



This year's 17th Verona Eurasian Economic Forum will be held on December 5th-6th in Ras al Khaimah (UAE)

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Autumn in Belarus is a time of bright colours, warm knitted blankets, hot tea and exciting trips

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Agniya Shigina, a student of the engineering and technical class at Minsk secondary school No. 225

Promising environment

Engineering education today is a major aspect of the global economy. The education system in Belarus is increasingly adopting an approach to education aimed at fostering engineering mindset among schoolchildren and involving them in sci-tech creativity. A new educational environment is being formed in schools: 167 engineering and technical centres — not to be confused with engineering classes! — are already functioning. They have been established in every district of the country and have become a base for schoolchildren to receive modern high-quality engineering education. Children coming to engineering and technical centres understand that to succeed in the world nowadays, it is necessary to be able to work in a team, make decisions in non-standard situations and have a solid practical foundation in design, programming, modelling, and robotics. The centres' equipment is impressive: 3D printers, robotic platforms, and sets for circuit design and microelectronics. This is not about traditional robotics courses, but rather a fundamental study of the exact sciences using the most advanced equipment. Classes at the centres help youngsters integrate their knowledge in areas such as physics, chemistry, biology, mathematics, engineering and computer science. All of this is free of charge. The project aims to prepare a new generation of engineers to work in the real sector of the country's economy. → 7



Belarusian model of people's power

President of Belarus, Chairman of the Belarusian People's Congress Aleksandr Lukashenko has held a meeting of the Presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress — the supreme constitutional representative body of people's power



The sitting was the first meeting of the Presidium of the supreme constitutional representative body of people's power. Aleksandr Lukashenko shared some views about the Belarusian People's Congress with the participants of the meeting, "I decided to hold a meeting of the Presidium in a broad format today, because we need to resolve the main issue.

Actually, it is already stipulated in the Constitution, so we all need to understand that the Belarusian People's Congress should not interfere with anyone's work. It should not dominate other bodies of power, since we will thus create problems for ourselves."

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed, "As regards the proposals that have been submitted to me over the past six months — dealing with the structure of our Presidium and on interaction with the delegates, I have not made a decision on them without consulting you. Most importantly, we (I mean the Belarusian People's Congress and the Presidium) in no case interfere with any body of power and we do not pressure them. Everyone is engaged into their own affairs. This practice is already decades-long in our country, and everyone knows this. Moreover, we should not allow an approach when our representative body of the Belarusian People's Congress is viewed as something

supreme able to do anything in the country. The position of the Belarusian People's Congress is determined by the Constitution. The Constitution outlines general provisions, requirements, and functional responsibilities of the Belarusian People's Congress, but it sometimes happens the other way around in details, in the specific application. If it is determined that the Belarusian People's Congress makes decisions on the issues of national security, war, peace, and so on, then these are exclusively its powers."

The Head of State added that the Belarusian People's Congress should not get involved into minor issues, "This does not mean that our meetings will be

held four times a year (like the Central Committee's plenums), and that we will discuss certain issues there and assert that we are working hard.

According to the Constitution, the Belarusian People's Congress should deal exclusively with its own issues, and this should be the basis for the structure and the relationship of the Presidium and the Chairman of the Presidium with the Belarusian People's Congress delegates."

As noted by President of Belarus, Chairman of the Belarusian People's Congress Aleksandr Lukashenko, the next meeting of the Belarusian People's Congress

is scheduled to be held after the Presidential election.

Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that the Presidential election will be held in the country on January 26th, 2025, and shared his views on the development of a programme that will be presented to the attention of citizens. "Since we have a certain unity, the programme of the incumbent President — which is being worked out by all of us today — will be a landmark for all Belarusian people in January, and even December. Meanwhile, we will detail the tasks for the next year and, perhaps for the coming five years, after the Presidential election — on the basis of this programme," the Head of State said.

The Belarusian People's Congress is the supreme representative body of people's power of the Republic of Belarus, which determines the strategic directions of the development of society and the state, ensuring the inviolability of the constitutional system, the continuity of generations and civil harmony

According to the amendments and additions made to Belarus' Constitution following the results of the nationwide referendum held on February 27th, 2022, the Belarusian People's Congress became a constitutional body.

The meeting of the Belarusian People's Congress as a constitutional body was held for the first time on April 24th, 2024.

During the event, the first four decisions were taken: on the election of the Chairman of the Belarusian People's Congress, his Deputy and the Presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress, as well as on the approval of the Provisional Rules of the Belarusian People's Congress.

President of the Republic of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko was elected Chairman of the 7th Belarusian People's Congress.

Aleksandr Kosinets was elected Deputy Chairman of the 7th Belarusian People's Congress.

The following members of the Presidium were elected:

- Vadim Bogush
- Aleksandr Brantsevich
- Konstantin Burak
- Dmitry Chernyakov
- Vladimir Karanik
- Marina Lenchevskaya
- Sergei Polyakov
- Sergei Sivets
- Ruslan Strakhar
- Olga Shpilevskaya
- Yuri Shuleiko
- Irina Tylets
- Nadezhda Yermakova

The Presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress is a permanent collegial body that ensures the prompt resolution of issues within the competence of the Belarusian People's Congress.

The maximum number of the Belarusian People's Congress Presidium is 15 people.

ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO, "PEOPLE'S CONCERNS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME"

During his meeting with the head and co-ordinators of the initiative group to collect signatures in support of the incumbent Head of State for nomination as a Presidential candidate, President Aleksandr Lukashenko asked to inform him about the problems that citizens are concerned about.

"The most important thing is that you communicate with people while collecting signatures. I would really ask you to have all this data concentrated and to inform me (in case we are elected), so that I know what people are talking about, what we need to pay attention to. It's a good sociological cross-section; it can't get any better than that. Just write me honestly and shortly about what good things people say and the rest about people's demands. What is wrong from their point of view? **The problems that people are concerned about are very important to me. And we will, of course, work in this direction and correct the shortcomings that people notice,**" Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

The Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus took the initiative to organise work on collecting signatures in support of the incumbent Head of State, and its Chairman Yuri Senko headed the relevant initiative group.

Aleksandr Lukashenko sincerely thanked all the members of the initiative group for the work carried out in support of the incumbent President, "I really appreciate it. I am daily reported on the situation in our initiative group. Actually, due to certain circumstances related to the events that have taken place, I could not meet with you earlier. The schedule is hectic these days as well, but I asked that all events be moved to a later date. After all, I had to meet you. I am sure that our conversation

today will be perceived fully by all members of the initiative group. I know this work is hard."

The Head of State noted that he physically has no opportunity to meet with all the members of the initiative group (there are more than 17 thousand of them). "So please, convey my words of gratitude to those who work in our interests," he addressed the meeting participants.

The Head of State asked not to force the initiative group members so that they would run around the houses, ask for something or arrange extra signature collecting points, "A sufficient amount has been collected already, so there is no need for us to be criticised again. [There should be no such statements that] the President has definitely pressurised someone, or we are forcing people to do something. Actually, such statements will be made, but let it be fakes, not the truth. We follow the laws."

Mr. Senko underlined that 1 million 581 thousand 559 signatures in support of the nomination of the incumbent Head of State as a Presidential candidate have been collected by the initiative group by the time of the meeting.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed once again that all stages of the election campaign should be organised in a worthy manner. "First of all, this is because we have nothing to be afraid of," he stated.

The Head of State pointed out that the collection of signatures would last until December 6th, "The deadline has been announced, that's why we have to be present until December 6th so that people can come and sign."

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

‘Three Slavic nations – Russia, Ukraine and Belarus – must sit down and come to an agreement’

Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko continues meetings with university students in the *Open Microphone with the President* format

Last Friday the meeting was held at the Minsk State Linguistic University. In addition to students of this university, representatives of the teaching staff, students, undergraduates from other educational institutions were also invited to the event, including the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Belarus, the Belarusian State University (BSU), the Belarusian State Economic University (BSEU), the Belarusian State Pedagogical University (BSPU), and MITSO International University. It was the third meeting with students in this format this year.

Role of media

Answering a question from a student of the BSU Journalism Department about whether it is not time to consider journalists not a classical fourth power, but the first (after the President), the Head of State noted, “Journalists should always remember: they are the fourth power! Not the first one.”

The role of mass media is great today, Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed, “You are at the forefront, as well as our journalists, including those present here. If you want to know the truth, read and watch the state media. It is true that already 60 percent and more people trust these media (it wasn’t like that before). Why so? People have found out where the truth lies. I advise you to be very attentive to this. I’m not saying that you shouldn’t see other, alternative points of view, you should see them — if you are able to analyse and draw the appropriate conclusions. It does not

Presidential formula for intercultural dialogue

Answering the question from a student of the Minsk State Linguistic University about the Presidential formula for intercultural communication, the Head of State shared his experience gained during international trips, negotiations and communication, “I always try to do everything to promote my culture in intercultural communication. That is my job. This refers not only to culture, but also to the economy, sports, education, healthcare, economics, industry, agriculture, trade, and so on. That’s my point...”

With that in view, the Belarusian leader mentioned the Republican Festival of National Cultures, which is organised in Grodno. He called it ‘a great event that welcomes representatives of different cultures’. “This festival is increasingly becoming a landmark for our country,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said.



translators from the Linguistic University. I do not use artificial intelligence for translation.”

“Does this mean you have jobs available?” the girl clarified. The Head of State assured her, “Yes, I have great respect for talented people.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko mentioned Anastasia Semashko, a simultaneous interpreter from Chinese with perfect knowledge of the language, as an example. The lady works at the Belarusian Embassy in China, but will soon return to her homeland, where she will be able to continue to polish her professional mastery. According to the President, real professionals in their field will definitely be in demand.

“It’s not about artificial intelligence, the fact is that I appreciate a person. Any artificial intelligence today is a product of man. We are its authors, but I am sure — when artificial intelligence and neural networks take over the minds and humanity in practice — the person will still be at the centre. Therefore, I am not refusing you [translators]. Man will create everything, and man is such a creature that can destroy themselves (through nuclear weapons, and so on),” the Belarusian leader added.

Belarus’ main vector in foreign policy

Responding to the accusations of Belarus’ multi-vector policy that sometimes are voiced from outside, the Head of State, in particular, stressed, “Our foreign policy is multi-vector not because I want this, but because it is the only way out. We must be on good terms with the West, with the East, with the Global South, and so on. Why should we quarrel? The vectors are different, and that’s the point. However, Russia is our main vector. These are our people. Our resources are from there, and our market is there today. Given the frenzied

all! Our interests are there. We want our interests not to be infringed upon when negotiating on Ukraine. We would not like anyone’s interests to be resolved here at our expense,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

Vision of Belarus’ future

Answering the question from Veronika Krayevskaya, a student of the Belarusian State Economic University, about Belarus’ place in the new world order and in the future in general, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted, “The future of our Belarus will be under your leadership. You will cherish your country (or not), protect it (or not). I am sure that you will defend it, especially if you have children. This will be a country for your children and my grandchildren.”

Speaking about Belarus’ place in the new world order, the Head of State noted, “I want you to be in this Belarus, to be able to work and earn money. And I want you to control your destiny and your country. That is, to put it simply. And for this you should define its face, starting with the Presidential election and expressing your position — culturally, intelligently forming opinions in society. This is what the Belarusian People’s Congress was created for.”

“Decent and disciplined — this is how I see Belarus. I see my country peaceful, comfortable for life, so that our children will be proud of it,” Aleksandr Lukashenko concluded.



mean that the state media and the authorities do everything right and don’t make mistakes. But in this information war, you have to be very careful, cautious and accurate. You have to figure it out. And in this respect, journalists should help the society as well.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko is convinced, “The role of the media is very great now, and my attitude towards journalists is very serious. I have paid and still pay great attention to working with journalists, because I understand that a lot depends on you. You are shaping the image not only of the present, but also of the future of our society.”

The Head of State advised young people not to be shy in proposing their ideas, “If you, based on knowledge and personal experience, see how we can improve, first of all, the educational process, some approaches to working with the youth — you’re welcome to voice your ideas. We’ll discuss it. Your opinion is very important to me. You know, there are no restrictions on topics. I am ready to answer your questions.”

The President also mentioned the large-scale social and cultural action — *Marathon of Unity* — which is currently taking place in the republic, “We started with a concert, and we are now working over the improvement. There is also a certain dialogue going on there. Not everything is always good, and I am also informed on this — including by you. There can be found different nasty comments on the Internet, but we study them and draw appropriate conclusions. Practice is my sphere of responsibility, while you know everything else better than I do.”

Humans are preferable, not AI

The Head of State was asked whether artificial intelligence (AI) replaces translators for him when communicating with foreign partners, and Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that, indeed, AI can replace humans in certain positions in the future, and then shared his view on the issue, “As a practical person, I always have

sanctions imposed against Russia and Belarus, we would not have survived without Russia. We have reoriented to Russia, China, and other countries. We sold billions of Dollars of products to the West, but this market is closed today. Where should we export to? Therefore, it is necessary to think over and act in the way so that our people live [normally].”

Interests of Belarus should not be infringed

The Head of State stressed that as far as the Ukrainian issue is concerned, he does not accept any mediation from the outside.

“We, three Slavic nations — Russia, Ukraine and Belarus — must sit down and come to an agreement. Why Belarusians? Because there is a war at our fence, at our border. And our interests must be respected. That’s



Visit to Pakistan

President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko has paid an official visit to Pakistan this week

As reported by the press service of the Belarusian leader, the main attention at the meetings in Islamabad was paid to the further expansion of interaction. Aleksandr Lukashenko held talks with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during which the most promising areas of co-operation and a joint action plan for the future were discussed. Special attention was paid to the topic of regional and global security, liaison across international platforms. In parallel with the visit of the Head of State, a Pakistani-Belarusian business forum was held in Islamabad. Read more in our next issue.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Desire to live peacefully and stably

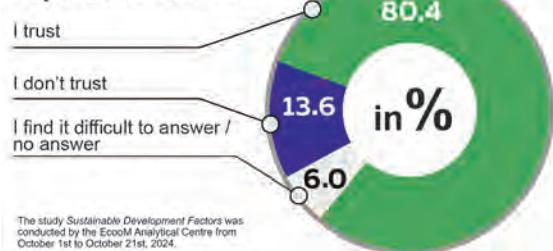
EcooM poll: absolute majority of Belarusians trust President

The absolute majority of Belarusians trust the President — as confirmed by the *Sustainable Development Factors* poll conducted by EcooM Analytical Centre in the period from October 1st to October 21st, 2024

Guarantor of peace and security

Respondents were asked to answer the question: to what extent do you trust the President of the Republic of Belarus? Commenting on the results obtained, Director of the EcooM Analytical Centre **Sergei Musienko** told *SB. Belarus Segodnya*, “The issue of trust in the Head of State is like trust in parents and the Motherland. The results obtained reflect confidence in the course pursued by the state, its peaceful and consistent policy.”

To what extent do you trust the President of the Republic of Belarus?



The expert highlighted an important point, “The figures are encouraging. They were registered before the start of the *Marathon of Unity* and the spontaneous *It Is Necessary!* nationwide campaign, and also before the initiative groups to collect signatures were formed. It is very important for sociology to see and know the source material. Moreover, this trust may well grow into figures of direct support for the incumbent President during the election — and become even more vivid.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko is now acting as the President of peace, and — according to political expert **Yuri Shevtsov** — this stands high in the eyes of society. Commenting on the results of the survey, he said, “The effect of the 2015 Presidential campaign is being repeated. Both then and now, society is shocked by the events taking place in Ukraine. Part of the society fears the prospect of the war spreading from Ukraine to Belarus in one form or another. At present, the Head of State acts as a guarantor that there will be no war in Belarus... Aleksandr Lukashenko has really managed to consolidate the people and continues to convey a peace-keeping agenda aimed at preserving regional security to the whole world.”

Head of State is man of his word and deeds

According to a deputy of the House of Representatives, **Irina Dovgalo**, Belarusians see the dynamics of the country’s development over the years of sovereignty. They see that, during his presidency, Aleksandr Lukashenko has never deceived either the Belarusian people or any particular person.

“Probably, this is the secret of the people’s love and trust in the President. This is important, since — if a person trusts the Head of State — they trust him as the country’s leader... If the President says that it is necessary to help a socially vulnerable group of citizens, then he never turns away from this path. No matter how hard it was, Belarus has not curtailed any social programme. Taking office, President Aleksandr Lukashenko not only took the country away from the abyss and provided people with enough food. Peace, order and tranquillity reign in the country. All this suggests that our President is a man of his word and deeds. That is why the people love him, the population trusts him, Belarusians rely on him,” the MP noted.

Economic optimism

Respondents were also asked to answer the question: to what extent do you trust the Government? More than 67 percent said they trust, 18.1 percent do not trust, and 14.4 percent of the poll participants found it difficult to answer.

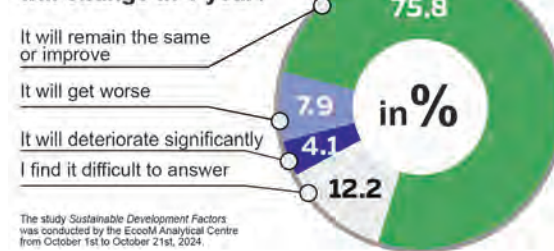
At the same time, most Belarusians believe that the economic situation in the country will be even better in a year: answering the question of how the economic situation in the country will change in a year, more than three quarters of respondents expressed confidence that it will remain the same or improve.

It is already obvious now that, even under the conditions of sanctions, the Belarusian economy is demonstrating steady economic growth, which has allowed for an increase in monetary income. This means the Government does its job efficiently.

To what extent do you trust the Government?



How do you think the economic situation in the country will change in 1 year?



PhD in Economics, analyst **Georgy Grits** expressed confidence in the positive economic dynamics, “I am sure that common sense will reign in the world. We already see the steps that the US President-elect Donald Trump took even before the inauguration in terms of resolving the conflict in Ukraine. The situation can no longer remain like that, as there is a violation of all international norms and principles of free trade. Therefore, I believe that the situation in the world and in our country will improve, and this trend will be guided by an increase in the subjectivity of the Republic of Belarus in such international organisations as BRICS, SCO, EAEU, and the Union State. The troubled times, when everyone is on their own, are coming to an end.”

How do you think your life will change in the near future?



EcooM poll: absolute majority of Belarusians take part in elections

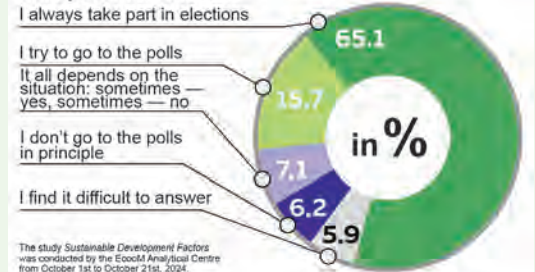
The EcooM Analytical Centre’s recent poll — *Sustainable Development Factors* — indicates that the absolute majority of Belarusians take part in elections.

Respondents were asked to answer a question about their participation in the elections: 65.1 percent said they always take part, and 15.7 percent — try to go to the polls.

As noted by **Sergei Musienko**, Director of the EcooM Analytical Centre, in his talk with BelTA, these figures meet the reality. “We register a high voter turnout in recent decades. People view elections as their duty, and this is physically visible at polling stations: we see how many people come. Actually, we provide transparent, clear opportunities for people to vote, and such an activity of them is our reality,” he commented.

Commenting on the results obtained, political expert **Vadim Borovik** told, “Such figures speak in favour of our society. They show that our citizens take a responsible approach to political campaigns and understand that their lives can significantly change as a result. Observing how our neighbours’ leaders have brought their countries either to their knees or plunged into the abyss of war, Belarusians are eager to cast their vote and expect that their voice will be heard, their opinion will be taken into account, and a stable peaceful life will be ensured after the elections.”

The Presidential election will be held in Belarus in 2025. Do you personally usually take part in elections?



Of course, a person can decide not to vote, but — as noted by the expert — their fate will be determined by others. “Either marginal or radical forces are mostly among the most active ones with reference to the general social passivity. In turn, if the society as a whole demonstrates an active position during the elections, then these people counter-balance the radical minority,” he explained.

The high turnout also indicates the absence of apathy in society and the confidence in the state. The poll generally reflects the results of the recent five years of government work. Those in power worked responsibly, and citizens saw that their participation in the elections had not been in vain. Belarusians as a nation are actually known for their responsibility, decency, and moderate political views. They also have a desire to live peacefully and stably.

Based on materials of sb.by

The *Sustainable Development Factors* sociological study was conducted by the EcooM Analytical Centre in the period from October 1st to October 21st, 2024. 1,580 respondents of different age, gender, level of education, type of settlement and region of residence were questioned. The statistical error did not exceed 2.5 percent.

The Minsk Times project is dedicated to people awarded the highest Hero of Belarus title

Power of Mikhail Karchmit's talent

Entering the agrotown of Snov in Nesvizh District, looking at the neat houses and yards, good roads, and perfect order, it is easy to imagine: 'This is what the village of the future looks like, with the invisible presence of a strong hand of a master'. The agrotown thrives and expands as the centre of its attraction — the Agrokombinat Snov agricultural production co-operative — keeps developing. The agrocomplex is the major agro-industrial holding in Belarus, a flagship of the agricultural sector. It ensures record yields of grain crops and sugar beet, along with milk yields and meat gains that have become benchmarks for many agricultural enterprises. Every year, hundreds of farmers from Belarus and abroad come there to learn from the advanced experience of production organisation. Perhaps the secret to the success of the farm lies in the fact that it has always been fortunate with its leaders. The most renowned of those is Mikhail Karchmit, honoured as a Hero of Belarus.

Mikhail Karchmit (1949-2004)

He was born on February 1st, 1949 in the village of Radovtsy in Molo-dechno District of Minsk Region. After graduating from the Belarusian Institute of Agricultural Mechanisation, he worked in the engineering and technical service of the Leninsky Put collective farm in Nesvizh District. From 1980 to 1988, he was the chairman of the Rassvet collective farm, and from 1988 to 2004, he served as the chairman of the Agrokombinat Snov agricultural production co-operative (previously known as the Kalinin collective farm until 1994) in Nesvizh District of Minsk Region.

Under the exemplary leadership of Mikhail Karchmit, Agrokombinat Snov became a source of pride for the Belarusian agro-industrial complex, serving as a benchmark for new, promising development in the national agricultural sector. The agrocomplex achieved production indicators on par with the best European agricultural enterprises, continues to hold leading positions in Belarus, and has repeatedly been a winner of republican, regional, and district competitions.

Mikhail Karchmit became the chairman of the Kalinin collective farm in 1988. He confidently took on the new position, although not without concerns over the agrocomplex's future — he felt the heavy burden of responsibility. Karchmit's engineering mindset immediately formulated the task for the initial stage, which involved modernising the production and introducing new machines and mechanisms. In a remarkably short time, as noted by Nikolai Radoman — the current head of Agrokombinat Snov — they managed to purchase 60 tractors, 10 MAZ trucks, four KamAZ trucks, and a bus.



AWARDS

- By Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 362 dated June 30th, 2001, Mikhail Karchmit was awarded the Hero of Belarus title for selfless work and exceptional contributions to the development of agricultural production
- The Badge of Honour Order
- Honoured Worker of Agriculture of the Republic of Belarus
- State Prize of the Republic of Belarus in the field of natural sciences
- Honorary citizen of the town of Nesvizh

Mikhail Karchmit,
"I am a patriot of Belarus. I am not ashamed to say this. I cannot imagine myself anywhere else, only on my native Belarusian land."

Mikhail Karchmit
 (from an interview with the *Sovetskaya Byelorussia* newspaper, 2004),
"I am watching today's youth with interest, especially those who are just entering the industry. I often compare them to our generation and I wonder how today's twenty-year-olds are better than us. When I see in the behaviour and actions of young people a desire for the new, for development, I feel joy. I understand that the youth can achieve a lot. We should trust them more. Then the necessary experience for the work will come much faster."

Karchmit's associates and colleagues particularly highlighted his foresight. He had a clear vision of the farm's future, at least over a five-year horizon. He knew what needed to be done for that future today, right now, because tomorrow would be too late.

Immediately after the arrival at Agrokombinat Snov, the new leader took charge of the livestock farms as well. Over 16 years that Mikhail Karchmit held the position of chairman of the board, they underwent deep reconstruction twice. However, no matter which sector or area you consider — be it a poultry farm, a pig complex, or a feed mill — Karchmit's talent is evident everywhere. It was under his leadership that grain yields reached unprecedented heights — 80 to 90 centners per hectare. The processing of the agrocomplex's own products became widely established. The current meat processing complex has grown from a small section; today, it employs hundreds of people and produces thousands of tonnes of products.

Vladimir Bobr, who worked as the chief agronomist at the farm, recalled, "When Mikhail Karchmit joined the farm, there were over 17 million roubles on the accounts; in Soviet times, that was a huge sum! During the years of perestroika, this money did not lose its value during the redenomination and did not remain on the accounts as dead weight. Almost all of it was invested in machinery, equipment for livestock farming, and the reconstruction of the farms. When difficult times came to the country, many abandoned livestock farming due to its unprofitability. In contrast, we did not close a single farm. After all, that would mean leaving people without work, without a piece of bread. Around the same time, there were stirrings regarding the land allocated to the farm, with some wanting to divide it up and make everyone farmers with plots of three to four hectares. It was then that Mikhail Karchmit took a firm stance, which he expressed at a general meeting: no land means no farm, and thus none of what had been created through collective efforts over many years. The people said 'no' to the division of the land and trusted their leader. Despite everything happening, the farm continued to develop; in 1991, a



meat processing workshop was launched, and in 1995, a dairy processing facility was opened, while a network of branded retail was being established at the same time, and everything went its own way."

Having extensive contacts at both regional and national levels, and the opportunity to consult, Karchmit took pride in the thoughtful team of the collective farm. He saw each of his associates as a highly qualified specialist. At any opportunity, he would emphasise, "We cannot be disjointed; we are one link, one core, one fist."

"Mikhail Karchmit was very concerned about the fate of his farm and hundreds of others, as well as about the people of the village," recalled Nikolai Radoman. "I believe the serious passions affected his health. Yet, despite everything, he did not allow the accumulated potential to be torn apart. Moreover, even during those years, we achieved an increase in production and maintained a decent wage for the workers of the farm."

Of course, many now miss him. With his experience, knowledge, and character, he could have accomplished much more for the people.

Reality has confirmed: Karchmit was right placing emphasis on a large, multi-sector agricultural enterprise. After all, land is a natural resource that requires rational and careful management. Those who are loyal to their native land and their work continue to serve honestly, growing grain, educating children, building homes, treating the sick, upholding law and order, maintaining cleanliness, preserving national traditions, honouring history... All of this is for their Belarus.

The flagship of the industry — the Agrokombinat Snov agricultural production co-operative in Nesvizh District — continues to impress with its achievements. The average daily weight gain of cattle has increased to 1,075 grammes, while the milk yield per cow will exceed 12,000 kilogrammes at year end. There are 2,900 dairy cows in the farm, plus young stock. Additionally, there is a pig complex and a poultry farm. This year, nearly 30,000 tonnes of grain from cereal crops were harvested there. The yield is impressive — 102.2 centners per hectare. It is also worth noting the successes in growing winter rapeseed. The average yield of this crop was nearly 60 centners per hectare.

MEMORY

- A memorial plaque to Mikhail Karchmit is installed on the administrative building of the Agrokombinat Snov agricultural production co-operative;
- Karl Marx Street in the village of Snov, where the Hero of Belarus lived, was renamed Mikhail Karchmit Street;
- A documentary film titled *The Leader* has been made about the activities of Mikhail Aleksandrovich [Karchmit].

Based on materials of sb.by, belta.by and *Heroes of Belarus* by Nikolai Machekin



Verona Eurasian Economic Forum 2024 scheduled for December 5th-6th in Ras Al Khaimah

This year's Verona Eurasian Economic Forum will be held on December 5th-6th in Ras al Khaimah (UAE)



By Marta Astreiko

Among the organisers of the forum are the Italian non-profit Conoscere Eurasia Association, the Roscongress Foundation and the UAE Chamber of Commerce and Industry. “The event is aimed at developing an open multilateral dialogue and equal co-operation within Greater Eurasia. The expansion of investment, industrial, trade and technological capabilities of this space is an important task,” they told sb.by.

The forum will discuss prospects for co-operation in energy, industry, finance, technology, transport, agriculture, and the social sphere. It will gather representatives of government and business circles, and among them there will be also political and pub-

lic figures from Europe and Asia, including Russia, the United Arab Emirates, Italy and other states.

“The Verona Eurasian Economic Forum 2024 is a key business event of the macro-region, which is aimed at finding mutually beneficial solutions in the field of international co-operation. The vector of development of associations and countries of Greater Eurasia is being formed on its side-lines,” Anton Kobayakov, the Adviser to the President of the Russian Federation, said.

“For the 17th year now, the forum has been creating excellent conditions for free communication, business contacts and discussions among business representatives from the countries of Greater Eurasia. This unique international event creates an opportunity for a dialogue between entrepreneurs in the space from the Atlantic to the Pacific and Indian oceans in difficult

modern conditions. Ras Al Khaimah has been chosen as its venue this year, taking into consideration the interests of the Emirati side and the growing global influence of the UAE which has joined BRICS in 2024,” Professor Antonio Fallico, the President of Conoscere Eurasia Association, noted.

A rich cultural programme is being prepared, and it will be open not only to the forum participants, but also local residents. In particular, the New Italian Cinema Events (N.I.C.E.) Film Festival, a retrospective show of films by Soviet and Russian director K. G. Shakhnazarov, a symphony orchestra concert conducted by Yuri Bashmet with participation of Italian tenor Vittorio Grigolo as soloist are planned.

An exhibition of folk crafts from Italy, Russia and the UAE will be organised as well.

Innocent victims of the West

Rulers of ‘developed democracies’ turning into brutal murderers, why

Minsk hosted a large international conference dedicated to an acute problem of modern times on November 15th. About 150 participants gathered at the National Library of Belarus to discuss ways of countering illegal migration and developing regional co-operation in this area. Among those present there were many foreigners, and that was a positive sign.

By Davide Carbonaro

The states that are the true root cause of the current migration crisis failed to send their representatives, and that was definitely bad. They — especially Poland and Lithuania — actually demonstrated the commitment to their long-lasting tradition of cowardice. As a result, Belarus remains the only voice crying in the wilderness.

The Belarusian leadership has the courage and honesty to stand up for those who cannot defend themselves: pregnant women, children and the elderly who are daily dying on the Polish Belarusian border and whom Polish border guards continue to treat inhumanly.

Belarus’ Foreign Minister Maxim Ryzhenkov clearly confirmed at the conference that the Belarusian state is open to discussing this important humanitarian issue with those in the West who are actually aggravating this tragedy. This means that President Aleksandr

Lukashenko is still extending an olive branch to the country’s western neighbours with a proposal to resume negotiations on resolving the refugee-related problems.

When did human life cease to be of any value? Why are the countries — that are boasting of their developed democracy — playing people’s destinies, considering themselves superior and more elitist than others? Why are they still arranging a horrible ghetto with real barbed wire, which reminds us of the Nazis atrocities in WWII concentration camps, for many unfortunate people?

The European Union fails to take even a minute to think of the health and well-being of these unfortunate people, who are forced to flee wars and conflicts unleashed by the well-fed West. They want bread, but the West gives them a stone. That’s what has happened to the promises of freedom and prosperity that the liberal West has been bragging about in its media for years.

The few delegates representing the western countries frostily acknowledged the existence of the problem, but did not go into details in their statements. When journalists asked them for an interview after the conference, no one wanted to speak officially.

Meanwhile, unofficially, everyone knows what is happening, but they are not allowed to even mention the suffering of refugees: the standard practice of the West says that there is no problem if it is not voiced.

Of course, it is great that the conference of the kind took place, but so far there is no opportunity for interested participating countries to put pressure on those who were absent in order to resume dialogue on the issue. Meanwhile, an increasing number of people continue to die at the border, being killed as a result of the wildest ousting measures applied by the Polish border authorities: they literally throw those who pass through the fences back into the Belarusian territory. People

Italian Davide Carbonaro is a journalist who lived and worked in Poland over the last 20 years. The authorities began to persecute him for his bold, truthful and incisive materials, and the journalist was eventually forced to flee Poland. Davide Carbonaro chose Belarus — a country of equal opportunities, kind people and national accord — as his new home.



— already dead or following severe beatings — are ousted like wild animals.

In my opinion, it is important to more widely speak up and openly show how unfortunate people are treated by the liberal West.

The Belarusian leadership has to independently take care of refugees, although it is in no case contributed to the ongoing crisis — and it is a tragedy and a shame for the whole world. The efforts that Belarus and

its President are making to save people are an example of humanity and courage, and they at least evoke a sense of deep respect.

As a person who moved from the European Union to live in Belarus, I am grateful for what is being done for migrants in the republic. At the same time, I feel pain and shame for the West (where I was born), which — like a cynical bloody maniac — closes its eyes to what it has done with its own hands.

Promising environment

How will engineering and technical centres, established in every district of Belarus, develop in schools?

A new educational environment is emerging in schools: 167 engineering and technical centres — not to be confused with engineering classes! — are already operational. The equipment is impressive: 3D printers, robotic platforms, and sets for circuit design and microelectronics. This is not about traditional robotics courses, but rather a fundamental study of the exact sciences using the most advanced equipment. All of this is free of charge. The project aims to prepare a new generation of engineers who will work in the real sector of the country's economy.



Agniya Shigina

By Taisiya Azanovich

Taking the first step

Agniya Shigina, a student at Minsk school No. 225, is only in the sixth grade but is already showing great promise. She has become the youngest winner in a research competition by creating, together with her classmate, a delivery robot. In the future, the girl dreams of building a robotic assistant that would make her mother's life easier — one that could both make pancakes and vacuum the house. Agniya is also interested in the topic of emotional machines. It is no coincidence that her future invention will be not only hardworking but also kind, responsive, and caring. The schoolgirl began her journey towards her dream at an engineering and technical centre, where she attends an elective.

The classes that the students attend resemble mini technical laboratories. The curriculum is extensive and focused on acquiring practical skills — from creating computer games and mobile applications to designing robots and solving complex engineering problems. Today, technology has permeated every sphere. Even if a student chooses a different path in the future, they will undoubtedly be able to apply this knowledge.

From simple to complex

Even first-graders can participate in activities at the centres — training begins with visual programming, then children gradually learn to solve engineering problems, as explained by computer science teacher Yuliya Kukhto,



Yaroslav Selitsky and Yegor Skiland

“At the initial stage, they create a robot vacuum cleaner and a security robot — these are simple projects. Later, they move on to programming smart home systems. Older students can be shown how processes are organised in real production environments, and taught to work with current engineering software.”

Additionally, the students model visual educational materials for various subjects on computers: geometric shapes for mathematics, DNA chains for biology, and architectural models for history.”

The school headteacher, Tatiana Kachan, added that the engineering and technical centre offers classes not only in computer science; teachers of chemistry, physics, and biology also work there, “This results in both a practice-oriented approach to learning and an interdisciplinary one. We organise elective classes and interest-based groups. The doors of the engineering and technical centres are open to students from our school and those from other educational institutions.”

Strong educators, impressive content

Engineering and technical centres have been established in every region of Belarus to ensure that all children have the opportunity to practise, as noted by Veronika Gameza, the head of the organisational and methodological support sector for engineering and technical centres at the National Children's Technopark. Methodological recommendations have been developed, and over 90 educators across the country have completed a two-year retraining course at the Academy of Education. Typically, these are teachers in mathematics and computer science with a solid foundation and necessary competencies.

According to Veronika Gameza, a roadmap has been signed, clearly outlining the priority areas,

“Our task is to develop engineering competencies in children, to popularise a profession that is rewarding both materially and in terms of potential development and career growth.”

The demand for engineers is only increasing. At the centres, students will be able to prepare for research competitions, develop their own technical projects, and even make small discoveries. Thanks to the creation of a new educational environment, we will be able to identify gifted children at an early stage and direct them towards education in the children's technopark. These young individuals are already potential graduates of our technical universities.”



Students of the engineering and technical class at Minsk secondary school No. 225



Australia to ban social media for under 16s

The Australian government will legislate for a ban on social media for children under 16, PM Anthony Albanese said, in what it calls a world-leading package of measures that could become law late next year

“The Albanese Government is introducing world leading legislation to establish 16 as the minimum age for access to social media,” Communications Minister Michelle Rowland said in a statement. “This reform is about protecting young people and letting parents know we’ve got their backs.”

The legislation includes financial penalties of up to 50m Australian Dollars (\$32.5m) for companies found not to have taken ‘reasonable steps to prevent age-restricted users having accounts’.

The ban is expected to affect services such as TikTok, X, Instagram and Snapchat, although the full list has not yet been released.

The legislation has bipartisan support and if passed would come into effect in one year.

The legislation follows several high-profile cases of children taking their own lives citing online bullying, and complaints from parents about the pressure their children face to be online.

Many parents and pro-ban campaigners have lauded the bill as a long overdue measure to impose accountability on tech companies for tools Australian children use online.

American inflammatory drive

US President Joe Biden’s approval of American weapons strikes deep into Russian territory may backfire on Washington, retired US Army Lieutenant Colonel Daniel L. Davis told *The National Interest* magazine, TASS reports

According to him, Biden’s decision on ATACMS may ‘blow up in America’s face’, as Washington risks expanding the conflict in Ukraine, ‘potentially drawing the United States into a direct conflict with Russia’. Moscow has clearly signalled that the use of long-range Western missiles to strike its territory would mean direct involvement in the conflict with Russia and entail ‘retaliatory measures’.

Davis called the authorisation to strike US weapons deep into Russian territory a ‘highly reckless decision’ that has no military benefit. According to the expert, Biden’s staunchest supporters ‘should urgently call for him to stop this inflammatory drive before it’s too late’.

Besides, in his opinion, Ukraine has already lost in the conflict, the decision to use ATACMS will not change anything.

One of the BBC article cites data from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) showing that Russia has gained almost six times as much territory in 2024 as it did in 2023. Dr. Marina Miron, a defence researcher at Kings College London, suggested to the BBC that there was a possibility the Ukrainian eastern front ‘might actually collapse’ if Russia continued to advance at pace.

BBC journalist Paul Kirby noted, “There is a sense that Moscow is maximising its gains and Biden is abandoning long-standing red lines before Trump tries to deliver on his promise to end the war in 24 hours.”

US President Joe Biden’s government is ‘the fascist state’, american journalist and television host Tucker Carlson said in a video released on his YouTube channel. “Our government is the fascist

state. I think we’re watching the most evil thing I’ve ever seen in my lifetime, which is the lame duck administration [of President Joe Biden] leaving the next administration with the [possibility of] world war, with the nuclear conflict,” Carlson said in his interview with US author and former lawyer Glenn Greenwald.

Earlier, Carlson said that Joe Biden’s approval of long-range missile strikes by the Ukrainian army deep inside Russia could threaten US people.

On November 19th and 21st, the Ukrainian Armed Forces attacked Russia’s Kursk and Bryansk regions with the British-French-made Storm Shadow missiles and US-made ATACMS missiles. In order to deter further escalation, Russia fired a hypersonic intermediate-range ballistic missile Oreshnik at the Ukrainian military facility.



Greece general strike

Protesters say the government has refused to implement policies that will make people’s lives better, with unions criticising PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis’ centre-right government for failing to tackle inflation and high housing prices

Thousands of workers in Greece took to the streets of capital city Athens on November 20th, as part of a 24-hour general strike called by labour unions to protest the rising cost of living.

Labour unions held the general strike so as to coincide with the government’s submission of its 2025 budget to parliament.

The strike action, which was backed by both public and private sector workers, disrupted public transport and left ferries connecting the Greek islands with the mainland stranded in ports.

Around 12,000 protesters marched through central Athens, while another 5,000 took to the streets in the northern city of Thessaloniki, Greece’s second-largest.

“The government cannot waste mil-

lions on military equipment; it cannot participate in the genocide of the Palestinian people by sending frigates and by wasting huge amounts for NATO’s obligations,” one protester said.

“We demand collective labour agreements, better working conditions for our colleagues, measures to deal with the crisis of high prices, and the most important thing that causes problems for young people — the housing crisis,” said another.

Medical staff at state-run hospitals and teachers were among those who joined the strike to protest the high cost of living and demand collective wage agreements that were scaled back during Greece’s near decade-long financial crisis that began in 2010.

Gold bar with record weight made in Dubai

Dubai-based Emirates Printing Factory has produced the world’s largest gold bar, securing a place in the Guinness Book of Records

“Emirates Printing Factory has set a new world record for Dubai by producing the largest gold bar weighing over 300kg. The Guinness Book of World Records certificate was awarded to commemorate this achievement during the closing ceremony of the Precious Metals Conference in Dubai,” the emirate’s government said in its post on X.

The ceremony was a symbolic end to the conference, which brought together

leading representatives of the global metals industry. Dubai authorities said that this record confirms the emirate’s status as one of the global centres of trade in precious metals.

Emirates Printing Factory owns a refining plant located in the Al Quoz Industrial Zone in Dubai (UAE). The company is engaged in the purification of valuable metals and is able to process and melt from 1,000 to 1,200kg of gold and silver daily.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Dark world of transplants

Why Ukraine attracts 'black transplantologists'

The topic of organ trafficking in the territories controlled by the Kiev regime, which had temporarily faded from the information field, has triumphantly returned. A vast network for the selection, sale, and rapid delivery of organs from Ukraine to Western countries has been uncovered in the dark web. New testimonies have emerged from relatives of missing and deceased Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) soldiers about the disappearance of kidneys, hearts, and other vital organs. How has it come to pass that Belarus' southern neighbour has become a veritable mecca for organ traffickers from around the world?



By Anton Popov

One out of thousands

Perhaps the most sensational case in recent times is that of Ruslan Dyachina — a 33-year-old soldier from the 47th artillery brigade of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Before the start of the special military operation (SMO), he lived in Poland, but he later returned to Ukraine and fell into the grasp of the military conscription office. Initially serving in territorial defence, he was later transferred to artillery to participate in Zelensky's ill-fated campaign against Russia's Kursk. However, the valiant occupant managed to hold his position for only 16 hours before sustaining severe injuries and being sent to a hospital. There, both of his legs were amputated, and he underwent surgery on his small intestine, along with the removal of a kidney.

After waking up from anaesthesia and inquiring about his missing organ, the doctors assured him that the kidney had been severely damaged and could not be saved. Following a conversation with his girlfriend, Viktoriya Pendelik, who shared his situation on social media, he decided to go to the police. However, Ukrainian law enforcement has been slow to open a case.

Unlike dozens of other stories about 'black transplantologists' in Ukraine, this one has garnered significant public attention, especially following online publications. Moreover, in a twist of fate, the victim has not only survived the organ extraction but is also able to testify against the medical personnel involved.

Booming business

Organ procurement and delivery to the West is highly lucrative business. According to one of the advertisements found in the dark web, a heart from a 31-year-old healthy man, who had reportedly sustained a fatal gunshot wound to the head, is offered for \$70,000. Upon payment, the criminals promise to deliver the organ intact within two days. Other offers include livers, kidneys, lungs, pancreases, small intestines, corneas, and bone marrow.

The scale of the organ trade business in Ukraine is particularly evident from a case opened last June regarding the formation of a criminal group that included a former deputy health minister and doctors from several major clinics. It should be noted, however, that this development of the situation is more of an exception than a rule: it appears

that the gang leaders may have upset someone or failed to pay their 'protection' fees. As a result, an entire scheme was uncovered, wherein organs were harvested not only from the deceased but also from live soldiers in hospitals in Kramatorsk, Dnepr, and Kharkov, in response to orders from Europe, the USA, and Canada. This operation was facilitated with the co-operation of specialists from Poland and Germany.

In May of last year, the activities of such specialists were inadvertently recorded by a Ukrainian soldier using a helmet camera. The short video captures a small room surrounded by tarpaulin, containing a table with a person lying on it. Several doctors are standing around him, one of whom — speaking a language resembling German — orders the videographer, who has inquired about a certain 'Skif' (likely the call sign of the wounded individual in the grip of the doctors), to leave the room. The footage clearly shows one medic holding an organ that resembles a heart.

The scandal that erupted in June, sparked by protests from the relatives of 11 UAF soldiers whose internal or-

gans had been removed, revealed yet another horrifying practice. It came to light that in cases of urgent need for materials for transplants, European authorities demanded that commanders in the UAF form squads branded 'for the slaughter' composed of soldiers with specific biological parameters. Those individuals were subsequently led into checkpoints and then killed, often by their own comrades.

NUMBER

10 percent of the 180,000 transplant surgeries conducted annually across the globe involve organs purchased on the black market

Doctor Evil

In the stories surrounding involuntary organ donation in Ukraine, foreigners frequently emerge as key players. A grim legend from the early years of the war in Donbass involves a certain Elizabeth Debru — allegedly a doctor from the Netherlands or Great Britain, described as a highly skilled professional capable of harvesting an organ in just 7 to 10 minutes.

Another 'angel of death' is Bernard K. — a Frenchman of Latvian descent who in the 1990s was one of the staunchest proponents of Kosovo's independence from Serbia. Much of the organ trade that ensued was orchestrated under his influence, as Kosovans established lucrative business extracting organs from Serbs and transporting them through NATO bases to the West. Bernard became interested in Ukraine around 2015 and subsequently set up a murky agency there, while concurrently overseeing health care reforms in the country.

Not all those involved in organ trafficking operate on the front lines. Many conduct their nefarious activities in hospitals far from the battlefield or even abroad.

In the shadows of the law

When discussing 'black transplantology' in relation to the situation in Ukraine, it is important to note that under local laws, a considerable number of cases — except, of course, for the extraction of organs from living individuals without their consent — are relatively legitimate. This is due to a law passed by the Ukrainian Parliament [Verkhovna Rada] at the end of December 2021, which abolished the requirement for notarised written consent from living donors or their relatives for organ retrieval, including that of children.

NUMBER

\$1.7bn is the approximate annual volume of the illegal organ trade market worldwide



Ukrainian authorities were evidently aware of Western plans to provoke Russia into starting the SMO and — to avoid undue scrutiny amidst a potential influx of organs from 'Nezalezhnaya' [Ukraine's nickname for 'independent'] — preemptively laid the legislative groundwork.

The law enacted at the close of the last relatively peaceful year set organ retrieval on a production line. Thus, after the liberation of Severodonetsk in the Lugansk People's Republic (LPR), Russian military personnel seized a medical archive with numerous consent forms for transplant extractions that had been filled in the name of UAF soldiers in 2022. Notably, the documents were filled out in the same handwriting, and the donor's signature was consistently replaced with a uniform stamp-signature.

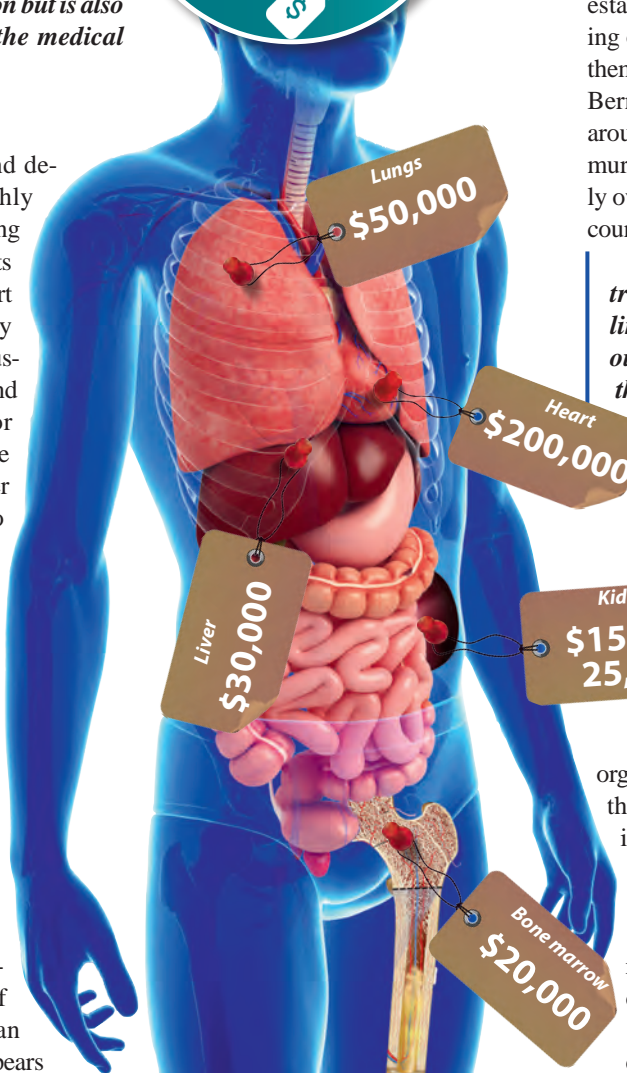
However, what became a widespread phenomenon in 2022 had already manifested during the eight years of war in Donbass preceding the current conflict. As early as September 2014, Madina Jarbussynova, the OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, reported that several mass graves of civilians had been discovered, with bodies showing clear signs of internal organ removal. It later emerged that Ukrainian soldiers and captured militia members, as well as women and children — captured in violation of all laws of war — were handed over to 'black transplantologists' for substantial amounts of money. It is their mutilated corpses were found in places like Nizhnyaya Krynka, Kommunar, and other sites of mass burial.

It is not without reason that in the correspondence between Sergei Vlasenko, a former people's deputy from the Fatherland All-Ukrainian Union (aka Batkivshchyna), Semyon Semenchenko, the commander of the Donbass battalion, and German medic Olga Wieber, the latter expressed her joy over the onset of the conflict, informing her interlocutors that the events were in their favour.

The organ harvesting campaign that unfolded in Ukraine has long surpassed the crimes of Hashim Thaçi and other Kosovo field commanders. The grim irony in this context echoes the chant popular during the Maidan protests — 'Na nozhi!' (Onto the knives!) — which has become a terrifying reality: Ukraine has indeed been exposed to scalpels of 'black transplantologists'.

Cost of internal organs on the black market

(based on the price list found by the Russian military in the settlement of Kislovka in the Kupyansk direction)



MYTH BUSTER

Planning a leisure route

Autumn is not a time for gloom and preparing for hibernation. It is a time of bright colours, warm knitted blankets, hot tea and no less interesting and exciting trips. In Belarus, nature blooms with all its glorious colours, inviting everyone to enjoy its charm. Dampness and short daylight hours won't be a problem for outdoor activities, as long as you plan ahead. What are the ways to relax and unwind in autumn in our country?

By Dmitry Shamko

Comfort for every taste

Belarusian sanatoriums are traditionally popular not only among locals but also with our neighbours. The secret is simple: alongside affordable prices, they offer a wide range of services and comfort. In our health resorts, guests can undergo a course of various treatment procedures, including balneotherapy, mud therapy, physiotherapy, and more. Visitors note that the cost of relaxation in Belarus is significantly lower than in similar establishments in other countries.

Depending on the comfort level of the room and the services offered, prices range from Br97 for a double room in a block to Br439 for a single two-room suite per person per day. This usually includes accommodation, five meals per day, a doctor's consultation, and prescribed treatments according to the necessary profile. Sanatoriums typically hold competitions, games, entertainment programmes, sports and musical events, as well as tours of sights and local attractions. Guests can enjoy table tennis, billiards, bicycle rentals, swimming pools, spa complexes, saunas, and other services.

Close to the nature reserve

Resting in the countryside is an excellent choice for those who wish to enjoy nature and spend weekends or holidays in the cosy corners of Belarus with picturesque landscapes. One can rent a small house or cottage in a desired location. Options and prices can meet various needs. Thus, you can relax at a dacha in the village of Semkovo, Logoisk District. This village-style house features wooden finishing, three rooms, a land plot of 7,000 sq.m., a pond, a bathhouse, a bar-

Belarusian agro-estates offer vast opportunities for diverse leisure activities. According to experts, this season has proved to be very active. In addition to Belarusians, Russians and our neighbours from Latvia are showing great interest in Belarus' agro-ecotourism, arriving in groups. Currently, around 1,300 farmsteads are operating in the country, all of which are in demand. Many travel agencies include visits to popular farmsteads in their programmes. Recently, the northern direction has become particularly trendy: for example, Yelnya — the largest unique area of raised bogs in Belarus. Certified guides are now working there.

becue area, a gazebo, a fireplace, a fridge, and even the internet! All these amenities cost Br30 per day per person. Moreover, if necessary, the owners are ready to help arrange a birthday celebration, a wedding, corporate event, or other festivities.

Another option is a wooden cottage by Lake Sumovka in Braslav. This is a nature reserve area near the Yelnya National Landscape Reserve, which is called the lungs of Europe. The house can comfortably accommodate up to eight people. The land plot of 5,000 sq.m. includes landscape design, a grill area, and a bathhouse. A boat, table tennis, and a karaoke speaker are included in the cost. The price per day is Br400 (for eight people), per week — from Br2,500, and per month — from Br8,000. A discount system is in place.

There are plenty of options available in the leisure market, and everyone can choose something suitable in terms of price, conditions, and location. In any



case, even the most budget-friendly houses are equipped with everything necessary for a peaceful and comfortable stay.

Eco alternative

Agro-ecotourism remains popular and continues to be a unique feature of our country. Thus, a tour with foreign visitors always includes a visit to a farmstead — it is like the cherry on the cake.

Today, travel agencies come up with fascinating itineraries that encompass engrossing activities, such as kayaking trips, visits to the 'Blue Lakes', and gastronomic delights at farmsteads, among others. Belarusian tour products are becoming increasingly diverse, showcasing distinct facets of Belarusian culture — this is what our guests are primarily interested in. Participants can engage in various workshops and masterclasses led by artisans, or learn folk dances and songs, ensuring there is never a dull moment. Additionally, travellers have already personally experienced how a holiday abroad can turn into a test due to various restrictions. As a result, many prefer not to turn their vacation into

Irina Voronovich,
Director of Tourism
Department at Belarus'
Ministry of Sports
and Tourism,

"The past summer season was successful for the hospitality infrastructure. Hotels, health resorts, and farmsteads operated at maximum capacity. The increase in individual tourists has been the trend in recent years. It now surpasses organised tours, contrasting the situation observed before the pandemic. The National Tourism Agency's website features a route planner that allows anyone interested to create a suitable travel itinerary with chosen stops for meals and rest."

Ilya Shvetiko

a challenge and choose to relax at home, especially since Belarusian climate has now become close to Mediterranean.

Prices vary, depending on the conditions and richness of the recreation programme. It is one thing when a large group of tourists arrives, and quite another when a few individuals or a family come for the weekend, needing merely accommodation and breakfast. Some visitors may wish for a varied, tailored programme, such as kayaking down a river — this incurs an additional fee. A 24-hour stay in comfortable conditions with breakfast typically costs around Br100. Some places might charge as little as Br60, depending on the amenities. If one adds a kayaking trip, it would be an extra Br70-80. In any case, this is quite a reasonable price for spending leisure time or a holiday with joy and benefit combined.

Typically, all leisure options are booked in advance. Summer, of course, is the peak season, but it is worth noting that autumn is also a vibrant period. Therefore, it is wise to act swiftly to choose the most suitable holiday option.

TO THE POINT

Tatiana Lidyayeva, Deputy Head of Sports and Tourism Department at the Grodno Regional Executive Committee,

"Agro-estates are not just places for quiet rural retreats. In Grodno Region, there has been created a comprehensive tourist product, offering 'all in one package' — active nature outings, gastronomic tours, cultural and entertainment programmes, and more. The variety of engaging events in many of those farmsteads rivals that of urban tourism. For instance, there are workshops on baking unleavened bread, decorating gingerbread, making homemade butter, and preparing pancakes, as well as samovar lighting, among others. In Mosty District, a tourist route has been established that includes kayaking on the Shchara River, off-road safari in the Lipichanskaya Pushcha, cooking dishes based on traditional regional recipes, and tasting herbal teas. In Shchuchin District, an ecological trail has been laid out, and a house-museum of village history and peasant life has been opened. Last year, 267 active agro-estates in Grodno Region welcomed over 82,400 tourists."



Radyushi farmstead in Grodno Region is surrounded by picturesque meadows and floodplain oak forests

grodno.vsa.free.gro.by

Emotions, passion, excitement!

By Sergei Kanashits

There is no such thing as too much hockey! For our country, this simple maxim has long become an axiom. The matches of the President's hockey team have firmly entered the top of sporting events marked in the fans' calendar as 'must-attend' since they invariably create a festive and positive atmosphere. The first match of the Head of State's ice hockey squad in the Republican Hockey League in the new season, held at the Olympic Arena on Saturday, drew a full house and energised everyone — both those who played and those who cheered.

A strong recommendation: if you have been to KHL matches and seen how they play in the NHL, but have never attended the matches of the President's team in the Republican Hockey League, then you have lost a lot. Go — you won't regret it. Because it's an amazing drive! It's great hockey. The main thing is the feeling of unity and cohesion, the feeling of a great sporting holiday that does not leave the audience from the first to the last minute.

Republican hockey competitions among amateur teams for the prizes of the President's Sports Club are becoming more and more popular every year: the level

The President's hockey team has started a new season with a victory



Nikolai Lukashenko (playing under number 31) is unstoppable



Aleksandr Kulevsky

of the tournament and interest in it are growing rapidly and steadily.

The regular season started on November 2nd, and the rivals will fight for the transitional cup until April. At the first stage, the ice squads of the regions and the President's team will determine the top four following the results of the round-robin tournament. Then the quartet of finalists will continue to fight in the semifinals, and the final series will be

held until two victories by one of the teams. Let us remind you that last season, the President's squad confidently defeated the Minsk Region team in the final series and won the Champion's Cup for the 15th time. The bronze medals went to the Grodno Region hockey players.

The reigning champions began the new championship with a match against the holders of the third place — the guests from Grodno Region came to

the Olympic Arena. They started their tournament journey a week ago, in the Ice Palace in Shklov, having played a draw (5:5) with the Mogilev Region team. An impressive 'troop' of the Grodno Region fans who arrived in Minsk did not hide their high ambitions before the game. "Is Trus playing today?" they asked, looking at the minutes of the meeting. Having found there the name of Vitaly Trus — one of the best Belarusian goalkeepers of recent years who played for Neman and for Belarus' national team — they nodded their heads with satisfaction, "So we will give a fight — we don't need to worry about the last line of defence."

A lot of players well-known in the recent past took to the ice that day: Andrei Kostitsyn, Oleg Antonenko, Nikolai Stasenka, and Andrei Antonov... The fans paid a lot of attention to them, but Aleksandr Lukashenko traditionally received the most applause:

every appearance of the Head of State on the ice caused genuine delight and ovation in the stands. As always, the President was assertive and active in the game, with one assist on his account.

The most effective was Nikolai Lukashenko, who turned this match into a benefit: the forward scored 4 (!) goals and assisted his partners two more times. He was recognised as the best player of the match.

As part of the Grodno Region team, this prize went to Sergei Oliyev. The final score of the match was 10:3 in favour of the President's team.

Before the game and during the halftime, life at the Olympic Arena did not stop for a second: incendiary performances by artists, competitions with fancy prizes, dance battles and cheerful animation did not let the crowded stands get bored. The noise in the arena was so loud that it made your ears pop.

The most pleasant thing is that the lion's share of fans was made up of young people: active, patriotic, caring and cheerful. By the way, among the numerous posters in the stands, there was one that read 'HAJO!' ['NADO', translated as It Is Necessary!] The fans demanded, as you understand, not only a goal.

The meeting ended with a good tradition: the teams threw soft toys into the stands. There were no losers.

Queens of the track

Dzinara Smolskaya and Hanna Sola won the stage of the Commonwealth Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk



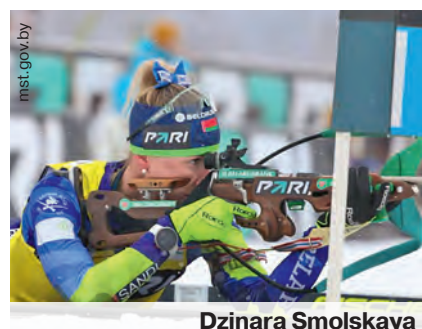
Hanna Sola

By Tatiana Pastushenko

The second stage of the Commonwealth Biathlon Cup, which ended at the weekend in Russia's Khanty-Mansiysk, gave fans a whole range of emotions — from the annoyance caused by the not very successful performance of our athletes in the sprints that opened the programme, to the delight at two gold awards in the pursuit race and mass start. Moreover, this time the success is due to the leaders of the women's national team — Dzinara Smolskaya and Hanna Sola.

Unfortunately, Belarusians were left without awards in the sprint races: the best results were demonstrated by Dzinara Smolskaya, who took fourth place among our athletes in the women's race, and Dzinara Lazouski, who was on the eighth line of the final protocol in the men's race. This, however, provided good opportunities to improve the position in the pursuit race. Dzinara took her chance.

The Belarusian made two mistakes at four firing lines and broke into the lead at the end of the race. No one was able



Dzinara Smolskaya

to get ahead of her. Anastasia Grishina, a 21-year-old Russian athlete who sensationally beat the leaders of her national team, lost more than 10 seconds to Dzinara, and Victoria Slivko, who closed the top three, lost half a minute. "I made some mistake at the first firing line, most likely downwind. At the second firing line, it was a very annoying miss, it should have hit the target. I got angry and decided that I would attack on the track and definitely not miss from a standing position," Dzinara Smolskaya said in an interview with Match TV. "Unfortunately, I haven't worked much on technique this year. Probably, I've been focused more on strength building and getting my body back in shape after childbirth. I got power back, now I'm trying to

implement it. I think I pulled it off."

The very next day, the Belarusian anthem was played at the stadium in Khanty-Mansiysk in honour of another young mother. Hanna Sola, who took 13th place in the sprint and 7th in the pursuit race, did not give her rivals a chance in the mass start: despite three misses, she beat the nearest competitor — Anastasiia Khalili — by 20.1 seconds! Immediately after the finish, Hanna admitted that at first, it was difficult for her to believe in victory, "Finally everything worked out after all those failures. I already wanted to give up. I am very glad that I even managed to finish with a flag — on top of that, in a race with four firing lines. I'm pleased about that. It's a decent race for me."

The biathletes of our men's national team were left without awards at the Commonwealth Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk, but they finished in the top 10 more than once.

Oleg Ryzhenkov — the head coach of the Belarusian national team — summed up the results of the stage on the air of Sports Centre.

"The girls have two gold medals! Sadly, the guys did not succeed, although Anton Smolski and Dima

Lazouski were close to the podium, and Maksim Varabei shows solid pace. Maybe some excitement played a role, excessive haste, and lack of concentration at the firing line. Excessive desire to show results sometimes gets in the way. Plus, there was a difficult wind situation. In principle, for the first winter stage, we are pleased that the functional readiness of our leaders — both girls and men — is at a high level. They feel great and are in good shape."

After the second stage of the Commonwealth Cup, Anton Smolski retained his leading position in the overall standings among men. Now he is 39 points ahead of Karim Khalili, who is in second place, and 56 points ahead of Eduard Latypov, who holds third place. Dzinara Smolskaya moved to the fourth place in the overall standings among women. She has 559 points, like Russian Kristina Reztsova, — 59 points behind the ranking leader, Tamara Derbusheva.

The next stage of the Commonwealth Cup will be held on December 20th-22nd in Tchaikovsky, but before that, biathletes will continue to compete in Khanty-Mansiysk, which will host two more stages of the Russian Cup.

Photo of the week



Ivan Yartvanovich

Goldfinch extracting seeds from a shrub

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.

November 28th, 1909 marks the birthday of Iosif Veynerovich (1909-1998) — a Belarusian cinematographer and film director, People's Artiste of Belarus. During the Great Patriotic War, he filmed frontline and partisan chronicles. He is the director and cinematographer of such films as *Ballad about a Mother*, *General Pushcha*, *The Right to Immortality*, and more. The documentary *Moscow Strikes Back* about the rout of German troops near Moscow, part of which was filmed by Veynerovich, became the first Soviet film to be awarded an *Oscar*.



On November 28th, 1924, the V. Kuibyshev Leather Haberdashery Goods Factory was opened in Minsk. It is known as Galanteya now — a major manufacturer of leather haberdashery goods of all kinds. Products released under the GALANTEYA brand are in high demand not only in the Republic of Belarus but also beyond its borders.



November 29th is World Buy Nothing Day. Every year at the end of November, people in many countries around the world refrain from any purchases for a day to recognise that overconsumption is a dangerous social

trend. It is known that only 20 percent of the world's population lives in countries with a high standard of living, yet they use over 80 percent of the Earth's natural resources. This not only represents an unjust distribution of the planet's wealth but also causes excessive harm to the environment.



November 30th, 1899 is the date of birth of Mikhas Lynkov (Mikhail Tikhonovich) (1899-1975) — a People's Writer of Belarus and an academician of Belarus' National Academy of Sciences. He was one of the leaders of the Belarusian Association of Proletarian Writers, the chairman of Belarus' Union of Writers, and the director of the Institute of Language, Literature, and Art under Belarus' Academy of Sciences. He is the author of prose works such as *Goy*, *Andrei Letun*, *Across the Ocean*, *Meetings*, and more. For his epic novel *Unforgettable Days*, he was awarded the State Prize of Belarus.



November 30th is World Pet Day, dedicated to all animals domesticated by man. It serves as a reminder to humanity of its responsibility for all creatures great and small. The motto of this day is the phrase from *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: 'You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed'.



On November 30th, 1924, the Republican Research and Practical Centre for Epidemiology and Microbiology (RRPCEM) was established. It is one of the largest research centres in the country, conducting a wide range of studies in the field of infectious disease control.



December 1st is World AIDS Day. It is observed annually around the globe in accordance with the decision of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 1988. The new disease AIDS was registered on June 5th, 1981.



It is a severe condition that develops in a person against the backdrop of pronounced immunodeficiency caused by the prolonged course of HIV infection. There is currently no complete cure for HIV infection; however, it has transitioned into the category of manageable chronic diseases.

December 1st marks Lawyer's Day in Belarus. The legal profession is multifaceted and encompasses a wide range of specialisations: defence lawyer, prosecutor, judge, investigator, legal advisor and scientist. Lawyers have an important mission to foster a legal culture in society, respect for the law, and the legal policy of the state.

On December 3rd, 1872, the beginning of the legend of the Great Flood was discovered on a fragment of one of the tablets containing an excerpt from the Sumerian *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Upon deciphering the text written in the cuneiform style on clay tablets found among the ruins of the ancient city of Nineveh, it was possible to read a passage about the beginning of the legend of the Great Flood. *The Epic* was created in the Akkadian language based on Sumerian tales over a period of 1,500 years, starting from the 18th-17th centuries BC.



lifetime, his Piano Concerto No.1 gained immense popularity. It has become part of the repertoire of leading pianists worldwide. This composition is included in the mandatory programme for the final round of the International Tchaikovsky Competition.

December 3rd, 1992 is the birthday of SMS, when the first-ever text message was sent. This event became significant in the history of mobile communication. Users appreciate this message for fast transmission speed.