



Solemn events dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Khatyn tragedy were held in Belarus

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Old Belarusian photographs you can see at the *From Negative to Positive* exhibition

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Sowing on the fields in the farms of Agro Turna from Kamenets District, Brest Region

Spring day feeds the year

Following the Brest, Gomel, Grodno and Minsk Regions, the Mogilev Region also joined the sowing campaign. Farmers understand how important the spring sowing season is. In three weeks, they must lay the foundation not only for this, but also for the next harvest: feed winter crops, sow spring crops and corn.

Huge work, which was preceded by serious preparation, lies ahead. The fields are already hot: ploughing the land, fertilising and preparing the soil. The machine operators who were the first to bring seeders into the field, knowing that time in the spring is priceless and flies quickly, work every day with overfulfillment of the norm. Grain growers do not let themselves go downhill — they sow strictly according to technology. The task for this season is to work even better than last year.

This year, the state has allocated almost Br3 billion for spring field work. These funds are used to purchase fuels and lubricants, mineral fertilisers, plant protection products, as well as to provide repair and maintenance of agricultural machinery. We have everything to carry out the necessary cycle of field work. Belarusian grain growers are hardworking and reliable people and will do everything that depends on them at the highest level.



BELTA

Act proactively



On March 21st, the President of Belarus held a large meeting with the country's security, defence and law enforcement agencies. Attending the meeting were representatives and management of the Prosecutor's Office, the Financial Investigation Department of the State Control Committee, the Investigative Committee, the KGB, the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Defence Ministry, the Emergencies Ministry, the State Border Committee, the State Customs Committee, the State Forensic Examination Committee, courts of general jurisdiction and heads of regions.

"The topic of our today's meeting is national security and the situation in the country's security, defence and law enforcement agencies. At the beginning of every year each law enforcement agency reports to me on the situation within their jurisdiction. You understand what kind of reports these are. I do not mean to say that they are not professional. They are very professional. As I noticed, however, the tendency and trend is to show everything in a good light. I do not mean it is a lie. It is not. Our security, defence and law enforcement services are doing quite well. But there are shortcomings," the Belarusian leader stressed.

The Head of State noted that he had no opportunity to attend the outcome meetings of each agency's collegiums this year. Aleksandr Lukashenko plans to do so at the beginning of next year.

"The highest level of external threats necessitates paying close attention to internal threats. Moreover, these are links in the same chain. The latest reports show how relevant today's discussion is. You know the situation by and large. As I keep saying, we should not lower our guard."

The other day, a foreign terrorist was eliminated in Grodno. The special services did a great job. An arsenal of weapons and explosives was seized. These weapons were intended for high-profile terrorist attacks against individuals and government officials. What I want to praise them specifically for is that in such a difficult situation when the shootout was taking place within a limited space and when the terrorists used grenades and firearms (automatic), not a single member of Group A involved in detaining this person was killed. Thus, they learned the lessons from the tragedy that happened in Minsk. It was a good operation, good job. As I often say, people who risk their lives should always be acknowledged and supported," the President said.

In general, as reported to the Head of State, the overall crime situation in the country is under control — the total number of crimes has not changed over the past year. The number of murders has decreased. The number of people died from criminal offenses has reduced by 13 percent.

"However, this is not the reason to get complacent. In the past year there have been a number of negative trends to which we must surely pay attention. Work on crime prevention, especially phishing, is insufficient. The number of victims of these phishing scams has doubled. The number of pensioners who fall victim to so-called phone scammers, has increased nearly fivefold," the Belarusian leader emphasised.

The President asked about the meas-

ures the police and other government agencies were planning to take in this regard.

"We need to protect these people. Children and pensioners must know that the government will always support and protect them," the Head of State stressed.



Andrei Shved

At the same time, Aleksandr Lukashenko demanded to pull out all the stops to eliminate violence against women and children,

"Women and children continue to be victims of violence, including sexual abuse. It is necessary to step up efforts to protect them, as well as to prevent juvenile delinquency. Men, if we cannot protect our women, we are worthless! It must be eradicated from our society by the toughest methods. Like the fight against terrorism."

It was also highlighted that numerous grave crimes committed by persons who had a prior arrest record are recorded.

"Recidivism is particularly common among those who served a jail sentence. Here, too, we need to take tougher action against them. Some of them are granted early release, some serve their sentence in full. When they are out of jail, they go back to their old wicked ways. I want to reiterate: a jobless person is a potential criminal. The measures that we take to place them into jobs are insufficient," Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

The President emphasised the need in this regard to pay close attention to those who are not working today.

The President noted, "If a person doesn't work, where does he or she take money for a living? It is clear where. Our society doesn't live in a vacuum and sees everything that's going on. Some people believe that law enforcement personnel are primarily interested in figures and ratings that measure their performance instead of people's destinies. Yes, we need figures and ratings. Nobody argues against that. But if we live purely for the sake of figures and ratings... I'd like to find out whether

it is true, whether we have moved away from departmental quotas as a system to measure performance."

The Head of State stated that not everything has been done to ensure the security and safety of the population. The number of people killed in traffic accidents remains significant. Aleksandr Lukashenko was also concerned about crimes among military personnel, including crimes committed by officers of various defence, security, and law enforcement agencies. The President remarked he had repeatedly directed the defence minister's attention to the inadmissibility of the things that sometimes happen in army units.

"On the whole, not everything is fine with army discipline. We see perfectly well and understand what is going on at the borders of our country. The question is whether we fully ensure the security of our state and citizens," the Belarusian leader wondered.

Belarusian Prosecutor General Andrei Shved reported on the crime situation in the country at a meeting with the Head of State. He noted that last year the law enforcement agencies took measures to ensure a stable social and political situation, law and order, protection of citizens against criminal offences. The number of murders, grievous bodily harm has decreased. Fewer people have died from intentional crimes and crimes through negligence.



He also reported on progress in the work to counter drug crime. The number of such crimes has decreased, the number of deaths from drug use has halved.

"Efforts to combat cybercrime are gradually yielding results. There are other positive results of the anti-crime effort. However, many issues still remain in place."

First of all, with regard to countering extremism and, as the beginning of this year showed, terrorism. The Prosecutor

General's Office takes a clear and consistent position: violation of the principle of the inevitability of punishment breeds impunity and, as a consequence, new, more serious crimes," Andrei Shved emphasised.

The head of the supervisory agency noted that the number of violations of the procedure for the use of airspace by unmanned aerial vehicles and ultra-small aircraft is growing. He urged to adopt uniform rules for the use, sale and operation of drones and to strengthen responsibility.

The conversation at the level of the President lasted about three hours, during which the work of the country's security, defence and law enforcement agencies was thoroughly discussed in detail.

As Andrei Shved told reporters after the event, the Head of State gave clear instructions, including on strengthening the coordinating role of the prosecutor's office. As the President said, the role of the prosecutor's office should be significantly strengthened, including in conducting analytics and making prompt proposals to eliminate certain negative consequences. In this work, the prosecution authorities will work closely with the State Secretariat of the Security Council and the Supreme Court to engage in analytical work on the activities of the country's security, defence and law enforcement agencies, identify trends and develop response measures, including submitting their proposals to the level of the President.

Conclusions were drawn for each area of work of law enforcement agencies and appropriate instructions were given. The main message to violators is to be discourteous. It was also about strengthening work to counter extremism and terrorism. As noted, it is necessary to interact more with society, people and local authorities in this direction.

Khatyn is a place of strength for the Belarusian people

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, took part in a commemorative event dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Khatyn tragedy

Firstly, the Head of State, together with his sons, visited the new museum built in the Khatyn Memorial Complex. The museum is equipped with exhibits and modern interactive technologies that very realistically tell about the terrible crimes committed by the Nazis and their accomplices on Belarusian land.

“It’s really original and unique,” the Head of State noted after the tour. He drew attention to the fact that earlier the events of the war years were most often demonstrated in a movie-like way. But in the new museum, everything is as close to reality as possible.

The Head of State laid a wreath at the Eternal Flame and took part in a meeting-requiem, during which the memory of the dead was honoured with a minute’s silence.

In his speech, Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised: time stopped here exactly 80 years ago. The history of Belarusian families, who peacefully lived in their own land, stopped. As many as 149 lives of the elderly, women, and children, including yet unborn children, were snuffed out.

alive, crushed by tanks, drowned, and killed with direct heavy cannon fire. How children were buried alive in order to save bullets. How chemical agents were sprayed over our towns and villages,” the President emphasised.

The Head of State went on saying, “You know that fascism has no human face, but it has names. These are names of murderers and traitors. And we know them. There are heirs and ideological successors whose gene of hatred towards us, the entire Slavic civilisation and our people has activated again.

‘Aryan standards’ were replaced with liberal democratic values. They have been filtering out people who do not meet the new standard for a long time. This is done by means of colour revolutions, riots, proxy wars, sanctions, blackmail. We also know how far this can go.’

According to the President, the example of neighbouring countries already shows how modern neo-Nazism is raising its head, “Therefore, we must, and



the memorial complex, which was restored on the model of the one that previously existed there and was destroyed during the Great Patriotic War. The Head of State lit a candle in the temple. Then the President talked to representatives of the media.

The journalists’ questions touched on various topics, including security. They also talked about the recent sabotage attempt in Machulishchi, and about the events related to the neutralisation of the terrorist in Grodno. The President urged Belarusians to unite and be vigilant,

‘The unity of security, military and law enforcement agencies as well as our people is of crucial importance today. This will make our life easier in the future.’

Attempts to conduct terrorist attacks in Belarus is something absolutely new for us. It’s not something we didn’t expect, either. We were expecting it. Both I and the military. But anyway it still seems unbelievable to us. What I would like is to see our people stay united. People see everything. You just tell us in time (I always address the people with such a request) if you see a stranger that looks or behaves weird. Just give us a signal. You just can’t imagine how fast the special services responded then. Thousands of people were involved. Those criminals were detected within five days. People were providing us with information: someone saw a person, a car and so on. We were following the tracks, we were searching. However, it is not always enough. This

is not because people were hiding something from us. This is because people just live their lives quietly and complacently. But today we need to see everything that is going on around us. I am not saying that we have to tell on others, to slander someone. No. We have to be very careful.”

By the way, people also helped in the capture of the Grodno terrorist.

“But people were informing us. Except for those scumbags who let him into their apartment. They have been detained, and we are working with them. They are simply outlaws. But this is only the beginning. A number of operations are still ongoing on the territory of Belarus,” the President said.

The question addressed to the Head of State mentioned the UK’s recent statements about the intention to supply Ukraine with depleted-uranium ammunition. A Russian reporter asked the Head of State to comment on that. Aleksandr Lukashenko immediately responded to the question by saying, “I’ll say that Russia will supply us with ammunition with ‘genuine’ uranium. If those people [in the West] are crazy, then they give a nudge to this process. It is the most dreadful and most dangerous thing. This is why it is necessary to slightly steer away from craziness... Once this ammunition blows up at positions of Russian troops, you will see that the response will be a terrible lesson for the entire planet. Russia has more than depleted uranium. You know it perfectly well... It is necessary to move towards a peaceful resolution the kind Putin and Xi Jinping talked about. The Russian leadership and one of the world’s largest powers — China — and many other nations agree with that.”

The Belarusian leader added: if there were more common sense in the leadership in Ukraine, then everything would have ended long ago.

While talking to reporters Aleksandr Lukashenko explained why the West is enraged due to Xi Jinping’s visit to Russia,

‘We are confident we are moving in the right direction. At least as far as Belarus and Russia are concerned. We are moving where doors are open for us.’

If a door is closed, why should we try to force it open? They will come to us. Europe already complains about America. While encouraging Europe [to enforce sanctions and sever ties], Americans trade with Russians very well and so on. It is business. And these lousy Western politicians create this situation with one hand and use the other hand to try to not only talk to us fraudulently but trade with us and develop economy. This is why we go where we are welcomed. We are doing the right thing. But they understood that they had done the wrong thing, too.”

Answering the question of journalists about the forecasts of the country’s economic development, Aleksandr Lukashenko said that the economy of Belarus has not collapsed and will not collapse,

‘The first quarter of the year confirms my optimism that this year should be and will be at least as good as last year. If we live this year just like we did last year and if we hit performance targets set at a government meeting on top of that, we will live a normal life.’

The Head of State was asked about the political campaign that will be held next year in the country, and about the state in which society is approaching this.

“If we stay grounded, everything will be fine. Therefore, we will handle this. But, of course, we should not lower our guard. In fact, those bastards who fled, several hundreds of them who are the most active, will have to show to their sponsors that they can do more than just write posts on Telegram channels. They have tried this and that: rebellion, colour revolutions, media warfare (it still continues). The only remaining tool that they will want to try is to take up arms and fight... In February 2024 we will have the parliamentary elections, the elections to the Councils of Deputies at all levels on the single voting day. It will be followed by the elections of delegates to the Belarusian People’s Congress. After that we will proceed to the presidential election. We are responsible for public security. And the rest is on you. People will make a decision, as they always do,” Aleksandr Lukashenko replied.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



‘This tragedy as well as thousands of equally horrible crimes committed during the Great Patriotic War remains set in stone and in the heart of the Belarusian nation forever. In the heart of the victorious nation, a powerful and magnanimous one that knows how to forgive.’

Up till now we’ve been trying not to burden with the feeling of guilt children and grandchildren of the butchers, who came to our land in order to conclusively put the problem of Slavs to rest. Eastern Slavs. We have not previously underlined that most of the Western Europe countries had joined Nazi Germany and the world capital had paid for this crusade. Today they enforce sanctions against us and have launched an economic and informational war. But we haven’t forgotten and will remind descendants of the death squads how the Belarusian land became one big death camp back in 1941. How people were burned

we will do everything to commemorate the feat of the generation of Soviet people who showed extraordinary courage and heroism. We need to make Khatyn a place of strength for the Belarusian people. This is our duty.

In the Year of Peace and Creation we, Belarusians say it clearly and loudly: there is no justification for a genocide policy, nothing is more important than a human life.’

I would like to emphasise: as long as we come here together with children, this will not happen again.’

Aleksandr Lukashenko visited the church on the territory of



Memory is sacred

There are places of power, sorrow and memory in the history of every nation. Khatyn was one of these for the Belarusians. The quiet, friendly Belarusian village of Khatyn can no longer be found on the map of Belarus. 80 years ago, on March 22nd, 1943, the Nazi invaders burned it along with 149 residents, of which 75 were children. The Khatyn Memorial Complex was created on the site of the village in 1969 as a symbol of eternal memory of the burned Belarusian villages. This is one of the most revered places in Belarus. There are few places in the world where there is such a thoughtful, tense silence as in Khatyn — there is only the rustle of steps on concrete paths, only the muffled chimes of bells. Mournful silence... It hides in itself the rumble of furious fire, and children's crying, and desperate cries of mothers, and angry curses of men dying in flames... The bells of Khatyn call us to remember and prevent a recurrence, stop fascism and preserve our identity.

By Olga Korneeva

Khatyn massacre

On a frosty morning on March 22nd, 1943, brutal Nazis broke into the village of Khatyn and surrounded it. The villagers did not know anything about the fact that in the morning, 6 kilometres from Khatyn, partisans fired on a fascist convoy and killed a German officer as a result of the attack. But the fascists have already passed a death sentence on innocent people. The entire population of Khatyn, young and old — the elderly, women and children were driven out of their homes and went to the collective farm barn. The families of Iosif and Anna Baranovsky with 9 children, Alexander and Alexandra Novitsky with 7 children were brought here; the same number of children were in the family of Kazimir and Elena Iotko, the youngest was only one-year-old. Vera Yaskevich was driven into the barn with her seven-week-old son Tolik... When the entire population of the village was in the barn, the Nazis locked the doors, lined the barn with straw, doused it with gasoline and set it on fire. The wooden structure immediately caught fire. Children were choking and crying in the smoke. The adults tried to save the children. Under the pressure of dozens of human bodies, they could not stand it and the doors collapsed. In burning clothes, terrified, people rushed to run, the Nazis cold-bloodedly shot those who escaped from the flames from assault rifles and machine guns. 149 people died, including 75 children under 16 years of age. The village was looted and burned to the ground.

6 people were recognised as witnesses of the Khatyn massacre: the only adult witness and five children. 13-year-old Alexander Zhelobkovich galloped off on a horse to a neighbouring village. Brother and sister Yaskevichi — Vladimir (13 years old) and Sonia (9 years old) hid. Three residents of Khatyn were destined to survive after escaping from the burning barn: 7-year-old Viktor Zhelobkovich, 12-year-old Anton Baranovsky and 56-year-old Iosif Kaminsky.

Khatyn Memorial Complex

In 1969, Khatyn Memorial Complex was opened in memory of all the dead Belarusians on the site of the former village. The authors of the memorial were architects Yuri Gradov, Valentin Zankovich, Leonid Levin and sculptor Sergei Selikhanov. The memorial has become a place of national worship. Thousands of people gather here every year for memorial events.

The Khatyn Memorial Complex is an example of a harmonious fusion of arts that has no equal in the world in terms of its impact on visitors. It is the embodiment of the spirit of deep sorrow and eternal memory, a symbol of greatness and tragic heroism. The memorial tells about the courage and insubordination of the Belarusian people in a harsh and concise manner.

The complex repeats the layout of the lost village.

At the entrance, visitors first of all see the 6-metre bronze sculpture of The Unbowed Man, who rose alive from the fire, carried the body of a dead boy out of there. The image was created in memory of Iosif Kaminsky and his son. It is also a symbol of the whole people, who lost their sons and daughters, brought many and many lives to the altar of victory, but survived, rose, preserved the memory of the fallen.

The black slab-roof marks the place where the barn was located, in which the inhabitants of Khatyn were burned.

Nearby is their mass grave, on which there is a symbolic wreath of memory with the words of the command of the dead to the living.

'Good people, remember: we loved life and our Motherland, and you, dear ones. We were burned alive in the fire. Our request to all: let grief and sorrow turn into your courage and strength, so that you can establish peace and tranquillity on Earth forever. So that from now on, nowhere and never in a whirlwind of fires, life does not perish!'



PUNISHERS

The punitive operation in Khatyn was carried out by the Ukrainian Schutzmannschaft Battalion 118, formed in 1942 from Ukrainian prisoners of war, mobilised youth from rural areas of the Kiev Region, and Western Ukrainian nationalists. In addition, the wildest SS punitive unit was involved — the SS-Sturmbrigade Dirlewanger. In 1942-1944 it took part in punitive operations in the Mogilev, Minsk, Vitebsk and Grodno Regions. Divisions under the command of Dirlewanger destroyed at least 186 villages in our country and killed about 25,000 people.

The versatility of the bloody epic of the Ukrainian battalion is confirmed in his study by the Swedish-American scientist Per Anders Rudling, "On the territory of oc-

cupied Belarus, the Schutzmannschaft Battalion 118 took part in the most brutal 'pacification' operations. From March to August 1943, it participated in operations Hornung, Draufgänger, Cottbus, Hermann and Wandsbeck". Hryhoriy Vasiura, chief of staff of the Schutzmannschaft Battalion 118, commanded the massacre of the inhabitants of Khatyn.

From November to December 1986, the trial of Vasiura took place in Minsk. By the decision of the military tribunal of the Belarusian Military District, Vasiura was found guilty of crimes and sentenced to capital punishment — execution.



Cemetery of Villages



THE UNBOWED MAN

The only adult witness to the Khatyn tragedy, 56-year-old village blacksmith Iosif Kaminsky, regained consciousness late at night, when the Nazis were no longer in the village. He had to endure another heavy blow: he found his wounded son among the corpses of his fellow villagers. The boy received severe burns and was mortally wounded in the stomach. He died in his father's arms. This tragic moment in the life of Iosif Kaminsky was the basis for the creation of the only sculpture of the Khatyn Memorial Complex — the Unbowed Man.

The fate of Iosif Kaminsky was very cruel. He came out of the fire and survived in spite of everything, but his entire family perished in the fire shed, and he lived with this pain until the end of his days. After the war, Iosif Kaminsky lived in the village of Kozyri, Logoisk District, Minsk Region. Until the last days of his life he came to Khatyn. He died in 1973 and was buried in Logoisk.

From the protocol of interrogation of Iosif Kaminsky, January 31st, 1961,

"...People doomed to death, including me and my family members, cried a lot and screamed. Opening the barn door, the punishers began to shoot citizens with assault rifles, machine guns and other weapons, but the shooting was almost not heard because of the screams of the people. I was at the wall with my 15-year-old son Adam. The dead citizens fell on me, the still alive rushed about in the general crowd like waves, blood poured from the wounded and the dead. The burning roof collapsed, the terrible wild cries of people intensified even more... I managed to get out from under the corpses and burning people and crawl to the doors. Here one of the punishers... fired at me from a machine gun, as a result I was wounded in the left shoulder... My son Adam, burnt, jumped out of the barn, I don't know how, but he fell after the shots 10 metres from the barn. I was wounded and lay motionless, pretending to be dead so that the punisher would not shoot at me... Soon I heard a signal to the departure of the punishers, and when they drove off a little, my son Adam, who was lying not far from me, about three metres away, called me to him... I crawled up, lifted him, but saw that he was cut in half by bullets. My son Adam still managed to ask me, 'Is mom alive?' And then he died."



Iosif Kaminsky surrounded by listeners, 1968

Symbolic barn roof



The tragedy of Khatyn is one of the thousands of facts testifying to the purposeful policy of genocide against the population of Belarus, which was carried out by the Nazis throughout the entire period of occupation (1941-1944): more than 3 million civilians and prisoners of war were exterminated on Belarusian land; more than 377,000 people were driven into German slavery under the threat of death, many of whom died as a result of unbearable working conditions, deprivation and torture; 209 cities and more than 9200 villages and villages were destroyed and burned, including 5295 settlements that the Nazis destroyed along with all or part of the population.

On the other side of the Crown, there is the answer of the living to the dead, *“You are our relatives. Bowing our heads in great sorrow, we stand before you. You did not bend to the fascist murderers in the dark days of hard times. You accepted death, but the flame of love for our Soviet Motherland will never go out. The memory of you is immortal among the people, as our Earth and the ever-bright sun above it are eternal.”*

On the site of each of the 26 burnt houses there is a log cabin monument, inside which there is an obelisk in the form of a chimney with a bell. 26 Khatyn bells spread the bitter memory of the Belarusian land around the world. On each obelisk there is a plaque with the names of the burnt inhabitants of the house.

Behind the monumental houses is the Cemetery of Villages. Urns with earth were brought here from 185 burned villages, which were never revived. Nearby is the Wall of Sorrow, a reinforced concrete block with niches in which there are memorial plates with the names of 66 largest extermination camps and places of mass death of people.

The memorial is completed by the Square of Memory, in the centre of which there are 3 birches, symbolising life, in place of the fourth one is the Eternal Flame, a symbol of the inhabitants of Belarus who died during the war. Nearby is the Tree of Life with a list of 433 villages burned down by the occupiers and revived after the war.

For more than half a century of its existence, the memorial complex has been visited by tens of millions of people from more than 100 countries of the world. Among the guests of honour of the complex are UN Secretary Generals U Thant and J. Perez de Cuellar; state leaders Richard Nixon, Rajiv Gandhi, Fidel Castro, Yasser Arafat, Urho Kaleva Kekkonen, Nursultan Nazarbayev, Robert Kocharian, Hu Jintao and many others.

Unique museum

On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the tragedy, a large-scale reconstruction was carried out in the memorial complex. Last year, the Head of State instructed to build a museum here and carry out all the necessary restoration work. ‘I want people’s hearts broken already before they walk here.’

When a year ago in Khatyn, during the nationwide subbotnik, the Head of State described how he sees the future museum, he used exactly this comparison.

These words of the President became the basis from which designers and architects pushed off when creating the project of the future museum, Director of the Khatyn Memorial Complex Artur Zelsky says,

“Whoever does not remember the lessons of the past is doomed to experience all the hardships again. This is the main idea to which our exposition leads. We did not seek to duplicate the Museum of the History of the Great Patriotic War or other museums. Our goal is to show people how terrible any aggression is, what horror and destruction it brings, how it turns human destinies into smoke. We give visitors a retrospective so that they realise, especially young people, how important it is to preserve the historical memory of the feat of the Soviet people so that we can create our future and preserve sovereignty.”

The museum has six rooms. Each is dedicated to a certain period in the history of the Belarusian people. The exhibition space gradually introduces the history of major military conflicts and the tragedies of the civilian population. The central element of the entire exposition is the ‘bloody stream’, symbolising all the victims of aggression in Belarus.

The first hall of the museum covers the period of the history of Belarus from the 10th to the 20th century. It recalls the main military conflicts that swept across our land. Terrible figures sound: in the 18th century, more than half of the population of Belarus died in various armed conflicts. Before the people had time to recover, the World War I fell to its lot, taking every fifth. Revolutionary upheavals, occupation, economic devastation... The recalcitrant Belarusian people survived in spite of everything and created their own state in order to independently determine their own destiny.

The second hall plunges us into the atmosphere of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War: from the first days of the invasion, Belarus turned into a bloody wound on the body of the Soviet Union.

The third hall reveals the theme of occupation, concentration camps, mass executions and the survival of the civilian population in these inhuman conditions. Punitive operations began immediately, in the summer of 1941. The beginning of the policy of genocide of the Belarusian people in the occupied territory was laid by the Pripyat Marshes massacres. The museum has collected unique photo evidence. On one of them, an unknown girl is digging her own grave, and executioners are crowding around, waiting to make a fatal shot.

The fourth hall is dedicated to the burnt villages. The burnt wall of the barn reminds us about how that fateful day ended for the inhabitants of Khatyn. On it is a map of Belarus, where 216 burnt villages smoulder like red coals, sharing the fate of Khatyn.

The fifth hall is the space of memory. The names of settlements affected by the invaders are carved on the walls.

The sixth hall demonstrates historical studies of the tragedy of war, reflects the history of the creation of the Khatyn memorial ensemble. It also contains unique exhibits discovered during the investigation by the Prosecutor General’s Office of the criminal case on the genocide of the Belarusian people.



In the halls of the museum



Aleksandr Kulevsky



In the halls of the museum



New unique museum in Khatyn

MEMORY

The Minsk Times
Thursday
March 30
2023

Little streams make great rivers

The *Witness of Time* exhibition opened on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the House Museum of First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in Minsk. During its centuries-old history, this little house, as the residents of the capital lovingly call it, has witnessed many historical events. And over the years of the museum's existence, it has been visited by numerous delegations and politicians from around the world, including Fidel Castro, Josip Broz Tito, Walter Ulbricht and others.

By Victoria Popova

We asked Director of the National Historical Museum of the Republic of Belarus Aliaksandr Khramy to give our readers a short tour and note the most interesting facts in two exhibition halls.

Mobile house

— Do you know that the House Museum of First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in Minsk is not original? Initially, it stood on Zakharyevskaya Street, which was the main and longest one and ran along the line of the sidewalk of the modern Independence Avenue, — Aliaksandr Khramy recalls. — The entire area in the vicinity was wooden and burned out almost completely during the Great Patriotic War. Immediately after it's end, serious work was begun to restore the city. But since the master plan for the development of Minsk assumed wide avenues, it was no longer possible to install the house in its original place. In 1948, on the occasion of the first anniversary date — the 50th anniversary, the restored house-museum was placed as close as possible to the historical site, but the modest wooden building did not fit into the architectural appearance of the rapidly growing avenue of the capital, and then the house was moved closer to Svisloch River, to the very place where it has been located for the last 70 years, since 1953.

Amazing resemblance

— Pre-war photographs with the appearance of the memorial part of the house have been preserved. And if



Egor Ermalitsky

we compare the current appearance of the museum and the original, we will see that everything is completely identical. For us, museum workers, such similarity is a matter of special pride. In addition, today, glass and ceramics of the pre-war period, which were found during archaeological excavations in the area of the original house-museum, are carefully stored in four showcases of the house-museum.

The first museum in the BSSR

— We have already noted that in Soviet times the House Museum of the First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was of exceptional importance. Firstly, this is the very first museum of Belarusian statehood. All official delegations that visited the BSSR came to our 'house' without fail. I will add that it was extremely difficult and honourable to get a certification of a guide here at that time. Moreover, all subsequent museums that appeared in the country were required

to take an expert assessment of the employees of the house-museum. And I just had a curious rhyme. Do you remember at one of the congresses of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party it was decided that the Social Democrats should publish a single newspaper, *Iskra*? 'From a spark a fire will flare up', Lenin liked to repeat.

This is how a whole museum industry appeared from our small house-museum in Belarus, which is successfully developing now.

The unquenchable interest of the public in museum events is a vivid confirmation of the words of the director. Let us remember that one can see rare photographs that capture the historical moments of the museum's life at the *Witness of Time* anniversary exhibition. There are photos of nine participants of the First Congress, books, periodicals and other materials related to the history of the issue.

Young visitors of the exhibition will be impressed by the model of the nearby avenue recreated on a 3D printer, thanks to the houses on magnets they will be able to feel like architects and place the city dominant at their discretion.

The realisation of a simple historical fact makes adult guests lose their breath: it was in Minsk that the future of the USSR was laid in a modest green house number 133 on Zakharyevskaya Street, where the First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party was held from March 1st to March 3rd, 1898.

Additionally, the *Witness of Time* exhibition dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the museum will run at the House Museum of the First Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party for several months.



Aleksandr Gorbasht

Aleksandr Gorbasht

Diplomacy in action

The main difference between the Minsk International Book Exhibition and other similar literary forums has always

The language of peace is clear without any translation

A new tradition was born at the 30th Minsk International Book Fair

This year, a whole literary and diplomatic district was 'erected' at the country's largest book presentation. The new project, which, most likely, will become traditional, was called the International Quarter. And if earlier foreign guests of the exhibition shared their seats around the entire perimeter of the site, now they have been provided with a permanent residence permit within the same district. A large review of literary novelties and book achievements of all friends and partners of Belarus, an example of open international co-operation and a platform for dialogue — this is the International Quarter.



been its predominantly business, rather than fair character. Today, the bias towards international friendship and communication is especially clearly dictated by the time, said the Belarusian Information Minister Vladimir Pertsov, opening the International Quarter, "In our country, 2023 has been declared by the President

the Year of Peace and Creation. The book is the source of what brings peace, goodness and love. This year the exhibition features 438 exhibitors from 19 countries, including Belarus. 194 exhibitors came from near and far abroad countries. We hope that the International Quarter project will become a tradition for us."

Russia and China, Turkey and Turkmenistan, Cuba and Iran, Syria and Venezuela — the list of participants of the fair is getting bigger every year. But this is not a one-way game: domestic writers and book publishers are just as warmly and cordially received as guests by our international partners. As a result, there is an increase in the volume of translated literature. Moreover, not only do we offer our own authors, but also foreign writers, publicists and poets come to us. In particular, general book publishing achievements were discussed at the opening of the International Quarter. The ceremony was attended by Minister of Foreign

Affairs of Belarus Sergei Aleinik.

He noted that the International Quarter is a completely new format, thanks to which the heads of diplomatic missions accredited in Belarus had the opportunity to brightly, diversify and creatively present the literature of their countries at the exhibition.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Turkmenistan to the Republic of Belarus Nazarguly Shagulyev personally conducted a mini-tour of the pavilion for colleagues and journalists. Richly illustrated popular science literature is side by side with serious monographs and country guides. You can buy both.

"It is always a pleasure to meet with poets, book publishers and readers at this site in Minsk. Last year, 13 states took part in the exhibition, this year there are already 19. This is a good sign. After all, the book is the bearer of the world. And if there is peace on earth, we will understand all the books without translation," Ambassador noted.

Information injection



The fathers always grumbled that, they say, the youth has gone stupid now. However, at one time the grandfathers of that same youth grumbled at their children... So this baton was passed on through generations, the children grew up and reproached their children for stupidity. Everyone got used to it and called this phenomenon a conflict of generations. But somehow, in the usual course of life, we missed the moment when the children, let's say, began to grow up somewhat more slowly, or even stopped altogether. Not physically, no, but mentally and morally. Have you heard about such a phenomenon as mosaic thinking? This applies to a situation when a person can perceive information only fragmentarily, and even then if it is provided with sufficiently strong stimuli. It is very difficult for people with mosaic thinking to read large texts, especially books, watch long videos and films. Gradually, the ability to analyse information and draw deep conclusions from it disappears. Moreover, a person becomes extremely susceptible to manipulation, because he or she begins to be guided mainly by emotions. There is a gradual degeneration of thinking. So how did we get to the point where this phenomenon has become widespread?

The era of mosaic thinking has already arrived: a very large number of people have forgotten how to think and absorb information without even trying to give a critical assessment

By Yuri Terekh

Background and first information injections

In general, mosaic thinking is the norm for young children, but with the right development, thinking begins to become more complicated, and children gradually get used to working with large amounts of information.

The elementary education system is designed specifically for the transformation of mosaic thinking into a system one. Everything used to work correctly before, but since about the end of the 90s, we ourselves began to create conditions that allow adults to move from critical thinking to mosaic thinking and feel quite comfortable.

Well, it's easier to live with mosaic thinking from a biological point of view. At least the brain is not overloaded, breaking the information flow into unrelated fragments. Only now you start to get dumb, and for the same reason you cannot realise it...

It is believed that the beginning of the processes that make it possible to switch to mosaic thinking was laid in the 90s, when numerous advertising inserts began to appear on television, breaking the air. The advertisers were faced with the task of cramming the maximum amount of information into the minimum amount of time, preferably with a strong emotional charge.

Moreover, such information injections greatly relax the brain, it begins to get used to the fact that information can be received very quickly, and even with emotions. Moreover, there is no need to draw conclusions, because there are already ready-made conclusions in advertising.



A little later, the problem only worsened with the development of the Internet. Information began to be presented as concisely as possible, just to attract users. A person, having got to a certain resource, should receive information with ready-made conclusions as quickly as possible, have time to notice the advertisement and move on. See for yourself how much more clip content has become: shots, stories — everything is organised for a few seconds of interaction. And our brain is actually extremely plastic, it adapts very quickly to changing conditions, a person does not even notice how this happens.

So we have come to the main marker, denoting the mosaic nature of our era and giving rise to 'screen people'...

TikTok: in pursuit of leadership

This social network was launched in China in 2016, and in 2018 it entered the international market. It instantly became one of the most popular social networks. The fact is that TikTok just fell perfectly on the request of young people, it was originally designed specifically for clip content. In fact, it is supposed to exchange clips that are as concise as possible, bright, emotional, and sometimes even informative (carrying a certain message).

It was exactly what the youth wanted: even shorter, even brighter, even more emotional.

And if until 2019 the growth in the popularity of TikTok was very high, then during the outbreak of the coronavirus, it became simply explosive.

It is extremely understandable, people were sitting at home, they wanted something bright and fast. This social network, quite rightly called a place for degradation, also managed to conquer an adult audience. It

a video of how he fell funny. These videos are becoming very popular. True, several people have already died during such filming, but who will stop such trifles. Or here's another great example: you need to film how you loosen the wheel bolts on the car, and then watch the accident. An accident involving three cars has already occurred because of this challenge on one of the busy highways.

New reality

Why am I putting so much emphasis on this?

To show that the era of mosaic thinking has already begun: a very large number of people have forgotten how to think and live only with emotions, absorbing pre-chewed information, without even trying to conduct some kind of independent analysis and give a critical assessment of their own actions.



was here that the same clip-likeness affected: the grains fell into fertile soil, richly flavoured with previous decades of information compression. And after this takeoff, TikTok really became one of the most popular social networks in the world. Where there is fame, there is money...

The opportunity to promote your ads through popular bloggers will never be missed by anyone, and the more popular the platform, the more users you can get and the more expensive advertising will cost.

Dangerous lifts

The so-called challenges can become a lift to the top of popularity. This is when people begin to massively repeat after someone the idea already implemented in the video. Popular challenges are gaining a lot of views, and people are happy to join the process.

These entertainments are not always safe and harmless. Well, what can you do, it's a competition. We have to add sharpness and drama. Against the general background, there are those who were able to stand out really brightly, both stupidly and dangerously, and sometimes even lethally.

For example, you can ask a friend to jump up and hit him on the legs at the moment of the jump, and then post

And it would be nice if this army of degenerates (in the scientific sense) simply entertained itself, but they also happily absorb any, even the craziest ideas, as long as they are emotionally charged enough.

So, now a reasonable question arises, what to do with this clipping of the mass consciousness? How to stop this process in general and not to become its victim?

Well, you have to start with yourself. If in any incomprehensible situation it seems to you that you immediately understand everything, and you don't even have to think to understand what is happening, then you are already at risk. Try to read more books that are known to be reasonable, kind and eternal. After watching the film, try to state for yourself the main thoughts that this film carries. Sometimes take a break from surfing messengers and social networks. In general, train your brain to work.

Teach children to think from school, encourage the craving for analysis and their own conclusions as much as possible. After all, a person who knows how to think will react to the 'You are incredible' slogan in such a way: why incredible, why would someone call me and what these people want from me? Whereas a fool with mosaic thinking immediately exclaims emotionally: 'That's it!!! I'm really incredible!!!' Well, we already know how this ends. This is such an ambiguous trend today, and this happens not only with us, it is observed all over the planet. It's time to do something with it.



Photo exhibition in European Parliament



BELTA's Boundary Between Life and Death photo exhibition

Romanian bill to annex Ukrainian territories

Romanian Senator Diana Iovanovici-Șoșoacă has introduced a bill in the Romanian Parliament calling for the 'denunciation of the Treaty of Good Neighbourliness and Co-operation between Romania and Ukraine' — as reported by TASS, with reference to Romanian news portal HotNews

The proposal calls for the immediate denunciation of the 1997 Romanian-Ukrainian friendship treaty and the annexation of historic Romanian territories lost in 1940.

The document says that Romania will denounce the treaty with Ukraine in 2027 'subject to a notice period of at least a year before the expiration date. Iovanovici-Șoșoacă is advocating for Romania to reclaim regions such as Southern Bessarabia, Chernovtsy Region, and Snake Island.

According to article 3, the annexation of these territories would be considered a declaration of war against Ukraine.



Șoșoacă justified her legislative initiative by saying that 'with this initiative we want to recover the cultural identity, traditions, customs and religion of the Romanian population estimated at about 1 million Romanians, including mixed families'.

The proposal highlights the escalating tensions in the region and the potential for further territorial disputes.

Exhibition defaming Poland opened in EP

Polish activists organised a photo exhibition in the European Parliament entitled *Displacements Are Illegal, Help Is Legal* to show the suffering of refugees in the Polish forests — as reported by the State Border Committee of Belarus

Volunteers and humanitarian organisations in Poland seek to show through photographs the violation of law and human rights at the Polish border, to demonstrate the consequences of the EU migration policy to the public and to draw the attention of human rights defenders to the suffering and death of refugees. The photo exposition displays large-format images depicting the gloomy atmosphere of the border forest, where exhausted and doomed to torment people are being illegally treated daily.

"The photos show how human rights are violated on the Polish-Belarusian

border, how people from countries such as Yemen, Syria, Afghanistan or the Congo are deprived of the right to seek protection, how cruelly they are treated, sentenced together with children, pregnant women and disabled to wander in the winter, swampy forest," said the organiser of the exhibition, Janina Ochojska, who is also the founder and president of Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH), a leading NGO, that has been involved in helping migrants at the border.

The opening was also attended by those who suffered from the actions

of the Polish security forces. Refugees who were lucky to stay alive and receive help from volunteers, recall that the Polish military 'did not give water, did not hear pleas for asylum, separated families, and took people to the barbed wire in wet clothes'.

The State Border Committee of Belarus recalled that a similar photo exhibition — *The Boundary Between Life and Death* — was opened in Belarus and is proof of the violence and lawlessness of the security forces of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia against vulnerable people seeking protection in Europe.

US 'cover up' sabotage

Veteran US journalist Seymour Hersh alleged that Biden administration officials have been 'feeding' the press false stories to 'protect a president who made an unwise decision and is now lying about it', according to the publication on the Common Dreams news portal

In a follow-up to his explosive story accusing US President Joe Biden of ordering the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines, Seymour Hersh charged that the White House — in collaboration with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz — is attempting a 'cover-up of its operation' by 'feeding' false alternative narratives to the press.

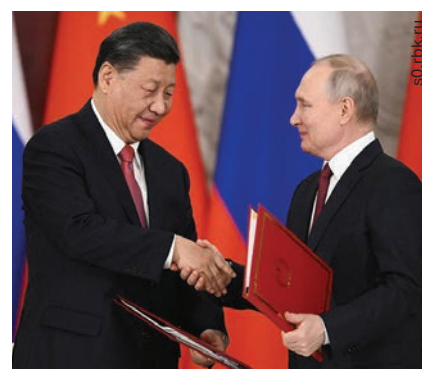
Hersh also alleged that while it remains an 'open question' whether Scholz was aware of the planned pipeline sabotage in advance, the German leader has 'clearly been complicit since last autumn in support of the Biden Administration's cover-up of its operation in the Baltic Sea'.

The journalist went on to add that 'the disinformation professionals inside the CIA understand that a propaganda gambit

can only work if those on receiving are desperate for a story that can diminish or displace an unwanted truth'.

"And the truth in question is that President Joe Biden authorised the destruction of the pipelines and will have a difficult time explaining away his action as Germany and its Western European neighbours suffer as businesses are shuttered amid high day-to-day energy costs," wrote Seymour Hersh, citing an energy expert who argued that the damage to the Nord Stream pipelines 'led to a further surge of natural gas prices'.

Officials from Norway, Germany, and Sweden told the UN last month that they are still investigating the explosions that severely damaged the Nord Stream pipelines.



During his three-day visit to Russia, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin had sincere, friendly and fruitful talks on the bilateral ties and major regional and international issues of mutual interest, and reached new, important common understandings across many fields

Russia-China ties enter 'new era'

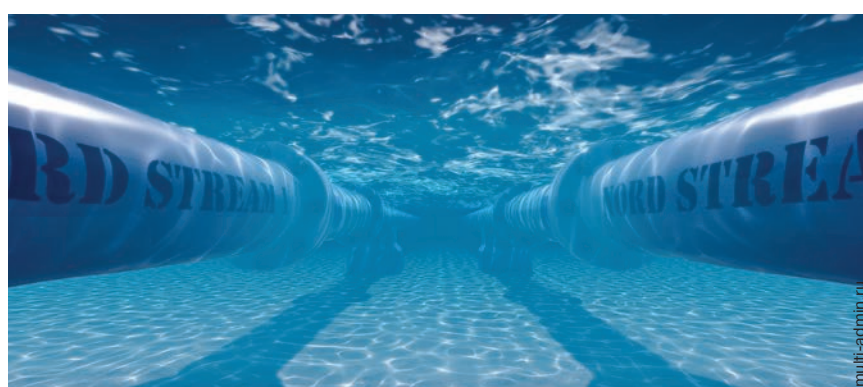
The two presidents also signed and issued two joint statements, making plans and arrangements for the growth of bilateral relations and wide-ranging co-operation between the two countries going forward.

Xi Jinping pointed out that China and Russia are each other's biggest neighbour and that consolidating and developing long-term good-neighbourly relations with Russia is consistent with historical logic and a strategic choice of China, which will not be changed by any turn of events.

No matter how the international landscape may change, China will stay committed to advancing the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership of co-ordination for a new era, he said, adding this state visit to Russia is a journey of friendship, co-operation and peace.

Russian leader Vladimir Putin expressed hope that the two sides will make full use of their existing channels of exchange and work for new progress in practical co-operation in various fields, including the economy and trade, investment, energy, space and cross-border transportation and logistics, and bring people-to-people and cultural exchanges in sports and tourism and at subnational levels to new heights.

Russia firmly supports China in upholding its legitimate interests on issues related to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Xinjiang, Putin said, adding Russia congratulates China on helping to successfully bring about historic outcomes from the talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran in Beijing, which fully demonstrates China's important status and positive influence as a major country in the world.





Ambrotype of the Minsk Kaplan family (1854-1860s)



Daguerreotype of the Minsk Kaplan family (1840-1850s)



Daguerreotype of the Minsk Kaplan family (1840-1850s)

From negative to positive.
History of Belarusian photography.

Here's what the lens can say

You can see the first photographs of 1840-1860, unique postcards with views of Belarusian cities, cameras and rare printed thematic editions of the late 19th — early 20th century at the *From Negative to Positive* exhibition of the famous historian and collector Vladimir Likhodedov, which is held at the National Historical Museum of the Republic of Belarus

By Vladimir Matyushkin

The exposition is timed to coincide with the opening of the photographic research sector in the museum. Its appearance was facilitated by an agreement signed with the support of the ministries of culture of Belarus and Russia in early December 2022 during the 5th Museum Forum between the National Historical Museum of the Republic of Belarus and the State Museum and Exhibition Centre ROSPHOTO from St. Petersburg.

“The National Historical Museum, as the owner of the largest collections, including photographic ones, oversees the creation of a general catalogue of the country’s museum fund. Having started work on the digitisation of museum objects, we realised that photography should be deeply involved. Interaction with ROSPHOTO is important to us. This is a large research centre that has developed a huge methodological base for the study and research of photographs, has an extensive digital collection of photographic exhibits from all museums in Russia. The specialists of the centre are ready to share their experience with our team by organising annual internships for us. Co-operation with the famous historian and owner of the unique collection Vladimir Likhodedov is a good reason to start a large-scale project to preserve the common historical heritage in the Year of Peace and Creation,” Director of the National Historical Museum of the Republic of Belarus Aliaksandr Khromoy says.

Indeed, the life of a modern person cannot be imagined without photography. Over time, even unpretentious, but so popular today selfies against the background of architectural monuments and sights in cities and villages, amateur family photos can become the subject of deep scientific study. Nevertheless, this is a matter for future generations! And ours now is to marvel at the priceless artefacts that have been preserved since the middle of the century before last.

The exhibition presents unique daguerreotypes of the 1840s–1850s, on which, from a certain angle, you can see images of respectable men in tailcoats and smartly dressed women of different ages with neatly styled hair in the fashion of those years fixed on silver or silver-plated copper plates.

Souvenir postcard with views of Polotsk (early 20th century)



Minsk family. Berman's photo studio (beginning of the 20th century).



Mogilev children. Fishman's photo studio (beginning of the 20th century).

“Daguerreotype is a very time-consuming and expensive process. To take one picture, the visitor had to sit still for 30–40 minutes. For this, special devices were used to support the head. The first photos were really expensive, literally and figuratively! Now they are generally priceless. It is a great honour for any museum to have them in its collections,” the curator of the exhibition, Head of the Photographic Research Sector of the National Historical Museum Svetlana Khoruzhik notes.

Frame history

The date of the invention of photography is considered to be 1839: then, at a meeting of the French Academy of

Sciences, a report was first presented on daguerreotype, or an early photographic process based on the photosensitivity of silver iodide. The first photographs, daguerreotypes, are named after their creator, Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre.

Photography, not having time to appear, began to develop very quickly. Moreover, already in the 1850s, daguerreotypes were replaced by ambrotypes (images on glass) and instant photo-pherotypes (images on metal). The latter were widely used in the 1920s.

By the way, one of the ambrotypes from 1850-1860 probably depicts the first Minsk photographer Anton Prushinsky. The picture is not signed, and it is impossible to say this with complete certainty, but the man is very similar to Anton Prushinsky from a photograph of a later period.

A separate stand is dedicated to the family of a well-known entrepreneur at that time, the owner of the printing house Ilya Lvovich Kaplan. On it is a photo from an extensive archive, which Vladimir Likhodedov was lucky enough to acquire from his descendants, including daguerreotypes and ambrotypes depicting representatives of the genus. Pictures of the beginning of the 20th century are also interesting: wherever the Kaplans were photographed — in Switzerland, in France, in England, in Germany, and, of course, in various picturesque corners of Belarus!

The entrepreneur also had his own trading house, located at the corner of Gubernatorskaya and Zakharyevskaya Streets (today it is Lenina Street and Independence Avenue), in which there was also a sales department for cameras and photographic accessories of the most famous world manufacturers. By the way, similar cameras of the late 19th – early 20th centuries are presented at the exhibition. There is also a personal camera of the Kaplans, as well as many letters and postcards sent to the Minsk address of the family from different parts of the world.

Fans of photographic art will also appreciate rare printed thematic publications of the late 19th and early

20th centuries, including several issues of the *Photographic Leaflet* for 1914, the illustrated catalogue *German Export*, and the instruction manual for Agfa and Gauff cameras. In addition, looking through the illustrated price lists of photographic warehouses of Anatoly Werner and F. Joachim, we can learn not only about the cost of certain accessories, the variety of which was impressive, but also about the history of their appearance, read about technical features and even customer reviews. This is the level of sales of the beginning of the twentieth

century! True, does it somehow resemble modern trading on the Internet and through social networks?

Numerous postcards with views of Belarusian cities and their inhabitants will help you finally immerse yourself in the atmosphere of that time.

A photo zone at the exhibition could not have come at a better time. Each visitor can leave a memory of an unusual exposition by sitting down on a comfortable old sofa against the background of images from the century before last and pressing a button on the phone’s camera.

Photos from the personal collection of Vladimir Likhodedov

In two shifts: work as a physical education teacher at school No. 2 in Khotimsk and a volleyball class. In addition, Nikolai Krivonos spends all his free time in the workshop. Actually, this is a simple balcony on the first floor of a five-story building. The wood carver has all the tools there: chisels, knives and brushes. The work drags on until late at night. Shavings and sawdust are carried around the apartment, but the family no longer pays attention. There is something to show guests — real works of art: a carved arch in the corridor, a coffee table and a shelf in the kitchen — original accents in the interior, carved icons, vases, eco-ware, fancy figurines... This is not consumer goods, you want to keep such things in your hands for a long time consider and marvel at how an ordinary piece of wood became pliable in the hands of the craftsman.

You can see an exhibition of works by Nikolai Krivonos in the Khotimsk House of Crafts



The tree comes alive in the hands



By Yelena Kukshinskaya

Nikolai Krivonos finds his source of creativity in his childhood, “Behind a talented student there are always great teachers. I am grateful to the drawing teacher Nikolai Savchenko and the teacher of the wood carving class Mikhail Pugachev. However, my uncle was also a craftsman in our large family. At first, I mastered the skill by playing war games: I cut out machine guns from the boards for myself and my comrades. Somehow, I went to football competitions on my way to a drawing competition — that is how the sport took over in my career preference. I graduated from the Pedagogical Institute, I work as a physical education teacher. I used to run a wood carving workshop in the regional centre of creativity for children and youth: the guys liked making gliders, military equipment and bows. But there must be talent for this, a great desire to learn the secrets of mastery, you need to be assiduous. Modern children are not accustomed to making efforts to create something, the consumer society teaches a person to live on everything ready. Moreover, the new generation also has a tendency to monetise everything: they have just made a frame for work, and they already write a price tag on it.”

Today Nikolay Krivonos works in the regional House of Crafts. His personal exhibition-sale was located there, the works of the Khotimsk carver can be seen at fairs, such as Alexandria Gathers Friends. And this year, the district centre will become the capital of the regional Dazhynki holiday, so he can already start carving souvenirs for the guests of the holiday — the workers of the village, — Nikolai makes plans,



The craftsman keeps his gold reserve in the basement. These are snags, boards and logs. It happens that fellow countrymen provide material for his creativity.

— A friend calls: ‘Kolya, we cut down a dangerous linden. We immediately thought of you’. I said that I have no car to bring it, and they made the home delivery. Well, linden is really the best wood for carving — a rather soft and light material. It is almost not subject to cracking and shrinkage, it is well cut and generally easy to process. But the problem is that landscaping in cities, tree pruning is done in the spring, when there is the most sap flow in the same linden. And then you dry it, you dry it, so it’s better to prepare your material in the fall. I am very grateful to our rector of the Holy Trinity Cathedral Father Pavel. He handed me linden logs of perfect condition after they put things in order on their territory. I want to donate an icon to the church. In my house there is an icon of St. George the Victorious, my favourite work.

How do new creative ideas come about? Sometimes he wants to test himself. Once Nikolai saw an image of a girl with tigers in a magazine — he carved a panel in a tree for 15 years: inspiration of an artist is a capricious thing. At one time, Nikolai Krivonos began to create a photo gallery of all the works — as a keepsake. After all, for the most part they go to gifts, go to different cities and countries. But the craftsman quickly cooled down to the idea of archiving his work. After all, the greatest pleasure for an artist is to create and give beauty to people.

“Among products popular with buyers at fairs are wooden utensils and figurines. People like such souvenirs because they keep the warmth of the craftsman’s hands. The tree has a special energy. Belarusians have always been surrounded by forests, and our ancestors sought to create beauty around them. The most ordinary materials — straw, clay and wood — turned into real works of art in their hands.”

Nikolai Sherstnev was elected President of the Belarusian Football Federation. There was no intrigue in the election of the new leadership of the organisation: during the reporting and election conference in the House of Football, it became known that the former Head of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee is the only candidate for the position of head of the ABFF, since Vladimir Bazanov decided to withdraw from voting the day before the meeting. Sherstnev was elected unanimously.

Focus on teamwork

New challenge for Nikolai Sherstnev



Darya Titova

By Tatiana Pastushenko

“Thank you for the trust, but I do not feel joy. There is no time for buildup and preparation. Everyone is already tired of waiting for results — we need changes for the better,” the new President of the ABFF said.

Nikolai Sherstnev is an experienced manager and, by and large, needs no introduction. Nevertheless, Deputy Chairman — Executive Director of the Vitebsk Regional Football Federation Dmitry Petrov recalled that Sherstnev is not a newcomer to sports either — he is an international class master of sports in kettlebell lifting, a participant in many world and European tournaments. Over the seven years of his work as Chairman of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee, a lot of work has been done to build and modernise the sports infrastructure of the region: an air-supported football arena was erected in Vitebsk, a football field and running tracks were built at the stadium of the Vitebsk State Technological University, 21 mini-football fields with artificial covering, a specialised centre for trampoline jumping, a sports and recreation complex was opened in Ushachi, an ice palace, a swimming pool and more were modernised in Novopolotsk.

Now Nikolai Sherstnev has accepted a new challenge. Speaking about what will be the first steps as President of the ABFF, he noted: first you need to dive deep, understand the problems. It is necessary to conduct an analysis, work out each issue with professionals and begin to solve them, “We will work out all the problematic issues, create such rules of the game so that they do not interfere with the athletes, coaching staff and organisers, but only help. This is probably

my mission: to unite not only athletes, coaching staff, but also football fans.”

Nikolai Sherstnev promised to make every effort to form a team of professionals and implement the plans announced at the conference and in pre-election interviews as soon as possible. The new head of the ABFF paid tribute to his predecessor Vladimir Bazanov, who presented a large-scale report on the work done over the past four years. It reflected the successes in the development of youth and grassroots football, the strengthening of the material and technical base, the development and popularisation of women’s football and the national championship. Sherstnev concluded: a lot of work has been done. A concept for the development of football until 2028 has been created, goals and objectives have been defined. Now a mechanism is needed to implement all these plans.

A team of professionals has already begun to form. Vladimir Bazanov remained in the federation. Like Mikhail Botnikov, in the position of Deputy Chairman of the ABFF. Much more interesting is that 36-year-old Andrei Vasilevich, who headed the Minsk football club, was elected the right hand — the first deputy head of the federation. Nikolai Sherstnev is convinced that it is also important to hear the voice of the young. The composition of the executive committee of the federation has also been updated. In addition to the President and his deputies, it included 17 people, including Alexander Hleb, FC Dinamo Minsk Director General Andrei Tolmach, Neman Sports School for Football Director Sergey Solodovnikov, Energetik-BGU team coach Anatoli Yurevich, Chairman of the Football Federation of Minsk Yury Vergeichik, FC Naftan head coach Yuri Puntus and others.

Fragile, yet strong

Yuliya Apanasovich became the bronze medallist of the 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships

By Tatiana Pastushenko

The 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships was held in New Delhi. Our women’s team, which included six boxers, went to it charged with success. Dreams of medals became a reality for one of the Belarusians — Yuliya Apanasovich returned to Belarus with bronze.

The athlete, competing in the weight category up to 52 kilogrammes, defeated the Romanian Alexandra Gheorghe in the first fight, and then in a stubborn fight she defeated Feruza Kazakova from Uzbekistan. In the quarter-final, Apanasovich left the Nepalese boxer Anjani Teli no chance and, having become a semi-finalist, she already guaranteed herself at least bronze. For her, the victory over Anjani Teli was the third in the tournament. However, this is the first fight that the Belarusian won by unanimous decision.

Alas, it was not possible to replace bronze with an award of the highest value: Yuliya lost to the Chinese Wu Yu. Nevertheless, bravo: Apanasovich is on a pedestal, and the Belarusian flag proudly flies in her honour under the arches of the arena in New Delhi!

Experienced Viktoriya Kebikova stopped one step away from the podium

those who arrived from the evening session went to the dining room. Belarusian Yana Burim was caught by the earthquake in her room. The athlete shared the details on her Instagram page, “I was lying down and suddenly felt that the bed was moving left and right. Slightly at first, and then straight up shaking. There were screams, clatter in the corridor. Evacuation started, which showed that our beautiful hotel has huge problems with the exit system. We changed several exits before we found the one that leads to the street. Thankfully we had enough time...”

The 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships, taking place in New Delhi, is the first international competition in Olympic sports in many months, in which Russian and Belarusian athletes take part. Their admission to competitions, as well as the lifting of the ban on the use of national symbols, caused a flurry of discontent in a number of countries — officials simply banned the athletes representing them from participating in the tournament. However, not everyone agreed with this. The Dutchwoman Megan De Claire decided not to miss the opportunity to show her best at the 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships — she entered the opening ceremony



— she lost to Boora Saweety from India in the quarterfinals — the silver medallist of the 2014 World Championship, the winner and prize-winner of the Asian Championships. So, unfortunately for us, she won. The rest of our athletes completed the performance earlier. Yana Burim, like Aryna Danilchyk, finished their performance at the tournament at the Round of 16 stage. Two more Belarusians — Alina Veber and Alla Ivashkevich — a round later. Alina Veber lost to Frenchwoman Davina Michel, while Alla Ivashkevich lost to Hadjila Khelif from Algeria.

However, before these important struggles, the girls received a sickly shake-up: an earthquake of magnitude 6.8 that occurred in Afghanistan came to India. The participants of the 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships even had to be evacuated from the hotel.

According to the head coach of the Russian team Albert Mutalibov, many were in hotel rooms at that time, and

ny under a neutral flag. The reaction of the President of the Boxing Federation of the Netherlands Boris van der Vorst (who, by the way, was to become the main competitor of Umar Kremlev in last year’s election of the head of the International Boxing Association, but his candidacy was declared invalid due to violations of the rules of the IBA) did not have to wait long, “We believe that Meghan de Claire’s registration for the 2023 IBA Women’s World Boxing Championships in India is a violation of the IBA’s technical and competitive rules, and requested an immediate clarification from the IBA. We also believe that this undermines the authority and independence of the Netherlands Boxing Federation, with broader implications for the governance of the sport as a whole.” Alas, Megan De Claire did not reach the podium, but she became the only athlete from the boycotting countries who dared to go against the politicised decisions of officials.

ARENA

● Belarusian football players lost against Switzerland at the start of UEFA Euro 2024 qualifying

The players of the Belarusian national team had an unsuccessful start in the qualifying tournament of the UEFA European Championship in 2024. Our team lost to the Swiss with a score of 0:5 in the first qualifying match in Serbian Novi Sad. In the first half, the Belarusians conceded three times. Two more balls were scored by our rivals in the second half of the game.

● Belarusian sambo wrestlers won eleven medals at competitions in Moscow

The International SAMBO Centre in Moscow hosted the international competition Sambo Founders Cup. Representatives of 10 countries became participants in a major international tournament: Belarus, Russia, the Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, China, Tajikistan and Morocco. As a result of the tournament, Belarusian sambo wrestlers won eleven medals — two silver and nine bronze.

● Belarusian speed skaters won eight medals at the tournament in Kolomna

13th All-Russian speed skating competition called Kolomna Ice was held at the Kolomna speed skating centre. Athletes from Belarus, as well as representatives of 20 regions of Russia, took part in the individual competitions, who determined the best at five distances (500, 1000, 1500, 3000 and 5000 metres). Following the results of two competitive days, the Belarusian team won eight awards: three gold, four silver and one bronze.

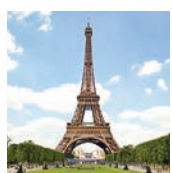


BELTA

Photo of the week

Puma Archi is a new resident of the Mogilev Zoo

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On March 31st, 1889, the grand opening of the Eiffel Tower took place in Paris. Today, the shape of the Eiffel Tower is the most recognisable architectural landmark of Paris. It is

known all over the world as a symbol of France. The designer Gustave Eiffel himself simply called it a 300-metre tower. The Eiffel Tower was originally conceived as a temporary entrance arch for the Exposition Universelle of 1889.

On March 31st, 1893, the American Whitcomb L. Judson (1843–1909) invented a new zipper called 'clasp-locker'. The invention significantly accelerated the process of fastening the boots. But despite the advantages of the zipper, it had no success for a long time. Zipper gained popularity only 20 years after its appearance.



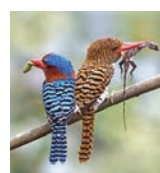
On March 31st, 1943, the Battles of Rzhev ended during the Great Patriotic War. This name conditionally unites 4 offensive operations that were carried out by the Soviet troops of the Western and Kalinin fronts against the Army Group Centre from January

8th, 1942, to March 31st, 1943. The Battle of Rzhev was one of the bloodiest battles of the Great Patriotic War. According to various sources, from 1 to 2 million Soviet soldiers died on Rzhev land. On June 30th, 2020, the Rzhev Memorial to the Soviet Soldier was opened at the site of the bloody battles.

On March 31st, 1966, the first artificial satellite of the moon was launched in the USSR. Launched from the Baikonur Cosmodrome Molniya-M launch vehicle brought the Luna 10 automatic interplanetary station to the Luna. The satellite was equipped with research equipment. On April 3rd, 1966, the Luna 10 station reached orbit around the moon for the first time in the world.



April 1st is April Fools' Day or All Fools' Day — an international holiday celebrated all over the world. On this day, people play pranks on relatives, friends and just acquaintances. One of the versions about the origin of the feast of laughter is associated with the fact that April 1st was originally celebrated in many countries as the day of the vernal equinox and the time of Easter. The festivities were always accompanied by jokes, pranks and funny tricks.



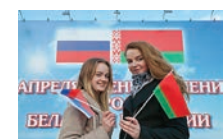
April 1st is International Bird Day — an international ecological holiday. Its goal is to preserve the species diversity and abundance of birds. Of the approximately 10,000 species of birds of the world fauna, more than 1200 species, or every eighth species of birds on our planet, are included in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

April 2nd is International Children's Book Day, which is celebrated on the birthday of the great Danish storyteller Hans Christian Andersen. The holiday promotes the enduring role of children's books in shaping the spiritual and intellectual image of new generations of the Earth. Also, the Day aims at drawing attention to literature, book art and book culture for children and the spreading of children's reading.



April 2nd is Geologists Day in Belarus. This holiday emphasises deep gratitude and respect to all those who work directly at the drilling machine, hydrogeological well, at oil, salt, coal, iron ore fields, as well as in scientific, design and production

organisations of the geological industry. Geological research in Belarus began to be carried out from the end of the 18th century.



April 2nd is Day of Unity of the Peoples of Belarus and Russia. It was on this day in 1996 that the Presidents of Russia and Belarus,

Boris Yeltsin and Aleksandr Lukashenko, signed the Treaty on the Formation of the Community of Russia and Belarus in Moscow. Over the past years, the union project has proved its demand and vitality. Thus, a large legal framework was formed, conditions were created to ensure the equality of citizens' rights, pursuing a joint defence policy, agreed on foreign policy interaction, and the implementation of large-scale economic and scientific and technical processes.

On April 2nd, 1833, the first complete edition of *Eugene Onegin* novel written by Alexander Pushkin was published. In one week, the 5,000th run of the first edition sold out in its entirety. Pushkin himself calculated the time spent on writing the novel — 7 years 4 months and 17 days. For many, the novel has become an encyclopaedia of Russian life, the most beloved brainchild of the poet's fantasy, a work in which the faithful picture of Russian society in that era is recreated.

