belarus tightly interact on the world stage in the face of unprecedented external pressure.

“Our countries have always provided each other with truly allied mutual support. The approaches of our countries to the existing global and regional problems coincide or are close in many ways,” he noted. “We will work jointly in the interests of forming a truly multipolar, democratic and fair world order system, ensuring equal and indivisible security.”



According to the Belarus President, in the course of the talks with Vladimir Putin, they also discussed the questions of economic co-operation, including with Asian and African countries.

“We have also discussed the work in the Asian continent, especially in Africa, where we are invited. They are really waiting for us there — primarily, for the Russian Federation with huge opportunities.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out the work on developing freight transportation on the Northern Sea Route and outlined the main tasks and directions for developing co-operation in the Union State both in the current

will amount to approximately 54 billion US dollars. This is truly a historic peak. Achieving such high performance is largely the result of implementing measures stipulated in 28 union programmes, within which fundamental decisions were made. We still need to develop common criteria to evaluate their implementation.

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, it is important to strengthen the international positioning of the union, as is done in the EAEU. As the main task in the industrial sphere, the President of Belarus outlined the activation of co-operation in import substitution.



# The Belarusian border is under reliable protection

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has approved decisions on the protection of the state border as well as of the airspace by border guard bodies in 2024

The Head of State noted that this event is traditional and is held every year, yet it is very important due to the situation that is unfolding around Belarus.

“The current decision on the state border protection has its peculiarity given the special situation we have. There is a war ongoing in the south. The situation in the west, where we border on Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic States, is even worse. I emphasise — even worse. The corresponding detachments are being prepared there, the commanders have been determined,” the President said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that Belarus also knows the ‘fighters of these detachments’ who are ready to fight against their own country.

**“Therefore, I keep telling the military and especially the Defence Minister that we must not miss anything, to put it plainly. Under no circumstances must we allow any random developments on our border. Therefore, vigilance comes first,” the President underlined.**

The event was attended by State Secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Volfovich, Minister of Defence Viktor Khrenin, Chairman of the State Border Committee Konstantin Molostov and Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces — First Deputy Minister of Defence Viktor Gulevich.

Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out that all the responsible persons ‘have been performing their functions well’ so far.

The Head of State listened to the State Border Committee leadership as well as the General Staff Chief. The President particularly inquired about the situation on the land border (border guards call it the ‘green border’, although now it can be called white since everything is covered with snow) and in the airspace.

“This is also a border. In Soviet times, our area of responsibility included both the borderline and the air-

space,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

The President was informed about the current situation on the state border, the forces and means involved in ensuring border security on the Belarusian side, as well as about the contingent in the neighbouring countries.

According to the Chairman of the State Border Committee, Major General Konstantin Molostov, Latvia uses military personnel of the Armed Forces and police officers in addition to regular units for the protection of their state border. Attempts to expel migrants to the territory of Belarus have significantly increased in the Latvian section of the state border over the past year.

As for Lithuania, its border area is actively used for the deployment of the US and German armed forces. They regularly participate in operational and tactical exercises. In total, up to 12 exercises were conducted in 2023.



“The military need to keep this in mind and have them, frankly speaking, in the crosshairs,” the Head of State emphasised in this regard.

As the Chairman of the State Border Committee noted in his report, all orders and instructions given by the Head of State to the border services in 2023 have been fulfilled. The situation on the state border remains consistently tense, but predictable and controllable.



“The situation on the state border and in the border area is stably tense at present. There is a certain decrease in the flow of illegal migration — primarily related to weather conditions. We detect and register in a timely manner all military challenges coming from the neighbouring countries. We respond in co-operation with the Ministry of Defence, the State Security Committee and the Interior Ministry,” the Chairman of the State Border Committee informed.

**In 2024, priority efforts in border protection will be focused on the measures to identify and combat challenges and threats to the national interests of Belarus in the border area, ensure visa-free travel for citizens of Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, and further build up the engineering infrastructure of the state border.**

The construction and commissioning of new complexes of border units and infrastructure facilities will continue. Manoeuvre groups will be expanded and equipped with modern weapons and hardware. Another priority is given to the improvement of the combat and professional training of border services, the educational material and technical base, and further development of the officer training system.

As for the state border protection in the airspace, Chief of the General Staff of

the Armed Forces — First Deputy Minister of Defence Viktor Gulevich said that a group of air forces of NATO countries is concentrated near the Belarusian state border. This is done, among other reasons, as part of Operation Safe Podlasie. The Chief of the General Staff stressed that such a military presence undoubtedly affects the Belarusian state border protection in the airspace, increasing risks and challenges.

“The Armed Forces of Belarus are taking additional measures to build up the radar field, forces and means of radio engineering troops, as well as forces and means of electronic warfare in order to successfully detect and affect the intruder’s aircraft,” he noted.

According to the Chief of the General Staff, the number of provocations in the airspace remains at the same level. However, the provision of the Belarusian radio engineering troops with new samples of equipment and weapons, both domestically produced and received from Russia, increases the capabilities of the Air Force and Air Defence forces to uncover provocations as well as possible accidental violations.

“We can track and document them, and make claims to the neighbouring countries, which, I hope, do this by accident and not intentionally,” Viktor Gulevich said.

## The President set the task to intensify scientific research



**Aleksandr Lukashenko awarded Doctor of Science diplomas and professor certificates to scientific and pedagogical workers. The Head of State traditionally meets with scientists and scientific and pedagogical workers — newly minted doctors of sciences and professors — on the eve of Science Day.**

**“My guidance message to you is very specific. Scientific achievements should not remain just a beautiful showcase. We must not allow the works of our scientists to lie on the shelves or gather dust in libraries. They are already awaited for at factories, medical institutions and in classrooms,” the Head of State stressed.**

The examples of applied scientific research were presented to the President by the participants of the ceremony.

Professor of the Eye Diseases Department at the Belarusian State Medical University, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Associate Professor Galina Semak spoke about the development and implementation into clinical practice of an effective treatment method that allows restoring and maintaining the transparency of eye cornea without resorting to transplantation. By doing so, a domestically produced hyaluronic acid is used. The Belarusian treatment method has already attracted the interest of clinics in Russia, and the work is underway to register the Belarusian medicine there.

They also discussed the development of domestic spectroscopy methods that make it possible to determine with high accuracy the composition and quality properties of products in petrochemical, construction and food industries, as well as of other

products. This method, for example, is used to identify counterfeit products, including food products. Mikhail Khodasevich, a leading researcher at the B.I.Stefanov Institute of Physics of the National Academy of Sciences, was awarded the degree of Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences for this development.

The President reminded that the political life in the country is undergoing transformations. Thus, the Belarusian People’s Congress has become a constitutional body, and serious powers will be conferred to it.

“Now I am very concerned — the Belarusian People’s Congress has become our constitutional body. If someone thinks that this is just a chair for Lukashenko, it is complete nonsense. It is not a simple matter. This is serious. It is both a kind of restrictor and a supervisor for the authorities. Accordingly,

appropriate people should be represented there. We must not repeat the Gorbachev period... They destroyed the country and got into a pit,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

When summing up the results of the meeting, the President also stressed the importance of working with young people to make sure that the current generation will be replaced by well-trained personnel who understand that achievements in various fields are only earned by hard work, and do not stem from the Internet.



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# The world respects the strong



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

*"It was not me who came up with this expression, 'If you want peace, prepare for war.' I have repeatedly stressed that it is probably the fifth time already that we are upgrading our Armed Forces to adjust them to the current situation. First of all, we have drawn the corresponding conclusions as well as lessons from the wars and conflicts that have occurred and that are taking place on the planet. The goal of our Armed Forces and security forces is to defend our land and our state. That's it! We do not set any other goals today. And we are preparing for war because anything can happen... Therefore, learn, learn and learn again... Above all, it is necessary to seriously study the art of war. So that is what we are going to do."*

**At a meeting on military security, on October 4th, 2022**

**By Nikolai Buzin, Doctor of Military Sciences, Professor, Assistant to the Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus**

## Without false political correctness

In the recent history of Belarus, the Military Doctrine has been adopted (amended) three times — in 1992, 2002 and 2016. The provisions of the military doctrines of previous years clearly demonstrate the change in approaches to the formation of national military policy. The 1992 document was a vivid reflection of its era. At that time the West, having won the Cold War, was convincing all post-Soviet states of its 'democracy and peacefulness', the need for global disarmament and the end of confrontation era. Yet, the West did not take a single step on its part towards demilitarization.

The first Military Doctrine was aimed at strengthening state and international security. It was based on the concept of armed neutrality and the ideology of 'new thinking', which denied the use of force to achieve political goals, and proclaimed the priority of universal human interests over national and state ones.

Over the next ten years, drastic political and military changes took place. Accordingly, views on ensuring military security evolved, which was reflected in the Military Doctrine of 2002. It was purely defensive in nature and declared that 'none of the states is currently a potential enemy for us (Belarus)'.

*It can be stated that at that historical stage, the country's military and political leadership took off the rose-coloured glasses of Western political correctness, realised the unscrupulousness of 'developed democracies' and began to form the basis of a system for defending its own national interests.*

## Reviewing the draft of the new Military Doctrine of Belarus

**The revision of the Military Doctrine, the most important document in the field of military security, which was discussed at a meeting of the Security Council with the participation of the Belarus President on January 16th, is at the final stage. The directions of its transformation are of particular importance, especially taking into account the start of the next NATO strategic exercise *Steadfast Defender — 2024* close to our borders. The manoeuvres involve up to 90 thousand troops from 31 countries of the alliance as well as Sweden, which has de facto already joined it.**

### Collective protection

Approved on July 20th, 2016, the current third edition of the Military Doctrine was a new-level document that incorporated all the best practices that had appeared in the field of military science. In particular, this refers to revolutionary changes in military science related to hybrid wars and special actions, precision strike systems and weapons based on new physical principles, the widespread use of 'colour revolution' mechanisms and confrontation in the information (mental) sphere.

*The revision of the Military Doctrine provisions was due to the increased pressure on our country from the West, the growing aggressiveness of NATO, the large-scale use of tools for a violent coup d'état in sovereign states, the process of Nazification of Ukraine and the armed conflict in Donbass.*

violence and an increase in the number of armed conflicts. The proxy war initiated in Ukraine by the West is meant to weaken Russia as much as possible and prevent the collapse of the 'rules-based world order'.

*In order to implement their plans, pseudo-democracies are actively introducing artificial intelligence into the military sphere, increasing opportunities for operating in cyberspace, initiating genomic and biological programmes, upgrading robotic systems and nuclear weapons as well as developing weapons based on new physical principles.*

and now includes two chapters. The very subject matter of the Military Doctrine has been clarified, which in Article 1 is proposed to be understood as 'a system of officially accepted views in the Republic of Belarus on maintaining international peace and security, ensuring the military security of the Republic of Belarus, its armed defence within the national security framework (previously stated: ensuring its military security)'. There has been determined the interrelation of the document with the defence plan of the Republic of Belarus.

As part of assessing the trends in the development of the military political situation, the sources of threats to Belarus have been clearly identified. These are the USA, NATO, Poland and the Baltic States.

The document provides a detailed and comprehensive assessment of the military political situation unfolding in the world and around Belarus, which allows to reasonably identify both external and internal military threats to our country.

In general, it should be noted that the doctrine has a targeted orientation, reveals the approaches of international entities to the use of military force, and provides predictive assessments of the possible consequences of their development for our state.

### There is no development without peace

For the first time, the national Military Doctrine envisages the possibility of a forceful response to a destructive cyber activity. Article 60 stipulates that 'in order to suppress or prevent malicious information technology impacts causing disruption in the stable operation of critical infrastructure facilities of the state, the Republic of Belarus will deploy all forces and means of both non-violent and forceful nature in accordance with the legislation regulating information security issues'.

The new Military Doctrine is a thoroughly elaborated and easy-to-grasp document, which reflects the national system of views on maintaining international peace and security, ensuring military security and armed defence of the state. It fully meets modern and prospective security requirements and covers all of its areas while remaining a document for the preservation of peace and not for the escalation of violence or war.

*The principle of 'If you want peace, prepare for war' is creatively supplemented in this case and transformed into truth — There is no development without peace, and a hundred years of negotiations is better than one year of war.*



The main objectives of the country's military policy were defined as maintaining international peace and security, preventing the threat of unleashing war and ensuring the guarantee of national security of the state against possible military threats. Along with that, the doctrine has preserved a defensive orientation.

*In fact, in the third decade of the 21st century, the planet entered the 'hot stage' of the world reconstruction. The system of checks and balances created after the Second World War, which existed for more than 70 years, has been completely destroyed. New centres of power are rapidly being formed, the West and the United States are consistently losing their influence, and military power is becoming the main political argument.*

However, the White House refuses to admit the reality putting a stake on military force, which provokes an upsurge in

There is no doubt that in the near future, a decrease in the level of military danger is not to be expected and the threats to the security of Belarus and the Union State will not diminish in any way, either. All this forces us to respond adequately to the changes in the situation and review the provisions of the national Military Doctrine.

### Leadership at any cost?

An analysis of the provisions of the draft Military Doctrine of 2024 indicates that the document has been significantly expanded and supplemented. It includes 6 sections that combine 14 chapters containing 122 articles. The total volume of the document is 46 pages. However, its value is not in the volume but in its essence and content.

Thus, the first section of the doctrine has already been considerably revised

SECURITY



# How to ensure technology sovereignty

Western sanctions opened multiple niches for Belarusian high-tech manufacturers

Let's be honest: sanctions have hit technological development hard. Still, many enterprises, to one degree or another, focused on broad international co-operation. On the other hand, a vast sales market has opened up for high-tech industries and research organisations. And not only at the moment, but for a fairly long period. Today, the issue of both technological development and technological safety is at the forefront throughout the world. And this strategy has become the driver for our high-tech industries and segments to reach a new qualitative level.



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

*"More than a quarter of industrial goods imported into the union [EAEU] worth approximately \$70 billion per year can be replaced by products of national manufacturers. A huge piece. May God grant us to master it. The Fourth Industrial Revolution provides a chance for the effective implementation of import substitution initiatives in the real sector of the economy at the regional level. Regardless of the further dynamics of our relations with the so-called Western partners, technological sovereignty and the substitution of critical imports will remain the basis for the further development of our union."*

**At the 2nd Eurasian Economic Forum in Moscow on May 24th, 2023**

By Vladimir Volchkov

## Don't get lost in the future

Technology largely determines a country's competitiveness. Many analytical and expert organisations (both international and national) are trying to identify the most promising areas on which to concentrate their efforts.

*In some details, these forecasts differ, but in general, a global consensus has emerged: the highest priority vectors are nanotechnology and new materials, microelectronics, breakthrough algorithms for working with big data (BigData), and biotechnology.*

Of course, scientific and technological development requires its own scale. Belarus is a relatively small country. Therefore, let's be objective, it is unlikely that it will be possible to become a world leader in the intellectual sphere for objective reasons. Nevertheless, we can unequivocally say that we will not get lost in the future, an extremely difficult and complex world. Because we have our own developments in all promising areas. Some of them are world class. The diversity of scientific research allows us to be confident that technological safety is not a figure of speech, but a completely achievable result for us.

*To a large extent, today's sustainability is the result of predictive government policy, thanks to which both fundamental and applied science in all its diversity have been preserved in the country. No matter how difficult it was at the beginning of our sovereign path, the state did not allow a single research area to perish.*

## Design sovereignty

The diversity of Belarusian scientific, research and production activities has allowed our country to survive the restrictions quite calmly and confidently. First of all, due to the fact that the design school has been preserved and developed in Belarus. Indeed, let's not

boast: we cannot produce everything. There is not always enough technological and production base.

*But skill sets in a wide range of scientific fields, coupled with design schools, made it possible to quickly reorient to alternative suppliers of components, assemblies and components. At least those that we could not immediately release and replace with our own efforts. Or in partnership with Russian colleagues.*

*It turned out that globalisation can develop not only in a European or American direction, but also in an Asian direction. Therefore, after a certain period of turbulence in the market of high-tech products, it quickly stabilised.*

Executive Director of the Association of Electronics Developers and Manufacturers (Russia) Ivan Pokrovsky presented a chronology of events in numbers. If in February – March 2022 we had to deal with a boycott of foreign suppliers, there were supply interruptions and 'eating up' of available warehouse stocks, then in the second half of the year both delivery times and prices for electronic components stabilised. Both new and old suppliers entered the market, but through 'parallel import' tools.

In a number of areas, we more or less successfully switched to components from friendly countries. For example, some Belarusian machine tool enterprises have switched to using computer numerical control (CNC) systems from the Russian company BaltSystem.

## We can a lot

*Undoubtedly, the prompt transition to new suppliers and prompt co-operation with partners from friendly states allowed the Belarusian and Russian economies to survive and develop. This in itself is a significant achievement.*

However, it is too early to rest on our laurels. After all, technological safety assumes that domestic solutions and technologies will be used in strategically important industries and critical systems. At least they will be their basis.

*In the Union State, more than two dozen companies are engaged in the production of electronic components. Far from the last place in the union industry is occupied by our Integral, the management company of the Integral holding. The company has developed a unique scientific and design school.*

Indeed, the Belarusian company works in design standards of 0.3 microns and higher. There are attempts to master smaller sizes. Demand for these products accounts for about a third of the microchip market. In addition, any segment of design standards does not stand still; it develops and deepens technologically.

Planar, a manufacturer of lithographic installations for the production of photo masks, operates in Belarus.

*Before the aggravation of the international situation, many developed countries bought Belarusian equipment. Including American corporations. Such equipment is produced by only four companies in the world: Japanese Canon and Nikon, Dutch ASML (although the corporation is controlled by American capital) and our Belarusian Planar.*

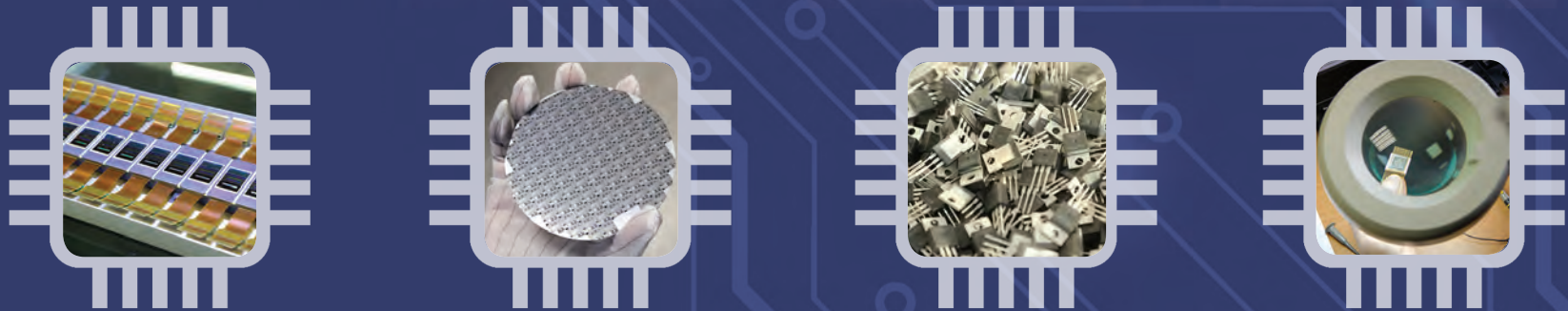
We also have good control, measuring and some other equipment for microelectronics. These enterprises are developing and reaching new technological frontiers. If in the past times of 'open market doors' there was always doubt that there would be a decent demand for their products, today these fears are absent.

## With maximum safety

Belarus and Russia have developed a clear course towards achieving technological safety. What does it mean? There are up to 70 thousand critical information infrastructure facilities in the Union State. These are objects directly related to security. And for now they are largely equipped with foreign electronics. Or, for example, technological equipment.

*In Belarus alone, the fleet of CNC machines exceeds 10 thousand units. Again, most of them are imported. The capacity of the Russian market is about 20 thousand units of metalworking equipment per year.*

Before the conflict in Ukraine worsened, 80-90 percent of this demand was met through imports. This is the widest niche. Of course, our manufacturers cannot increase production volumes even if there is demand. Neither in microelectronics nor in machine tool building. Undoubtedly, some market share will be 'closed' by imports. Naturally, first of all from friendly states and strategic partners. But a certain strategic segment will definitely remain with our manufacturers.





# Fight for the scraps...

## Lack of access to quality food as food for thought

According to Eurostat statistics, in prosperous Germany, almost 16 percent of citizens — 13 million people — are considered poor. We are talking about one of the ‘locomotives of the EU’; in simpler countries the problems are much more serious. Incredibly, the lack of access to good food in the EU is on the rise, and this provides plenty of food for thought.

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

*“Western Europe is led to believe it is a big-time political entity but this subjectivity results in soaring prices for energy resources and record-high inflation. Essentially Europe is about to experience the greatest food crisis on record.”*

**At the ‘Historical memory is the way to the future!’ open lesson at the Palace of Independence on September 1st, 2022**

## Rising prices in the EU (% , from January to September 2023)



Sources: Eurostat, Euobserver

By Maksim Osipov

### Products went from hand to hand

More and more Poles are buying gifts in second-hand stores. As *INN Poland* notes, used goods can also be purchased online. We are also talking about food: you can even buy used cookies, gingerbread, deli meats, and coffee. According to the publication’s estimates, of the approximately 20 million sales ads published on marketplaces every month, two-thirds are used goods. At the same time, the largest increase (about 20 percent) relates to the ‘home and garden’ categories. The publication, the translation of which is posted by the portal inosmi.ru, reports,

*“61 percent of Poles say they buy second-hand goods. Plus, 53 percent of us say they do it more often today than they did a year ago.”*

Although the newspaper assures that ‘this way we not only save the household budget, but also take care of the environment’, and ‘rational and thoughtful purchases are becoming second nature to Poles’, Joanna Skowronska, development manager at Allegro, admitted: Poles began to offer more (and more often be interested in) homemade food, honey and even second-hand coffee.

As *Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny* writes, in online communities that unite people who want to donate or accept items as gifts, more and more (usually anonymous) requests for food are appearing. Most often they ask for food for children. The Polish publication provides shocking figures.

*According to the latest data, about 1.8 million Polish residents (representing almost 5 percent of the country’s total population) live in extreme poverty. Over the past year, another 200 thousand people have been added to the army of poor people.*

### Country of hungry children

Moreover, 3 percent of Poles cannot afford to buy basic food products. 5 percent of Polish residents no longer buy meat, fish and fruit. Buying prescription drugs is a problem for 8 percent of Poles. Moreover, The European Anti-Poverty Network organisation predicts that there will be more and more people in Poland who can barely make ends meet: inflation



growth and the poverty level in 2023 were very high, forecasts for this year also cannot be named optimistic.

*Back in 2022, 333 thousand minors in Poland lived in extreme poverty, but by the end of 2023, the group of people under the age of 18 increased to 400 thousand people.*

The president of the board of the Noble Gift association, Joanna Sadzik, told *Bankier* about how poverty directly affects the lives of children, “Imagine that in the morning you ate a slice of bread with margarine and washed it down with tea. You spend seven hours at school, where you study, go to physical education, and write a test in Polish. You stay away from the other students as the sight of their second breakfast makes your stomach growl. And you trudge home slowly, you don’t have much energy to walk quickly. You dream about the cutlet that was for lunch in the school cafeteria today. You can still smell its delicious scent. But at home, only an empty refrigerator awaits you. Mom returns from work at 18:00, and only then will you eat soup. Now you finally have the strength to do your homework.”

Moreover, as evidenced by data from the Polish General Statistical Office, having a child is a factor that increases the risk for poor families of falling into poverty. With every new child, the poverty rate increases. Among families with at least three children, every tenth child lives in extreme poverty.

### Cheap and nasty...

The difficult economic situation is affecting the list of goods that Estonians also buy. Under the influence of the crisis, they are forced to purchase cheaper food products. The Baltnews portal quotes the press secretary of the local retail chain Coop Martin Miido, “What has definitely increased is sales of sausages instead of ham. Expensive raw materials are replaced with cheap alternatives. People eat enough, but they choose more carefully, they take from the shelves what is more profitable for their wallet at the moment, because over the past couple of years prices have increased quite significantly. As one grower said, when times are tough, people turn to root vegetables.”

There is nothing surprising in the fact

that people began to save, Baltnews notes. According to calculations by the Bank of Estonia, by the end of 2023, national GDP will decrease by 2.2 percent, and unemployment in the country is rapidly growing. At the beginning of 2024, there were about 54,000 people unemployed in the country. At the same time, just over 1.3 million people live in the entire country. And if in 2021 there were 18 thousand people here in absolute poverty, then in 2022 — about 48 thousand, and now this figure has exceeded 50 thousand people.

### Is this the end of the queue for food?

The level of poverty is also growing in the recently prosperous Sweden and Norway. According to the Swedish newspaper *Nya Dagbladet*, more people need food today than before the coronavirus pandemic. A nationwide study of the national food distribution programme late last year found that more than half of Norway’s food aid recipients were families with children and recently arrived refugees (mostly from Ukraine and Syria). Study leader and report author Tune Flötten summarises, “The increase in the number of people who really have nothing to eat suggests that entire pockets of absolute poverty may appear in Norway, that is, when people lack the basic necessities of life.”

The report revealed another feature: part-time and even full-time employees are increasingly seeking food assistance. In other words, the income offered is frankly not enough even for food. Tune Flötten notes,

*“So many families with children are queuing for food! This contradicts our ideas about a happy childhood and the ideals of social equality.”*

### ANALYST’S OPINION

Nicolas Baverez, a columnist for the daily *Le Figaro*,

*“A new economic cycle has begun, marked by rising interest rates, which means worse conditions for business activity. In this multipolar, unstable and dangerous world, the position of the West is further worsened by the fact that an abyss has suddenly opened up between the US and the EU. America’s military and political power is growing, and the European Union, unable to cope with the problem of restoring sovereignty and security, is degrading in the economic and trade spheres, which have always been its strong point. Our middle class is getting poorer while the US and China compete to innovate in key sectors. Capital flows to Europe stopped in 2010, while in the US they increased by more than 20 percent. The middle class in the United States is experiencing the beginning of stabilisation after the redistribution of added value in favour of workers due to the redistribution of technological rent, and in Europe the middle class continues to get poorer.”*

REALITY





# Farmers’ anger is mounting across Europe

Thousands of farmers across Europe have taken to the streets in recent weeks, claiming they are being disproportionately affected by EU’s efforts to slash greenhouse gas emissions, and demanding more financial support from governments

European farmers are fuming. From the Netherlands to Romania, Poland, Germany and even the south of the continent, they have been expressing their discontent, reinforcing EU institutions’ fears that this protest movement could spread and benefit the far right. These mobilisations, while each one has arisen for reasons of its own or linked to national decisions (higher diesel taxes, competition from Ukrainian imports, reduction in pesticide use, limitation of nitrogen or greenhouse gas emissions, more land to be left fallow to preserve biodiversity), come at a time of tense discussions in Brussels.

**Romania**  
In Romania, the EU country with the highest number of farmers (about 3.5 million, according to the European Commission), members of the agriculture and

transportation sectors have been protesting since January 10th, often in groups of tractors and trucks in locations around the country, demanding lower taxes and fairer subsidies.

**Germany**  
Last week, farmers in Berlin were joined shoulder-to-shoulder with eco-activists. Farmers say that they are fully supportive of environmentally friendly, genetically unmodified farming, but for that, they do need subsidies or, at least, fair prices set for their products. The farmers have been on the streets since last December, when the federal government agreed on a budget cancelling several decades-old farming subsidies and benefits.

**France**  
The most violent protests have been in France, the largest agricultural producer

in the EU. Since mid-January, thousands of farmers have blocked roads, burned tyres and spread manure at the entrances of various administrative buildings across the country. Earlier this week, they choked off major motorways around Paris after threatening to blockade the capital, which they called ‘Operation Paris Siege’.

**Lithuania**  
Lithuanian farmers also staged a large-scale protest in Vilnius, demonstrating against the country’s agricultural policies. Farmers from across Lithuania were protesting against the government’s agricultural policy, increased excise duties on fuel, the obligation to restore perennial meadows, the extension of protected areas.

**Italy**  
Italian farmers have been protesting in multiple cities to denounce the EU’s

agricultural policies. Protests are ongoing in Italy’s major urban centres, including Rome, Bologna, Florence, Milan, and Naples. The demonstrators reportedly use highways to reach the cities, and protests mostly affect road traffic entering and leaving urban centres.

**Poland**  
Polish farmers put up nationwide road blockades last week to protest against Ukrainian farm imports which they said were undermining their revenues. The Polish agricultural sector is being ruined by the European Green Deal and environmental schemes, bureaucratic procedures imposed by the EU, Tomasz Obszański, of the Farmers’ Solidarity Unions, said. The situation is deteriorated by an influx of grain and other food products imported duty-free from Ukraine.



## New coffee genetic map

Scientists have unravelled the genetic secrets of coffee in a discovery they say paves the way for more flavoursome brews

Researchers in Italy pieced together the most complete genetic map yet of Arabica coffee — the world’s most popular drink.

The new insights into the plant’s genetic make-up will help in the breeding of new coffee crops. And it may lead to coffee plants that can cope better in a warming world.

“We have produced a new sequence map of coffee, Arabica,” Dr. Michele Morgante of the University of Udine in Italy, said. “This tool may give us ways to provide coffee growers with better plants that appeal more to the consumers, and cope better with changing climatic conditions.”

The study used the latest DNA sequencing technology to examine the ge-

netic make-up of the Arabica coffee plant in unprecedented detail.

It may also help coffee growers develop new varieties of coffee with particular flavours and aromas, as well as those able to tolerate tougher growing conditions.

Rising temperatures and unpredictable rainfall are altering the conditions under which coffee plants are grown, leading to decreased yields and increased attack from pests and diseases.

Dr. Aaron Davis of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, said it was an ‘important step forward in our understanding of the genetic diversity of coffee which may help to guide the future development of this economically important and much-loved crop species’.

## Beijing to monitor living conditions of giant pandas abroad

China will monitor the living environment of giant panda bears located abroad, given that there are currently 56 cat bears in foreign zoos, Zhang Yue, a representative of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration of China, said at a press conference

“In an effort to improve the protection and supervision of giant pandas overseas, effective from 2023, the Chinese National Forestry and Grassland Administration has established entities to conduct on-site inspections and evaluations of 23 foreign facilities in 19 countries to acquire comprehensive information on the living conditions of all giant pandas abroad,” the official said. He noted that those conditions are so far ‘generally appropriate’ in terms of enclosure structure, breeding and medical treatment, as well as illness prevention.

“The health of the pandas abroad is

generally well maintained, with some older bears in poor condition being given proper diagnosis, medical treatment and good care,” Zhang said.

Plans call for expanding international co-operation in this area, arranging daily monitoring of the pandas’ health condition, and further improving the inspection and supervisory system. Through partnerships with foreign institutions, 41 panda cubs have been born outside of China since the 1990s, Zhang clarified.

Giant pandas are considered the unofficial symbol of China.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



# Election fever

## How foreign policy influences the election campaign in the United States, and vice versa

The presidential election in the shining city on the hill is less than a year away. The Republicans and Democrats have not yet finally decided on the candidacies of those who will compete for a place in the Oval Office next November, but with a high degree of probability the ‘elephants’ will nominate Trump, and the ‘donkeys’ will nominate Biden. Both potential superpower leaders are imperfect, and one can find many who oppose the nomination of each of them, but this time the United States is approaching the election campaign in far from the best shape, both in foreign and domestic policy.

By Anton Popov

### Premonition of disaster

However, if there is no serious intrigue at the stage of nominating candidates — according to the latest polls of *The Wall Street Journal*, for example, Trump is supported by 59 percent of Republicans, while his closest rivals in the party Nikki Haley and Ron DeSantis are only 15 and 14 percent, respectively — then here It’s too early to place bets on the winner. Nearly four years of Democrats in power have shown the American voter that his country has serious problems on all fronts and extending Sleepy Joe’s term for another term could lead to disaster.

*Conflict with Russia, tension with China, complete lack of flexibility in relations even with allies — Biden and his team have turned on the ‘hegemon mode’ to the fullest, although there are clearly not enough resources for such a strategy.*

Last year’s congressional elections, which are called midterms and are considered a rehearsal for the presidential elections, were not a triumph for either the ‘blues’ or the ‘reds’. And if last winter pushing through a new budget with huge aid to Ukraine was relatively painless, the current debate among congressmen has become a complete nightmare for Biden and his team. The accumulated contradictions between the parties began to directly affect the largest US geopolitical project of the last 10 years — Ukraine.

### Migrant issue

Republicans have nothing against helping the Kiev regime, but they saw the budget debate as an excellent way to solve at least one of the problems that complicates their return to the White House. We are talking about protecting the country’s southern border from illegal migrants.

*The ‘elephants’, as representatives of the conservative right, consider migrants, including a very small percentage of the white population, a direct threat to their electoral victory.*

The fact is that the idea of weakening controls on the southern border belongs to the Democrats and Biden personally. In this way, the ‘donkeys’ hope to increase their own electorate with representatives of Asia, Africa and Latin America, who quickly gain citizenship and the opportunity to vote. As a rule, newly minted Americans cast their votes for the Democrats who have sheltered them.

Republicans are particularly concerned about Texas, a traditionally conservative state whose population remains firmly on the red side.

*In an attempt to save their powerhouse state from the invasion of ‘donkeys’, the Republicans in Congress organised a boycott of all plans for further pumping the Kiev regime with weapons.*

Democrats are asked to concede only one thing: to allocate money for border security, making life much more difficult for illegal immigrants, but this concession will be a painful blow to Biden’s rating among his ‘core’ electorate — 35 percent of the non-white US population who sympathise with the Democratic Party. In other words, Trump’s associates drove the team of the current owner of the White House into zugzwang. If Democrats agree to give money to protect the border, they are defeated in domestic politics — the electorate will consider this a betrayal. If the ‘donkeys’ continue to stand their ground, trouble will come to them on the foreign policy track, since without support from overseas, Ukraine will be defeated, and the Western camp will rightly blame Biden and his comrades for the defeat of the Kiev regime.

### Until the end

However, so far neither Biden nor his team have shown any readiness to compromise. On

the contrary, it seems that the decision has been made to tighten the screws. And while the US President was talking about the fact that after Ukraine’s loss, a NATO country would have its turn to be subjected to a Russian attack, for which American soldiers would have to fight, Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin, at a secret briefing, threatened senators that he would send ‘their uncles, cousins and sons’ to front.

*Hints and direct threats of a third world war indicate, on the one hand, the Democrats’ extreme reluctance to compromise on the border. On the other hand, in the ranks of the “donkeys” there is growing despair that they themselves, having created conflict situations in Ukraine and the Middle East, have driven themselves into a trap.*


For the current Biden administration, less than a year before the elections, Ukraine and Zelensky personally have become an extremely toxic asset, especially after the unsuccessful summer counter-offensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Turning into a modern version of the Nivelle massacre on the battlefield, the counterattack completely ruined the Democrats’ election plans.

The ‘struggle for democracy’ in Ukraine has failed — more than \$100 billion from taxpayers’ pockets has been wasted or completely stolen; in the Middle East, Israelis and Palestinians have come together in a bloody clinch, with no end in sight in the near future; relations with China after the meeting in San... Francisco is not what you would call friendly.

Perhaps, the Democrats only have the successful destruction of the economy of the European Union and the relocation of some important production facilities in the United States, as well as the capture of the European LNG market, but Biden’s main electorate is liberals who support the green agenda, who are not at all impressed by this particular achievement of the owner of the Oval Office. As well as the fact that the United States became the largest oil exporter for the first time since 2009 and, as it became known on the eve of the Dubai summit, did not transfer a single cent to the fight against climate change this year.

### Between two fires

The situation in the Middle East does not add optimism to the pre-elec-



**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... A nightmare. If all these nuances are taken into account, then who knows what will happen there. But if Trump wins... Everyone can say nice things when campaigning. But speaking is one thing while solving issues is a whole another story. The machine works in America, and not a single President will go against this machine.”*

**During a working trip to the Minsk Region on June 13th, 2023**

tion year. The civilian death toll in the Gaza Strip is rising, and continued support for the operation in the enclave undermines Biden’s reputation. Moreover, dissatisfaction is again expressed by those who, in the last elections, went in orderly ranks to vote for the Democratic candidate. Left-liberal circles support Palestine, which creates additional tension within the United States, which suddenly divided society no worse than the death of George Floyd in May 2020.

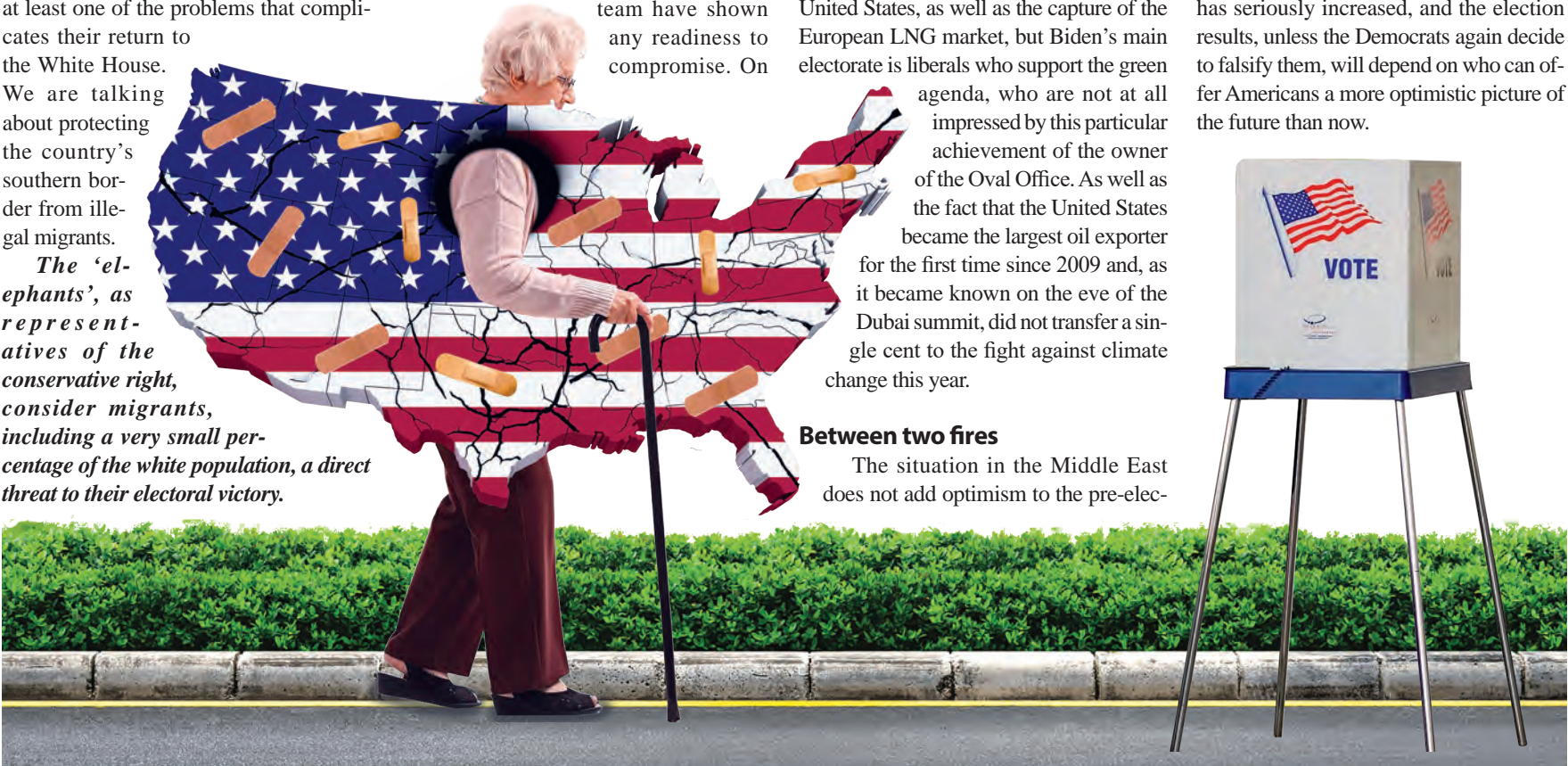
*And Biden again has to make a difficult choice: indulge the electorate in the hope of re-election, but betraying one of the last allies in the Middle East, or throw all his strength into supporting Tel Aviv.*

In addition, the United States is practically involved in the conflict, protecting the port of Eilat from Houthi missiles and flying spy drones over the Gaza Strip.

Perhaps, the United States has never entered into any election campaign in its history in such a state as it is now. The strategy of unfreezing old conflicts around the world unexpectedly ran into resistance from the progressive part of humanity, which began its counter-offensive.

*The expansion of BRICS and the SCO, de-dollarisation, and the public refusal to recognise the hegemonic power that until recently seemed unshakable are destroying the usual way of pre-election periods in the United States.*

Previously, as soon as the time approached to look for a new owner of the Oval Office, Washington ‘withdrew into itself’, guided exclusively by the internal interests of the ruling groups. However, now the influence of the external factor has seriously increased, and the election results, unless the Democrats again decide to falsify them, will depend on who can offer Americans a more optimistic picture of the future than now.





Inquisitive minds are still fascinated by the mystery of the construction of the Egyptian and Mexican pyramids. But there is an example of such a grandiose structure in our country. In the 14th century, the two-metre thick walls of the Lida Castle were built from real boulders without any cranes. They saw bloody battles, love, courage and betrayal. The castle was attacked more than once, and in the 18th century, during the Northern War, it was practically destroyed by the Swedes. But now the beauty of Lida has been restored, and we can plunge into the harsh charm of the atmosphere of the Middle Ages.

# Legends of antiquity

By Oksana Nevmerzhitskaya

## Entrance over stones

The castle fortress, which was supposed to perform defensive functions and serve as a princely residence if necessary, was built primarily for defence against the crusaders. It was erected all together at the confluence of the Lideika River and Kamienka River. Legend has it that in those days, every traveller on foot who wanted to enter the territory of the settlement had to bring a stone with him, and those who rode a cart had to bring several stones.

Initially, the fortress, built in the shape of a slightly irregular quadrangle, had only one tower — on the southwestern side. Now it is called Gedimin Tower, named after the founder of the castle. Later, his grandson Vitovt ordered another tower to be erected diagonally across the courtyard, which, of course, began to bear his name.

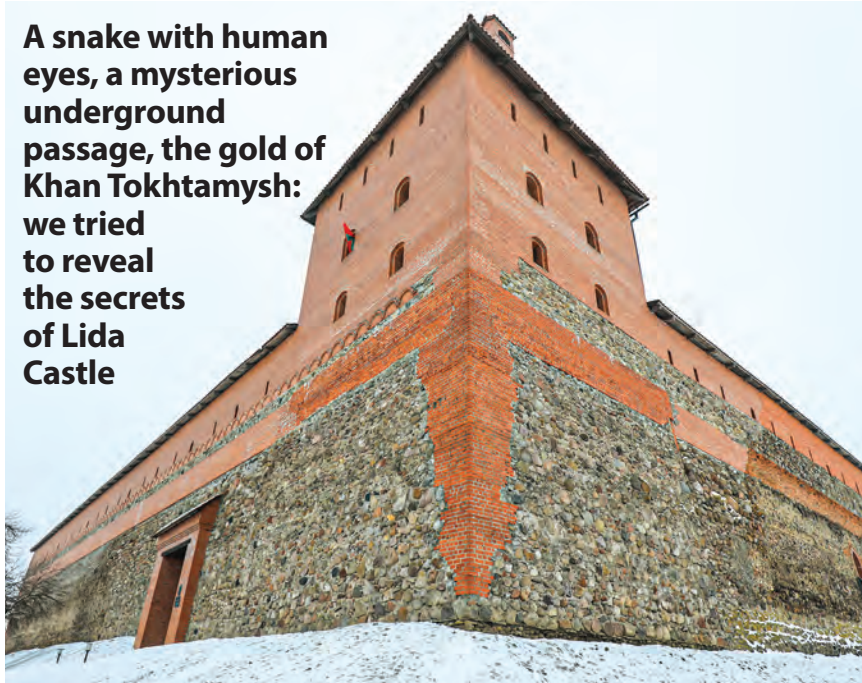
## Castle legends

During excavations in the 1970s, archaeologists discovered only fragments of the foundation of the original tower from the time of Gedimin. They served as the basis for the reconstructed structure. On its walls you can see images of the castle in different eras, including those by Yezep Drozdovich, a famous Belarusian painter.

*The guides pay special attention to two pine trees near the castle walls. They say that one day the Franciscan monks intended to convert the inhabitants of the castle to their faith. The missionaries did not find understanding among the pagans — they took them and hung them on pine trees. And when someone decided to cut down the trees, instead of sap they bled. After that the pine trees were not touched. There was even a belief that after the trees died, misfortune would come to these lands. It is unknown who exactly and why harassed the coniferous couple, but they say that it happened on the eve of the Great Patriotic War...*



## A snake with human eyes, a mysterious underground passage, the gold of Khan Tokhtamysh: we tried to reveal the secrets of Lida Castle



## Rare exhibits

In the exhibition located in the Gedimin Tower, you can see the unique bricks that were used in the construction of Lida Castle.

“They are called ‘gloving’ because on the surface there are traces from the master’s hands, grooves from the fingers. It is not known whether this was how they removed excess clay, or whether this was how they increased the adhesion area between the brick and the lime mortar,” Tatyana Lipnitskaya, senior researcher at the Lida History and Art Museum, notes.

The oldest type of tiles with which the castle towers were covered has also been preserved — with a protrusion-spout on the outside or a spike on the inside as a fastening element. Most often, the corners of roof slopes were built from such tiles, clinging to each other. There are also ancient tiles.

“Furnaces in the Middle Ages looked completely different from what they look like now. They were round, up to a metre in height and in diameter.

*The thickness of the wall of such an adobe stove reached 40 centimetres, and inside it, they placed a stove tile or tile that looked like a jug, and the stove resembled a honeycomb. Due to this, the heat-transfer surface increased,” the specialist continues.*

Among the rarest exhibits, which were found on the territory of Belarus literally once or twice, are a device for bloodletting and a small, if not tiny, silver coin.

The princes never lived in Lida Castle, but they could stop here while passing through, for hunting or to inspect the garrison. Therefore, princely chambers are recreated in the tower — strict and even ascetic, where only the animal skins used as carpets and bedspreads remind of warmth and comfort.



## Combat rounds

Visitors to Lida Castle have access to battle galleries with loopholes with a beautiful view of the lake, which, according to Lida residents, has the shape of a heart. They are located at a height of about 10 metres above the ground.

“Most of the flooring is located on the castle wall itself. Its thickness here, at the top, is about one and a half meters, and where the loopholes are, it is about 70 centimetres. Several loopholes have been preserved, where we see old authentic masonry made of large gloving bricks,” notes Tatyana Lipnitskaya.

The loopholes have different widths: there are narrow ones for archery with a range of about 70–80 metres, there are wide ones for crossbowmen who could shoot at 200 metres. But if the enemy had already gotten close to the walls, it was extremely difficult to knock him out. Therefore, the place for the fortress was chosen on the banks of the river, or even better, at the confluence of the rivers.

## Royal wedding

Along the battle gallery you can go to the Vitovt Tower, built at the beginning of the 15th century. Being ‘younger’, it was better preserved — walls 4 to 8 metres high have survived to this day, as well as fragments of the lower tier, thanks to which it was possible to restore the basement vault.

*There are several thematic halls in the Vitovt Tower. Among them is an interactive one dedicated to the wedding of King Jagiello and Sophia Golshanskaya. The groom was, according to various sources, from 60 to 71 years old, his fourth wife was 17 years old. It was she who became the founder of the Jagiellonian royal dynasty, giving the king two sons.*

“The newlyweds got married in the Transfiguration Church in Novogrudok,



after which they came to feast and spend the night at Lida Castle. It was with their wedding in February 1422 that the appearance of the ceremonial royal gates in Lida Castle is associated, which were urgently built for the ceremonial entry of the king and queen,” explains a senior researcher at the museum.

## The gloomy spirit of the Middle Ages

Valuable exhibits can also be seen in the exhibition of the Vitovt Tower. This, for example, is the Lida cord sword made by German craftsmen. It is the only one on the territory of Belarus, and throughout the world there are no more than a hundred such cords.

In the vaulted dungeon of the Vitovt Tower there is an exhibition of torture devices for witches. True, it has nothing to do with the history of the castle itself; the Inquisition was not rampant here, but it corresponds to the gloomy spirit of the Middle Ages and is very popular among tourists.

Archaeologists who thoroughly explored the courtyard and surroundings of Lida Castle did not find any underground passage here. Nevertheless, rumours persist among people about its presence. But as practice shows, legends are usually based on real events.

*The story of a snake with human eyes is also connected with the underground passage. There are rumours that she lives there for many years, and appears to people on the eve of misfortunes. She was seen in Lida before the Great Patriotic War, and then before the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. At the same time, in the spring of 1986, the western wall even collapsed.*

In the 21st century, in the courtyard of Lida Castle, real knightly lists are held — fights between participants in historical reconstructions, where everything is adult: lathered horses, riders in armour, the rattling of weapons, wounds and fractures.



Starting the tennis season with big wins is a wonderful and pleasant tradition in all aspects. Once established by Victoria Azarenka in 2012-2013, it was picked up by Aryna Sabalenka who continues to carry the banner of Belarusian tennis high. Last January, Aryna won the first Grand Slam title of her career becoming the Australian Open champion. In this year's tournament, Sabalenka won even in a more confident and spectacular manner.

# The best of all

Aleksandr Lukashenko congratulated the athlete on her triumph on the courts of Melbourne. “Accept my congratulations on your confident defence of the Australian Open title. Winning the Grand Slam tournament is a huge personal achievement, a matter of national pride, a great incentive and example for thousands of children in Belarus and around the world. I thank all those involved in this triumph. I wish you good health and new successes,” the congratulatory message reads.

By Sergei Kanashits

In the final, Aryna Sabalenka did not experience any big problems defeating Chinese Zheng Qinwen, who reached a Grand Slam final for the first time, easily in straight sets — 6:3, 6:2. Thus, in seven matches of the tournament, the second racket of the world did not give away a single set to her opponents and finished two matches with obvious superiority (6:0, 6:1 and 6:0, 6:0). Only in the semifinal meeting with American Coco Gauff, Sabalenka allowed her opponent to take more than four games in one set (7:6, 6:4). Complete and utter domination!



match until four o'clock in the morning!) affected his physical condition in the end. Medvedev lost in the final to Italian Jannik Sinner despite leading by two sets — 6:3, 6:3, 4:6, 4:6, 3:6. The final with Sinner is the fourth five-set match for the Russian at the last Australian major. He previously played similar matches with Finland's Emil Ruusuvuori, Poland's Hubert Hurkacz and Alexander Zverev from Germany. By the way, the men's final match became the 35th five-set match at the last tournament. This figure is an Open Era record along with the 1983 US Open.

## Aryna Sabalenka is second to none again



Sabalenka, along with Serbian Novak Djokovic, are undoubtedly the brightest and most charismatic participants of the tour. Over the past season, Aryna managed to stabilize her game, cope with emotions, become more mature and reach a new level. This looks promising in terms of regaining the title of the first racket of the world and keeping it for a much longer period than it happened last season. She is now far from being an impatient and restless tiger cub who first made herself known to the tennis elite back in October 2017 at the Tianjin tournament in China. Then, the 19-year-old girl was very close to beating magnificent Maria Sharapova in the final — Aryna led 5-1 in the deciding set but somehow ended up losing. Since then, Sabalenka has treated both her fans and detractors with such incredible swings and sincere emotions many times, which has become her trademark and made her stand out from others. Yet, now the tiger cub has grown up and turned into a real tigress that is almost impossible to defeat.

Aryna Sabalenka's friendly international team that helps her achieve success includes two Belarusians. Novice coach Anton Dubrov, who took over as a mentor after Aryna had parted ways with Russian specialist Dmitry Tursunov, is growing in this position together with Aryna. His words after the triumph in Melbourne reveal one of the many secrets of victory, “There is nothing more important than what we are doing now. We try

to implement this idea in training, in conversations. No matter how you feel — maybe your batteries are only working at 40 percent and you can't run — well, let's do it at least at the highest possible level.” Sabalenka's sparring partner is Andrei Vasilievsky. This is not a Russian hockey superstar and the world's best goalkeeper from Tampa — that is his full namesake — but a Belarusian guy, a former tennis player. Andrei has always been a team player, having achieved major success in doubles, where he reached the Wimbledon quarterfinals and was in the top 100 of the world ranking.

These are the ones who are in sight now. However, Aryna Sabalenka's current achievements would not have been possible without her father who passed away before time, when Aryna was just 21. It was he who brought the future champion to tennis. Nor would they have been possible without the first coach, Elena Vergeenko, daughter of a famous football goalkeeper, USSR champion in 1982 as part of Dinamo Minsk, Mikhail Vergeenko. Nor without many others who, at some point of her career, participated in the life and preparation of the current world tennis prima. And certainly, without the state as a whole, which gave Aryna Sabalenka a launching pad, an opportunity for development and growth. One would agree that this is also an important thing to remember and be grateful to the native country. Happy victory and keep it up!

## ARENA

### • The girls won medals

Alina Harnasko became the absolute winner of the international Winter Queen Cup tournament in Spain, which was attended by 570 gymnasts from Belarus, Spain, Andorra, Belgium, Greece, France, Great Britain, Italy, Lithuania, Romania and the United Arab Emirates. The leader of our national team celebrated the victory in the all-around programme and finals of all individual sports. Another Belarusian, Anastasiia Salos, took the second place in the all-around event. In junior competitions, our grace Nicole Liauta became the best in exercises with a ball, hoop, clubs and ribbon. She also had no equal in the all-around.



### • Faster than the wind

Two gold and one silver medals were claimed by Belarusian athletes at the All-Russian Orenburg Mile competitions for the prizes of the governor of Orenburg Region. Belarusian track and field athletes Vitali Parakhonka, as well as Maksim and Elvira Hrabarenka — leaders of the national team in sprint and hurdle disciplines — took part in the competition. Vitali Parakhonka won gold in the 60 m hurdles. In the same kind of programme, Elvira Hrabarenka had no equal among women. Elvira's husband Maksim competed in the 60 m flat race. In the final, the Belarusian lost only four hundredths of a second to Russian Yaroslav Tkalic and finished the second.

### • The wrestlers showed class

Belarusian freestyle wrestlers won four medals at the Ivan Yarygin Cup, which brought together athletes from 24 countries in Krasnoyarsk. Magomedkhabib Kadimagomedov won gold in the 74 kg weight category — he defeated Russian David Baev in the final. Silver medals were awarded to Alina Shauchuk (weight category — up to 68 kg) and Krystsina Sazykina (up to 62 kg), while Aliaksandr Hushtyn (up to 97 kg) became the owner of the bronze medal.







100-year-old Anna Krivospitskaya, a veteran of the Great Patriotic War from Chausy, knows the value of human life and the cost of war better than anyone. Therefore, one of her wishes to the current generation is to have peace.

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On January 26th, 1954, a famous Belarusian sculptor, Vladimir Zhananov (1954-2012) was born. He worked mainly in the field of monumental and decorative sculpture. Vladimir Zhananov's urban sculptures, located in Minsk right among people and for people, without any pedestals or bases, give the Belarusian capital a special flair. Among his works are *Unknown Woman*, *Girl with an Umbrella*, *Lady with a Dog*, and more. *Carriage* is one of the main attractions of Minsk Town Hall Square.

On January 26th, 1525, the first printed map of Russia was published — a map of Moscow lands. Cartography appeared even before the emergence of writing in primitive society. The history of cartography in Russia began before the era of Peter the Great. The archives of Ivan the Terrible contain 248 maps. Modern cartography is a complex multidisciplinary science, closely related to geodetic and geographical sciences.



On January 27th, 1944, the blockade of the city of Leningrad was lifted. In 1941, Hitler launched military operations at the approaches to Leningrad in order to completely destroy the city. On September



of land communication with the country. On January 27th, 1944, Soviet troops completely lifted the 900-day fascist blockade of the city. According to various sources, over 1 million people died during the years of the blockade.

On January 27th, 1945, Soviet troops liberated the prisoners of Auschwitz, the largest Nazi concentration and death camp located on the territory of Poland. Thanks to the rapid actions of the Soviet army, the Nazis were unable to destroy not only the prisoners, but also the traces of their crimes. The Nazis killed more than two and a half million people in Auschwitz. And over 500 thousand people died of hunger and diseases. The Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum was opened in 1947. The International Holocaust Remembrance Day is observed on January 27th.



On January 27th, 1957, space was declared the property of all mankind. The corresponding international agreement was signed between the United States, Great

Britain and the Soviet Union. In particular, the document states that 'the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries.' This is how the era of international space law began.

On January 28th, 1820, the discovery of the Earth's sixth continent, Antarctica, took place. The honour of its discovery belongs to the Russian round-the-world naval expedition led by Thaddeus Bellingshausen and Mikhail Lazarev. This expedition is rightly considered to be one of the most important and difficult ever made. The collected scientific materials made it possible to get the first idea of Antarctica. 28 geographical objects with Russian names were mapped on the Antarctic map.



January 29th, 1886 marks the birthday of the automobile — Karl Benz received a patent for his first car. In 1887, the world's first automobile was introduced at an exhibition in Paris. Only



three such cars were created, two of which disappeared without a trace, while the third one gleams in the limelight on the podium of the German Museum in Munich. The condition of this exhibit is assessed as very good, you can even have a drive...

January 31st is the International Jeweller's Day. The date was chosen due to the fact that it is in January that jewellers register their hallmarks. The profession of a jeweller is one of the oldest. Ancient Greece is considered to be the birthplace of jewellery art. Precious stones, pearls, amber, gems and semiprecious stones were used in jewellery. The works of ancient masters still amaze with their beauty and grace.



The traditions laid down by jewellers of the past are continued by modern craftsmen, delighting us with beautiful products.

On January 31st, 1919, a provincial Museum of Local Lore (now the Mogilev Regional Museum of Local Lore) was opened in Mogilev. According to some data, the Cross of Euphrosyne of Polotsk was kept there in 1929-1941. During the war, the museum was looted. It was restored in 1950.

