



The Byelorussian offensive Operation *Bagration*, the 80th anniversary of which we are celebrating this year, was a truly colossal historical event

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Pakhtakor and Dinamo Minsk veterans met on the field to pay tribute to the Tashkent football club players who died 45 years ago in a plane crash

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Galina Gavrilovich

Artyom Sapsalev – the site supervisor for laying engineering communications and landscaping of the Promzhilstroy territory

Future to be built by the young

In August, Belarus' enterprises and organisations are replenished with new personnel. Young specialists embark on their first jobs after university years. Ambitious guys are brimming with ideas and eager to put the acquired knowledge into practice. With the support of experienced colleagues, their initial professional steps often lead to success. Artyom Sapsalev, the site supervisor for laying engineering communications and landscaping of the Promzhilstroy territory, graduated from the Belarusian-Russian University with a degree in civil engineering two years ago. His team consists of 15 members currently working on an iconic construction site — the Museum of Glory in Mogilev Region. This object holds particular significance for the young man as his great-grandfather fought during the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War, and this museum honours all those who contributed to the Victory. "I plan to bring my daughter here in the future. It is going to be a very beautiful site. The Museum of Glory in Mogilev Region will be designed in the shape of the Order of the Great Patriotic War. We have student teams involved in the project. As a student, I took part in the construction of a school and a polyclinic in Mogilev. A friend advised me to apply to this construction company. For me, as a young specialist, the attitude of experienced colleagues is important. A university diploma represents theory, while a construction site is a huge living organism where things are constantly changing, and the interaction of all links is crucial," the young specialist emphasised.



A shield for right-minded citizens and a sword for the criminal world

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, stands for further integration of law enforcement agencies within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), and encourages the maintenance and strengthening of co-operation. The Head of State has outlined this during a conversation with participants of the CIS Interior Ministers Council meeting at the Palace of Independence.

The first meeting in the format of the Interior Ministers Council was held in February 1992 in Minsk, and this time Belarus has hosted the 50th jubilee council meeting. Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that life is very changeable, and no one knows how the situation will unfold, “Nowadays, many are looking for benefits and are moving away from our common development trend created in Soviet times... Don’t do this.

Head of State. The President underlined that over the years of joint work, the parties had become repeatedly convinced — it is only together that we can effectively counter global, cross-border, and internal threats. “Belarus will always support and co-operate with all of you as far as possible,” Aleksandr Lukashenko assured. “In fact, the CIS interior ministries are a shield for right-minded citizens and a sword for the criminal world. Howev-

absolutely illegal unilateral economic sanctions. A permanent hybrid war is being waged against our peoples. Each of CIS countries has already experienced at least one colour revolution, which is essentially an attempt at a coup d’état,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted. The President stated that Belarus was no exception as it witnessed an attempt to stage a coup in 2020 and ‘take the country by storm’. “They counted on the blitzkrieg,

formation about the operational situation in the country; therefore, a lot depends on their work and competent actions. “The main thing is to get the information in advance. When we receive it from you, we begin to act,” the President explained. Aleksandr Lukashenko highlighted that international terrorism relied on the latest technologies and media resources to promote its activities. “An effective fight against this evil requires an integrated approach, including political, social, and economic measures, the development of international co-operation, and information exchange. We will be able to resist this only if we unite our efforts,” the Head of State urged.

The third task is the fight against cybercrime — one of the key and most challenging tasks for the CIS law enforcement agencies, which is relevant for all countries. According to the President, fraud centres including call centres operating on the territory of Ukraine have become more active after the start of the special military operation. The number of attempts to destabilise the work of government agencies through deliberately false reports of mining of important state facilities has increased. There have been registered more scam cases against ordinary citizens. “Especially this year. We are trying to turn the tide on cybercrimes, and based on the reports, I can see that we are succeeding,” the President said. Other CIS countries face similar problems. Therefore, the President believes that the experience on combating such crime will be of interest to everyone.

On celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Victory and common history

The celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Victory in the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War was listed as one of the significant topics on the agenda of the meeting of the CIS Interior Ministers Council. “Victory Day is the most memorable and solemn date in our common history,” Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised. “It symbolises the unity and courage of the Soviet peoples in the face of fascism — the most terrible threat to all mankind.” There is no disagreement about this statement in the CIS countries, as noted by the President.



Who knows what will happen to us and our states tomorrow. It may happen that you will have to turn to Russia for help. The recent events suggest that no one needs us. Therefore, we need to stick together. The situation may develop in such a way that our states will not be able to do without our unity. If we fail to understand this today, opponents will do away with us one after another. Should Russia collapse, we will all be drawn into this funnel,” the Belarusian leader emphasised.

On further integration of law enforcement agencies

“Our time-tested equal partnership, backed by a solid contractual framework, is based on the principles of openness, trust and mutual assistance,” said the

er, this is only true if we stand together. Proceeding from this, Belarus has always been and remains to be a consistent supporter of integration within the Commonwealth of Independent States, and in this case — further integration of law enforcement agencies.”

On major tasks for CIS law enforcement officers

The Head of State pointed out that the law enforcement agencies were facing serious tasks. Aleksandr Lukashenko outlined the most important of them in his opening remarks.

The first task is to ensure the rule of law, peace, order and stability in CIS countries. “We see perfectly well how attempts are being made to put our countries at loggerheads and split them from the inside. We are under the pressure of

like the fascists, and acted according to well-known playbooks. Back then, we did not allow the collapse of the country or the outbreak of a civil war. We took a number of radical steps to change the situation in Belarus,” the Belarusian leader underscored.

The second crucial task is to counter terrorism. This refers to both internal and external terrorism, which is gaining momentum especially in connection with the activities of the West — primarily the United States — in Ukraine. “The fight against terrorism is a paramount task for us. I always tell my minister [Interior Minister Ivan Kubrakov] that we cannot do without the police,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed. The President noted that everyone in the Interior Ministry — from a district police officer to the minister — has complete in-

The most important assessment

During a conversation with journalists, Belarus’ Interior Minister Ivan Kubrakov has noted that Belarus is a hospitable country, and the task that has been set by the President to the Interior Ministry is to ensure that any person who stays in Belarus should feel safe. The Interior Minister stressed that colleagues from CIS countries are interested in learning from the Belarusian experience. Ivan Kubrakov recalled the well-known statement that crime knows no borders, asserting the necessity for law enforcement officers to collaborate closely with counterparts from other countries, “We have certain practices, and other countries also have similar practices. When interior ministries consolidate their efforts in the fight against crime, there will be order everywhere, in all our countries. Any citizen from any country, whenever they arrive, will feel at home. And we will accomplish this task.”

Platform has proven its relevance

The well-being of all CIS citizens depends on the efforts of law enforcement agencies and their joint work in the CIS space. As highlighted by Russia’s Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev, “Every time we use this platform within the CIS in order to align our positions and address various issues, such as the fight against cybercrime. All parties have already achieved positive outcomes from their interactions. Another subject is the search for fugitive criminals. A specific example — in six months, the interior ministries of CIS member states jointly found 213 individuals. The key focus is on efficiency and progressive development, with concrete results stemming from the law enforcement efforts of all colleagues across CIS countries for the benefit of our citizens. We have assured Aleksandr Grigorievich [Lukashenko] that we will do our best to meet his expectations and to ensure that the instructions of the country leaders are carried out accurately, on time and with a high level of effectiveness.”

High-level interaction

During the meeting of the CIS Interior Ministers Council, Kazakh Interior Minister Yerzhan Sadenov expressed his gratitude to Aleksandr Lukashenko for the warm reception and hospitality on the Belarusian land, particularly noting that, despite the busy presidential schedule, the Head of State was able to attend the meeting in person. Yerzhan Sadenov stressed that all CIS member states are linked by close ties of friendship, “The interaction between the internal affairs bodies of our countries is at a high level. Drawing on the existing legal framework, we successfully search for criminals, execute mutual orders, and share best practices.”

In general, the CIS Interior Ministers Council is guided in its work by the decisions taken by the heads of states. The meetings traditionally review the progress of these implementations, evaluate the current state of interaction and determine prospects for the near future.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

‘There will be no country without rural development, as villages are the foundation’

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has held a meeting in Shklov on the development of agricultural production in Shklov and Orsha districts



Before the discussion, the Head of State recalled that a rural revival programme had for the first time been adopted in Belarus, “It was actually a village rescue programme, and its origins were rooted in the first programme of the future President entitled *Leading People Away from the Abyss*.”

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, a simple life-guided task was then in focus: to provide people with food and clothes. Instead of money, everyone had numerous coupons, but it was difficult to buy something using them. At that time, the state did not follow the lead of market liberals, did not cut the land into pieces and did not give it into private hands.

“We adopted that programme and created a serious basis for the development of agriculture,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted. “We took our people away from the abyss, provided them with food and clothes.”

It would seem that it was possible to stop on that, but the Head of State has always had a strategic vision. “There will be no country without rural development — neither ours, nor Russia, nor Ukraine,” the President stressed.

“The village is the foundation, and we should take another step towards the development of agricultural production now,” the Belarusian leader underlined.

At the meeting, Aleksandr Lukashenko has outlined a number of tasks for representatives of the agro-industrial complex.

The Head of State noted that all heads of agricultural enterprises of Orsha and Shklov districts had been invited to participate in the meeting, “It is necessary to discuss the issues in detail and make final decisions. There should be a return from what has been injected. There should be no mistakes, since much money was invested. Technological and performance discipline is the key point. Before asking for money, show that each invested rouble will give ten roubles in revenue.”

In this regard, the President outlined a number of priority areas in the development of the industry,

“Firstly, the integration of agricultural producers needs to be continued, and large companies with a full production cycle should be created in the areas they are in need. Secondly, enlargement should take place on the basis of strong farms with a clear and understandable specialisation — to set an example. Thirdly, transformations should be implemented in strict compliance with all technologies, a well-developed raw material base and consistent discipline.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko added that not only the chairmen of district executive committees, but also the governors will bear responsibility for the result, “Specific officials from executive committees, ministries, the Government, the President Administration, the Property Management Directorate and the Academy of Sciences should be assigned for each event, organisation, field, farm and other objects of the programme.”

PRESIDENT ANNOUNCED DESTRUCTION OF AIR TARGETS FLYING FROM UKRAINE OVER THE TERRITORY OF BELARUS AND RUSSIA

On Saturday, President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko continued his working trip to Mogilev Region, and the issues of effective development of agricultural production were the focus of his attention. In particular, at a meeting in the agro-town of Gorodishche, the problem of financial recovery of agricultural organisations was discussed on the example of the Kupalovskoye Holding.

However, prior to the study of the prescheduled topic of conversation, the Commander-in-Chief commented on an incident related to the violation of Belarus' airspace by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

“Yesterday [August 9th] at 06.10pm, the Air Force and Air Defence Forces of Belarus were put on high alert: we call it 'number one readiness'. Not for the first time, the Armed Forces of Ukraine broke all rules of conduct and violated the airspace of the Republic of Belarus: in the eastern direction, in the area of Kostyukovich District. The Air Defence Forces were put on combat-ready alert to intercept the targets. There were about a dozen of the latter. Planes and a helicopter took off. In addition, the MLRS complexes were put on combat-ready alert. At 07:04pm, the Air Defence Forces destroyed several targets over the territory of Belarus, at an altitude of 1.5km and a range of 6.5km. The rest went under the control of the Russian Federation (we have a unified air defence system). As informed by Russia's General Staff, the targets were destroyed near Yaroslavl,” the President said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko added that the search for the destroyed targets continues, “We suspect that those were attack drones, definitely flying from Ukraine. I do not understand why Ukraine needs this, so we should figure it out. We have clearly defined and informed them that we will respond to any provocation. Accordingly, the Defence Ministry and the General Staff of Belarus have been ordered to take appropriate measures in order to reliably ensure the security of our state.”

In connection with the incident, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted the high level of interaction with the Russian Air Defence Forces and the fact that all targets had been destroyed, both over the territory of Belarus and over the territory of Russia. “It is unpleasant that Ukrainians — and I have warned you of that many times — thus showing that they are not ready for any peace and continuing to escalate tensions. Two days ago, there was an attack in the Kursk direction, where they advanced several tens of kilometres. And here we have this provocation aimed at strikes against Russia,” the President added.

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the provocation would be widely discussed in the media, but — in order to avoid insinuations of various kinds — he decided to inform about it right now. “This shows once again that we need to work tirelessly on our land and to produce appropriate results so as to avoid the situation that is happening now in Ukraine,” the Head of State stressed.

DEFENCE MINISTER ON HOW UKRAINIAN AIR TARGETS WERE DESTROYED OVER BELARUS AND RUSSIA

Belarus' Defence Ministry regards the incident related to the violation of Belarus' airspace by the Armed Forces of Ukraine as a provocation that created a threat to the republic's security — as stated by the Defence Minister, Lieutenant General Viktor Khrenin.

“On August 9th, the air defence forces on duty noticed unidentified air objects flying from the territory of Ukraine in the direction of the Republic of Belarus,” Mr. Khrenin said. “In order to promptly prevent a possible violation of the state border in the airspace of the Republic of Belarus, designated forces and means were put on number one alert in a timely manner. After crossing the state border, the air targets were classified as unmanned aerial vehicles, and the command was given to destroy them. As a result of the actions of our combat crews, some of the air targets were destroyed. The others, which were outside the air defence zone, were taken under control by units of the radio engineering troops on duty to be further placed under the control of the Russian side.”

The Defence Minister disclosed the chronological order of events, “At 06.10pm, the flight of a group of targets from Ukraine towards the state border of the Republic of Belarus was registered by the on-duty forces of the radio engineering brigade. At 06.13pm,

the air defence forces on duty were put on number one alert to deal with that group of targets in case of their violation of the state border. At 06.29pm, the crews of Su-30SM aircraft and Mi-24 helicopters on combat duty took off. At 06.58pm, the air targets were detected by means of an anti-aircraft missile regiment of the duty forces, they were tracked and identified as unmanned aerial vehicles. At 07.04pm, the targets were destroyed. The aerial vehicles outside the airspace of the Republic of Belarus were transferred under the control of Russia's Air Defence Forces and means and were also destroyed.”

The Defence Ministry regards this fact as a provocation against the Republic of Belarus. “Taking into account the situation developing in Ukraine and Russia's Kursk Region, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces has instructed to strengthen the grouping of troops in the Gomel and Mozyr tactical areas in order to respond to any possible provocations. Military units of the special operations forces, ground and missile forces, including the Polonaise rocket systems and Iskander complexes, have been tasked with marching to designated areas. The forces and means of the anti-aircraft missile troops, radio engineering troops and aviation have also been enhanced. We are closely monitoring the situation and are ready to respond to any changes,” Mr. Khrenin stressed.

BELARUS HAS STRONGLY PROTESTED TO UKRAINE IN CONNECTION WITH THE VIOLATION OF THE BORDER BY DRONES, SB.BY REPORTS WITH REFERENCE TO THE BELARUSIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY'S PRESS SERVICE

“Charge d'Affaires of Ukraine in Belarus Olga Timush was summoned to the Foreign Ministry. A strong protest was expressed to the Ukrainian diplomat, and a corresponding note was handed over in connection with the violation of the border of the Republic of Belarus by a group of unmanned aerial vehicles launched from the territory of Ukraine,” the Foreign Ministry said. The Belarusian side demanded to take comprehensive measures to exclude similar incidents in the future, which could lead to further escalation of the situation in the region. Ms. Tumash was warned that in case of a repeat of such provocations, the Belarusian side reserves the right to take retaliatory steps to protect its territory. It was particularly pointed out that if the diplomatic mission of Ukraine in Belarus cannot influence the prevention of such provocations, the Belarusian side will raise the question of the expediency of its continued presence in Minsk.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

International Operation *Bagration*

It is only together and by joint efforts that children of different nations who became the Red Army fighters were able to defeat Nazism

The Byelorussian offensive Operation *Bagration*, the 80th anniversary of which we are celebrating this year, was a truly colossal historical event. It stretched for more than two months, covered vast territories of several countries and had various dimensions. One of them is the international nature of the operation, which will be discussed in this article.

By Vadim Gigin,
deputy of the House of Representatives,
Candidate of Historical Sciences

The representatives of the Stavka (General Headquarters) of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief — Marshals Aleksandr Vasilevsky and Georgy Zhukov, and Commander of the 2nd Byelorussian Front Georgy Zakharov — were Russians. The 1st Byelorussian Front was led by Konstantin Rokossovsky — a Pole with Byelorussian roots. Ivan (Hovhannes) Bagramyan, who headed the 1st Baltic Front, was an Armenian. By the way, Armenians are rightfully proud of the fact that during the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War, they gave four marshals to the Soviet Union. In addition to Bagramyan, these are Chief Marshal of Armoured Forces Hamazasp Babadzhanian, Air Marshal Sergei Khudyakov (Armenak Khanferiants), Marshal of Engineer Troops Sergei Aganov. Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Union Ivan Isakov (Hovhannes Ter-Isahakyan) was also an Armenian.

Trampling over the dead

The 3rd Byelorussian Front was commanded by Ukrainian Ivan Chernyakhovsky. A very revealing story related to the memory of this outstanding commander, who was prevented from becoming the youngest marshal of the Soviet Union by death, happened in present-day Ukraine. All post-war generations of Ukrainians were proud of the fact that such a brilliant military leader was born in the village of Oksanino in Uman District, Kiev province in 1907. Even after gaining independence and surviving two Maidans [mass anti-government uprising], they were afraid to disturb the general's memory. On February 22nd, 2013, his name was given to the National Defence University in Kiev. In June 2023, Vladimir Zelensky 'fixed' everything: Ukraine does not have Ivan Chernyakhovsky National Defence University any more. The Kiev regime authorities also began to rename the streets named after the general.

Even earlier, Lithuanian politicians trampled on their own history. It was the troops of the 3rd Byelorussian Front that liberated Vilnius from German Nazi invaders in 1944. After the tragic death, Chernyakhovsky was buried in the centre of the Lithuanian capital, where a monument was erected to him. The nationalists who came to power did not like this, and the remains of the general were disinterred and reburied in Moscow in 1992. The monument in Vilnius was demolished.

Grateful descendants

In contrast, the Ossetian people cherish the memory of their national hero — Cavalry General Issa Pliyev. A stunningly beautiful equestrian monument to commemorate the twice Hero of the Soviet Union stands in the centre of Vladikavkaz, on the square named in his honour. Issa Pliyev commanded a cavalry-mechanised group (CMG) during Operation *Bagration*. As part of the 1st Byelorussian Front, Pliyev's CMG liberated Slutsk, Stolbtsy and Slonim.

In order to imagine how multinational the Red Army units that liberated Byelorussia were, it is enough to look at the street names of our towns and cities. Najafgulu Rafiyev Street in Minsk is named after an Azerbaijani — a fearless tank platoon commander. In total, out of 130 Azerbaijani soldiers awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title, 14 received it for the liberation of Byelorussia. The memory of them is cherished in modern Azerbaijan. Tank hero Rafiyev is buried in the Baku necropolis Fakhri Khiyaban, where the most respected Azerbaijanis rest.

Call sign Kazbek

Ivan Pavlov's film *Time to Return* produced by Belarusfilm National Film Studio has been released recently. It is based on real facts from the biography of Mamadali Topvaldiyev. A native of the kishlak [village in Central

Asia] of Pandiga in Rishtan District of Ferghana Region, Uzbekistan, he was drafted into the Red Army. In 1941, he was surrounded on the Byelorussian territory but managed to reach the partisans. He quickly became a legend. As part of the 5th detachment of the *Chekist* partisan brigade, he became one of the best bombers during the rail war behind enemy lines. The Nazis put a reward of 50,000 Reichsmarks on his head — a huge amount. Mamadali Topvaldiyev was awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title. A total of 32 Uzbek natives received the Hero Star for their bravery in the liberation of Byelorussia.

Eighty-four Kazakhstans also became Heroes of the Soviet Union for their fights for the freedom of our country. A street in Volkovysk is named after one of them — Kazbek Nurzhanov. This reconnaissance man was mortally wounded in the battles for the city. Not only is the street in Volkovysk named after the Kazakh hero, athletics competitions among schoolchildren, which have been held since 1978, bear his name.

National units

Entire national units and formations distinguished themselves during Operation *Bagration*. The 1st Polish Army under the command of Lieutenant General Zygmunt Berling started its combat path on the Byelorussian land. On July 20th, 1944, as part of the 1st Byelorussian Front troops, the army crossed the Western Bug during the Lublin-Brest offensive and entered the territory of Poland. At that time, it numbered 90,000 people in its ranks and included four infantry, one anti-aircraft artillery division, one armoured, one cavalry, five artillery brigades, and two aviation regiments. On July 26th, the 1st Polish Tank Corps was formed.

As part of the 1st Baltic Front, the 16th Lithuanian Infantry Division became one of the most renowned. At that time, it was commanded by Major General Vladas Karvelis. The division had already distinguished itself in battles even before the start of the strategic offensive, in particular during the liberation of Gorodok. For that battle, machine gunner Danutė Stanelienė received her first Order of Glory. Later, she became a Full Cavalier of that legendary soldier's order, which was equivalent to the Hero of the Soviet Union title. In October 1944, the 16th Lithuanian Rifle Division received the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, and in 1945, it was named in honour of Klaipėda for the battles during the liberation of this city.

Needless to say, in present-day Lithuania they do not want to recall their true heroes — those Lithuanians who did not serve the Nazis but drove them away from their native land...

'Our Cossacks are going through Berlin'

The fighting would not be complete without Cossacks! During the Great Patriotic War, the Red Army had a large number of Cossacks in its ranks. The Kuban people especially distinguished themselves during the liberation of Byelorussia. The 9th Guards Kuban Cossack Cavalry Division fought as part of the CMG. During Operation *Bagration*, the cavalymen advanced at a high pace and participated in the liberation of many Byelorussian cities, having made a special contribution to the defeat of enemy groupings in Baranovichi and Brest. For their feat, the division was awarded the honorary name *Baranovichi*, and two more orders appeared on its banner — the Red Banner and Kutuzov 1st degree.

Pliyev's group also included another Kuban division — the 10th Guards Cossack Cavalry. On June 25th, it was involved in the breakthrough, and the Kuban Cossacks valiantly walked 100 kilometres in five days. The division received the honorary name *Slutsk* for the liberation of this Byelorussian town, while three of its regiments (36th, 40th, 42nd Guards) became *Baranovichi*. The division was also awarded two orders — Kutuzov 1st degree and the Red Banner.

Therefore, during the war, a whole Cossack army emerged that included two Cossack divisions and three regiments with Byelorussian names!

It is highly important to constantly return to the lessons of the Great Patriotic War. One of them states: it is only together and by joint efforts that children of different nations who became the Red Army fighters were able to defeat Nazism — the most hideous evil. We, Belarusians, will always remember this.



HISTORY

One hundred and ten years ago, fighting broke out that had global significance, shaping the world order and geopolitical landscape for decades ahead. That terrible military disaster engulfed 38 states, home to over 1.5 billion people. The total number of those mobilised reached 73.5 million. The battles that fought between July 28th, 1914 and November 11th, 1918 claimed 10 million lives — a figure equivalent to the total casualties from all European wars over a thousand years — and left 20 million wounded.

Patriotism examples

Why it is important to remember the events of the First World War

By Vyacheslav Danilovich, deputy of the House of Representatives, Doctor of Historical Sciences

Heroism and courage

Since 1915, the Western Front had been passing through the territory of Byelorussia. Nearly 900,000 residents of Byelorussian provinces were drafted into the army, of which 70,000 gave their lives in battle. Sixty thousand Byelorussian civilians perished due to the wartime hardships. A huge tragedy for the population was the displacement of at least 1.5 million residents to the rear. Our losses are comparable to those of Belgium, which had a similar population size to that of Byelorussian provinces. Any history book on the First World War will highlight Belgium as one of its primary victims. That war is an integral part of our history, and its memory deserves to be honoured appropriately.

Numerous acts of heroism and courage are associated with the battles of that time. Over 1 million soldiers of the Russian army, including thousands of Byelorussians, were awarded St George's Crosses. Many of those individuals later earned the highest Soviet awards during the Civil War and the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War.

Major General Aleksandr Sobolev, a native of Vitebsk Region, a St George cavalier and hero of the Brusilov offensive, joined the Red Army voluntarily. In 1919, he received the Order of the Red Banner. After being captured, he refused to go over to the White Guards' side and was shot by them. Major General and St George cavalier Anton Stankevich, a native of Grodno Region, who joined the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, suffered the same fate. As he was captured, he was offered to defect to the White Guards, but the courageous military man refused the proposal, as well as a 'comfortable' diplomatic position abroad. He ascended the scaffold wearing the uniform of an ordinary Red Army soldier and put a noose around his neck himself. Anton Stankevich was posthumously awarded the Order of the Red Banner and is the only of the former generals buried at the Kremlin Wall. Aleksei Tereshkov, a native of Gomel Region, had three St George's Crosses and three St George's medals. In 1945, he, holding the rank of lieutenant general, became a Hero of the Soviet Union. Minay Shmyryov, the renowned partisan brigade commander and Hero of the Soviet Union, was awarded four Orders of Lenin and the Order of the Red Star, and had three St George's Crosses. Marshal of the

Soviet Union Konstantin Rokossovsky also received St George's Cross and three St George's medals during his service in the Kargopol Dragoon Regiment.

During the Great Patriotic War, wearing St George's awards alongside Soviet orders and medals was tacitly allowed. St George's Cross got a second life in the Order of Glory — one of the most honourable military awards in the Red Army. Just like the St George's Cross, the Order of Glory could only be earned through acts of bravery and loyalty to the military duty on the battlefield.



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"There is no country or people that have felt completely safe over the past decades. Military force has once again become the main tool for resolving world issues — as if there were no millions of human losses and horrors of the First and Second World Wars. Now we are literally covered with an information wave of the so-called premonition of the third world war, which only the lazy one did not mention. And there are grounds for concern."

At a meeting with the leadership of the national security state bodies, on February 20th, 2024

Anglo-Saxons' interests

The Entente allies, led by Great Britain, used the military and economic potential of the Russian Empire to avoid the defeat of their forces in Europe. At the same time, they supported the revolutionary movement in the Russian Empire, and later participated in the military intervention against the Soviet republics. This strategy aligned with the overarching policy of the Anglo-Saxons to weaken their main competitors on the global stage as much as possible.

Impregnable fortress

Historical justice is currently being restored. Belarus has already made significant strides in researching and perpetuating the First World War events. The Institute of History of Belarus' National Academy of Sciences in liaison with colleagues from universities, local authorities and historians have held a number of scientific conferences, prepared and published collections and monographs as part of the implementation of the state research

programme. President Aleksandr Lukashenko has consistently set the task for Belarusian historical studies to recreate an objective picture of the past.

Local lore enthusiasts in Smorgon and Vileika regions led by Boris Tsitovich created a First World War museum complex in the village of Zabrodye, Vileika District, with the highest blessing of Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus Filaret. Boris Tsitovich's dedicated efforts to preserve historical memory earned him the *Spiritual Revival Award* of the President of the Republic of Belarus.

Thanks to the government support, a memorial was unveiled in 2011 at the Minsk Fraternal Military Cemetery honouring soldiers who died during the First World War. With the support of the Union State, a memorial complex commemorating the First World War heroes and victims was solemnly opened in Smorgon in 2014. The significance of the 810-day defence of Smorgon — from September 15th, 1915 to December 5th, 1917 — is on a par with major battles of the First World War, such as the Battles of the Marne, the Somme, Verdun, the Gorlice breakthrough and the Brusilov offensive.



General view of Smorgon from the observation post, 1916



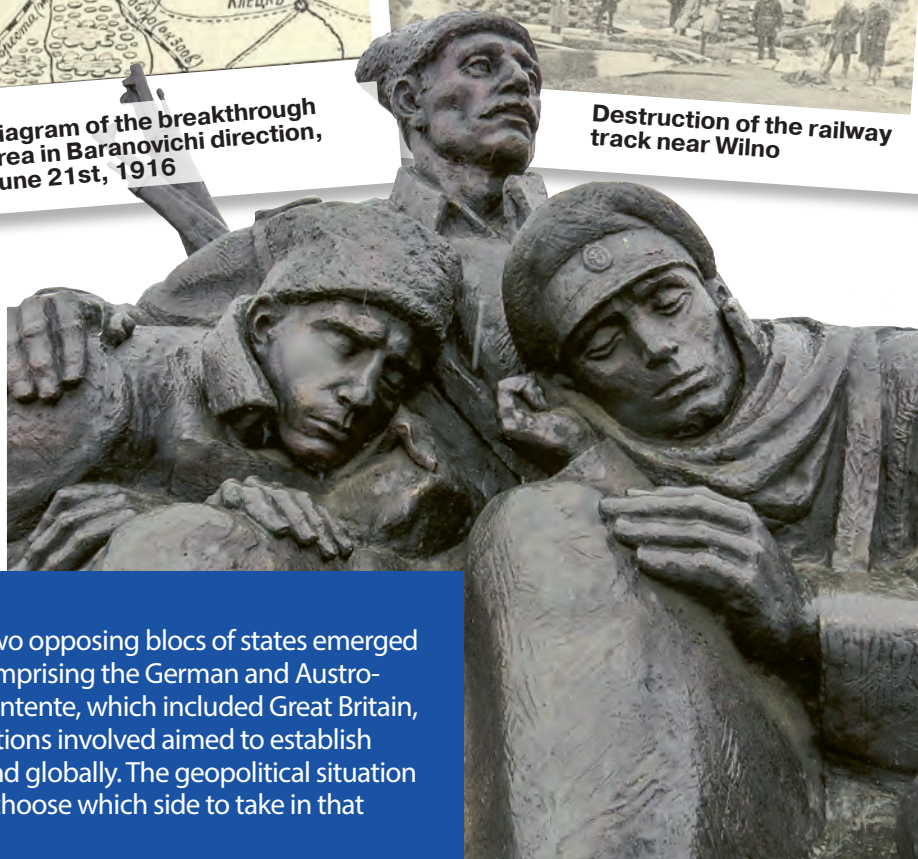
Raid by enemy planes dropping about 60 bombs on the Minsk – Baranovichi railway



Diagram of the breakthrough area in Baranovichi direction, June 21st, 1916



Destruction of the railway track near Wilno



Preservation of historical memory

What are the key lessons of the First World War for us, Belarusians? First and foremost, we must focus on preventing similar tragedies in the future, preserving peace in our homeland, and being ready to defend the sovereignty of our beloved Belarus with weapons in our hands, should it be necessary. Last but not least, we must not blindly trust the Anglo-Saxon countries and their allies, as their primary concern always lies in their own mercantile interests, for which they are ready to disregard treaties and allied relations.

Today we should remember that the Russian Empire is one of the historical forms of Belarusian statehood. The authorities of that time viewed Belarusians as part of the triune state-forming peoples of the empire — Belarusians, Great Russians and Little Russians. It was the Russian Empire that became the cradle of the Belarusian nation. Therefore, preserving the historical memory of the tragic and heroic events of the First World War is essential for the patriotic education of our younger generation.

IMPORTANT NOTE

At the dawn of the 20th century, two opposing blocs of states emerged in Europe — the Triple Alliance, comprising the German and Austro-Hungarian Empires, Italy, and the Entente, which included Great Britain, France, the Russian Empire. The nations involved aimed to establish their dominance both in Europe and globally. The geopolitical situation of other countries forced them to choose which side to take in that confrontation.

Unification line

The two countries have come closer to creating a single energy market, which gives them the opportunity to ensure the formation of a common economic base for the Union State's development. A single energy market lays the foundations for a common market of goods and services without price, tariff and other imbalances, exceptions or distortions.

Why developing common approaches in the energy sector is crucial for Belarus and Russia

By Aleksei Avdonin,
analyst at Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research

Equal conditions

In the context of increased external competition from Western corporations, it is important to create internal operation modes for national economies without any price distortions. It is this approach that lays the groundwork for accelerated economic growth. In other words — the cheaper electricity, the lower the price of final products including petrochemicals, mechanical engineering, electronics, construction industry, etc. As a result, the two countries will become more attractive to customers than their competitors in terms of cost hence will be able to expand their presence in the market.

FOR REFERENCE



The average tariff for electric energy in the Russian Federation for population is P4.79 per 1 kWh, which equals Br0.1729 per 1 kWh. The cost of electric energy in the Republic of Belarus is Br0.2537 per 1 kWh, according to data for last February.

The single-rate tariff in the Republic of Belarus for 'industrial and equivalent consumers with the connected capacity of up to 750 kVA' is Br0.33734 per 1 kWh, VAT excluded. The tariff is valid from 01.01.2024.



The tariff rate for electric energy (Russian roubles/MWh, VAT excluded) for subjects of the wholesale market of electric energy and capacity in Moscow is P869.83, which equals Br0.291247 per 1 kWh.

FOR REFERENCE

By its Resolution No. 988 dated July 20th, 2024, the Russian Government submitted to the President of Russia a proposal to sign an agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus on the formation of a single energy market of the Union State.

On July 29th, 2024, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed Decree No. 232-pp *On Signing the Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus on the Formation of a Unified Energy Market of the Union State*.

In Belarus, the draft of this agreement was approved last year by Presidential Decree No. 376 dated November 27th, 2023 *On the Draft International Agreement*.

Economy plays a pivotal role

Within the framework of the Union State and the single energy market, the two countries will develop industry, agriculture and science in comfortable conditions, as well as will be able to regulate economic processes according to uniform principles.

Tariffs will be uniform for both external and internal supplies. In addition, we will have the opportunity to further strengthen Belarusian and Russian roubles, and switch to settlements in national currencies instead of dollars and euros.

In the unified market, when a supplier engages with a Belarusian producer, they can facilitate the overflow of electricity to Russia. The procedure for electricity purchase and sale is simplified. Consequently, Russian consumers, who signed contracts with Russian electricity producers, will be able to do this with Belarusian companies in the same manner.

Aleksei Kushnarenko, Director General of Beltopgaz State Production Association, clarified that 'the convergence of economic activity conditions, open and transparent approaches to tariff setting will contribute to enhanced efficiency of energy supply organisations, bolster their production and technological potential, and enable the implementation of new joint projects, including in the modernisation of electric grid infrastructure'.

Stages of a long journey

Belarus' Energy Minister Viktor Karankevich has stated that the Belarusian-Russian decision is aimed at creating an equal competitive environment that will ensure a variety of price offers for consumers. Moreover, there will be incentives to upgrade and develop generating capacities and attract additional investments to the industry. The single energy market of Belarus and Russia is ready for the first stage of operation, with electricity trade enabled between legal entities. The Belarusian side will be represented by Belenergo State Production Association. The second stage envisages deeper integration with an expanded membership and the organisation of a unified technological management process.

In the future, the Union State's single energy market will be synchronised with the operation of the common market within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

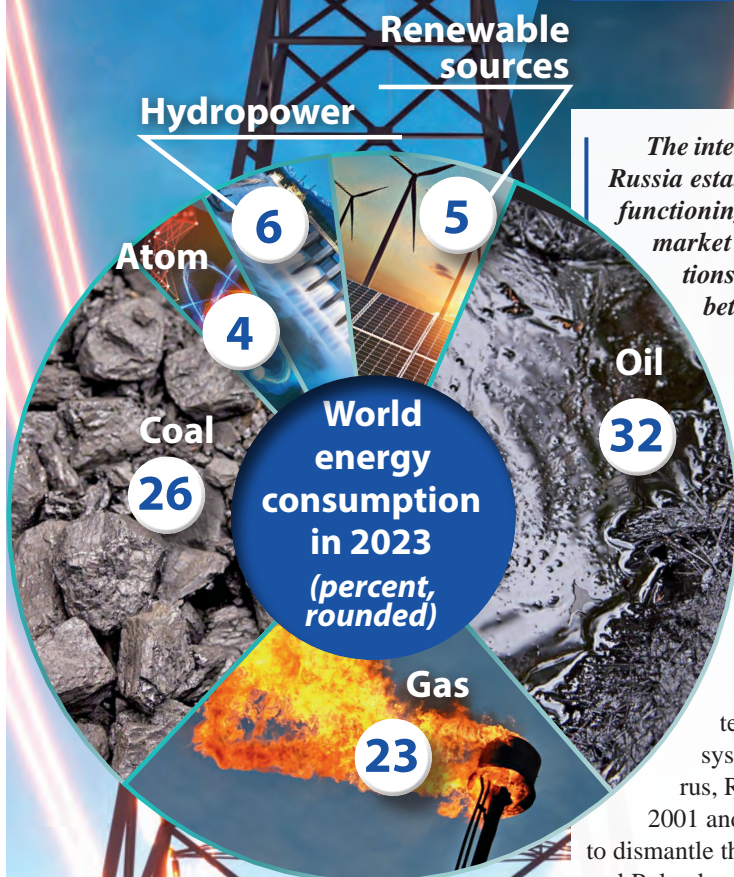
Thus, it can be safely stated that the creation of a unified energy market within the Union State will strengthen the economic sovereignty and energy independence of our countries, as well as will protect consumers in Belarus and Russia from negative trends, primarily from global price increases.

The international agreement between Belarus and Russia establishes the legal basis for the formation, functioning and development of the unified energy market of the Union State, and regulates relationship on the purchase and sale of electricity between the market participants.

In addition, the unified energy market will give Belarus additional opportunities to export electricity to Russia. After all, our Western neighbours have abandoned relatively cheap Belarusian electricity in favour of pseudo-European values and illusory advantages of European integration.

Thus, last July, electric power transmission system operators Litgrid (Lithuania), AST (Latvia) and Elering (Estonia) notified Russia and Belarus of the non-extension of the agreement on parallel energy system operation within BRELL ring — Belarus, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, signed in 2001 and valid until February 2025. They also plan to dismantle the remaining power lines. The Baltic States and Poland are synchronising their power grids. For this purpose, the EU has allocated about €1.2 billion, which should cover about 75 percent of the costs. The Baltic States stopped importing Russian and Belarusian electricity to provide the needs of the border regions in 2022.

By such actions, the European Union forcibly drives enterprises and the population of the Baltic States into debt and plunges them into a state of austerity, which will definitely restrain the national development of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.



FOR REFERENCE



For H2 2023, tariffs for electric energy for population were as follows: in Lithuania — €0.2313 per 1 kWh; in Latvia — €0.304 per 1 kWh; in Estonia — €0.2192 per 1 kWh. The average cost of electric energy in the European Union was €0.2850 per 1 kWh; in the Eurozone — €0.3054 per 1 kWh.

Folk wisdom has it: It is easy to borrow, but it is hard to pay back. Realising this, Aleksandr Lukashenko has repeatedly stated that 'we must live within our means'. Therefore, one of the fundamental principles behind the management of the Belarusian state is the avoidance of burdensome debts. As a result, Belarus' national debt, amounting to about 24 percent of GDP, is now one of the lowest in the world. However, not everyone on the planet lives like this. The United States and many Western countries are used to constantly borrowing and spending a lot more than they earn. All this leads to a large-scale debt crisis fraught with global cataclysms and upheavals.

By Valery Bainev, Doctor of Economics

On the verge of a global scam

The US national debt has recently set another record, topping a staggering \$35 trillion. According to the forecast of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the American national debt will exceed \$50 trillion by 2034. Simple logic suggests that no one in the United States is seriously considering living within their means. Quite the opposite, local businessmen seem to be planning to dig even deeper into the pockets of their creditors. However, as this situation cannot persist indefinitely, it signals one potential outcome — the overseas tricksters may have conceived some kind of grandiose scheme designed

Analysing global financial meltdowns

Why has the global stock market got into a turbulence zone and will the United States plunge the planet into a financial abyss?

What is it about? Initially, the West became affluent by siphoning resources from its colonies, where it acquired natural resources almost for nothing, as well as by exporting millions of slaves to the metropolises — an essential source of wealth for today's global economic leaders. The famous French-Belgian scientist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, wrote about this: *The West built itself from the material of colonies.*

Secondly, despite the collapse of the colonial system after the Second World War, the United States and its allies have continued their global parasitism. By vigorously printing dollars and their European

the total global debt reached an exorbitant amount of \$307 trillion in September 2023. Notably, developed countries account for two-thirds of this debt — \$206 trillion.

As for the actual global public debt, it had increased to \$101 trillion by the end of last year, compared to \$22 trillion in 2000. As of September 2023, the public debt burden in the United States stood at 117.6 percent of GDP, while in the Eurozone it was 92.6 percent.

It is crucial to note that today interest payments on the

WHEN BUBBLES BURST
The recent global stock market meltdown prompted experts to refer to it as 'Black Monday'. The most common explanation for this event is the release of an unfavourable forecast for the development of the US economy. Among the accompanying factors, analysts point to the onset of deflation of another 'financial bubble', inflated by excessive investments from American IT companies in artificial intelligence development. Some experts have even announced a 'bloody August', suggesting that fundamental contradictions have accumulated globally, which can no longer be resolved exclusively within the framework of a conventional financial and economic crisis. It has now become evident to many that the US economy, which has been thriving on the unrestrained printing of dollars, is largely a massive artificially inflated 'financial bubble'. Therefore, to prevent its sudden deflation from undermining the Union State's economy, Belarus and Russia are pursuing a policy of de-dollarisation.

debt

Total public debt (% of GDP — according to IMF)

257		Japan*
179		Greece*
162		Singapore**
137		Italy**
117		USA**
112		Portugal*
111		France*
111		Spain*
107		Canada**
104		Belgium*
101		United Kingdom**
49		Poland*
49		Armenia*
44		Czech Republic*
43		Latvia**
24		Belarus***

* 2022 ** 2023 *** June 2024

to radically reduce or even completely write off the 'star-spangled' debt.

Apparently, the monetary reform in the United States associated with the introduction of the digital dollar is conceived as part of this 'global scam'. The digital dollar is expected not only to reset the colossal national debt of the United States but also to fulfil another cherished dream of American moneybags. According to the plot, the digital dollar will allow them to outmanoeuvre current holders of substantial dollar savings around the world, leaving them with worthless green candy wrappers in their possession.

True sources of the West's welfare

Some of us still naively believe that the relatively high standard of living in a handful of Western countries is solely due to the extraordinary talents and hard work of their local inhabitants. This is far from the truth, though. The primary source of their past and present prosperity is living at the expense of other countries and peoples, or, to put it bluntly, banal parasitism.

surrogates — euros — they reap tangible benefits from all over the world in exchange for pieces of paper. For the countries that oppose this state of affairs, they have a formidable weapon in the form of the US and NATO military machine. Long-suffering Libya and Iraq, which at one time dared to refuse to trade oil for dollars, felt the full crushing power of Western beliefs.

Thirdly, the United States and its European satellites have grown accustomed to living shamelessly in debt at the expense of the rest of the world. To this end, they issue and sell government securities, promising to pay interest on them and eventually repay their value. However, all indications are that the United States and its European accomplices have no intention of fulfilling their obligations in full.

Expenses and revenue

The global 'debt fever' that has struck the collective West is evidenced by data on the rapidly growing total global debt — both private and public. According to the Institute of International Finance (IIF),

US national debt alone comprise over 30 percent of total budget revenues. Thus, in 2024, expenses related to managing the US national debt are projected to reach a whopping \$1.15 trillion.

Along with that, these expenses are growing at a much faster rate than budget revenues year-on-year. This signals that the global hegemon is inexorably approaching a point where it will be unable to pay interest on its national debt. In other words, the United States is steadily steering towards default.

The whole world is waiting with bated breath for the potentially catastrophic outcome of this situation. After all, the official refusal of the United States to pay its debts would trigger a chain reaction of devastating events in the global economy, compared to which the Great Depression of the last century would seem an innocent disturbance.

War will write off everything

The question is — will the United States along with their European accom-

plices face default? In order to postpone this outcome, Western adventurers wield both traditional and innovative tools.

The US and European central banks may continue to print an increasing number of worthless banknotes, attempting to temporarily plug holes in the deficit budgets of Western countries. Yet, this scheme will finally undermine the already fragile global confidence in them.

Among the innovative approaches is the digitalisation of the dollar and the euro, hence the virtualisation of the West's astronomical debts. Nevertheless, a number of purely technical issues remain unresolved on this path.

Alas, global tricksters possess another strong trump card hidden up their sleeve — the world war. They expect that the war, as is known, will write off everything, including debts. This is why the collective West has been racing around the planet in recent years with a burning torch in its hands. The United States and its European accomplices need a big war in order to continue their global parasitism.



UK on fire. Unrest spreading

The fatal stabbing of three young girls at a dance class in the seaside town of Southport, in the north of England, has been followed by the worst unrest the United Kingdom has seen in more than a decade

Despite the initially small number of participants and the condemnation of violence by all political parties, the geography of clashes expanded dramatically. It is reported about two burned hotels and a looted enterprise for the production of military drones (!), though the official reports do not say anything about the number of beaten police officers, looted houses where migrants live, as well as the number of broken storefronts and cars, and even more so about the number of insults shouted by protesters at Muslims and migrants, but it is clear from the footage distributed by the media that their number is significant.

The protests were triggered by false rumours initially spread on social media saying the attacker was a Muslim asylum

seeker. The suspect was later identified as 17-year-old Axel Rudakubana, born in Wales. UK media reported that his parents are from Rwanda and his family professes Christianity, but who cares anymore?!

Riots have since broken out across England, from Plymouth on the south coast to Sunderland in the North East. There have also been riots in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Crowds attacked mosques and accommodation housing asylum seekers, cars and buildings, including a library, were set on fire, and shops looted. Violence in south Belfast, where anti-immigration and anti-racism protesters faced off in tense scenes outside the city hall, involved 'racist elements', a judge has said. Police are investigating an assault on a man whose head was report-

edly stamped on as a racially motivated hate crime.

Now the country is waiting for a decisive restoration of order from Keir Starmer, who headed the Royal Prosecutor's Office before starting his political career and was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath by Queen Elizabeth II for his success in this post. The country's PM has already stated that what is happening on the streets of the country is not legitimate protests, but 'far-right thuggery', for which there can be no justification.

To date, the number of people arrested in the UK has exceeded 400, about a quarter of them have been charged, and three men have been sentenced to various terms of imprisonment: from twenty months to three years.

Dangerous chemical is widespread in US food

A chemical used in rocket fuel and fireworks is also found in an array of food products, particularly those popular with babies and children, according to findings released by Consumer Reports

The tests by the advocacy group come decades after the chemical, called perchlorate, was first identified as a contaminant in food and water. The Environmental Working Group in 2003 found perchlorate in nearly 20 percent of supermarket lettuce tested.

Linked to potential brain damage in foetuses and new-borns and thyroid troubles in adults, perchlorate was detected in 'measurable' levels of 67 percent of 196 samples of 63 grocery and 10 fast-food products, the most recent tests by *Consumer Reports* found. The levels detected ranged from just over two parts per billion (ppb) to 79 ppb.

Foods often consumed by children had the highest levels of perchlorate, averaging 19.4 ppb, while fresh fruit and vegetables as well as fast food also contained elevated amounts. In reviewing packaging types, foods in plastic containers had the highest levels, averaging nearly 55 ppb, followed by foods in plastic wrap and paperboard.

"We all eat more than a few servings of food per day, and children — due to their lower body weight — may be particularly at risk," *Consumer Reports* stated in its findings. "For a child between one and two years old, a serving of the boxed mac and cheese we tested would hit nearly 50 percent of the EFSA limit."



Argentina's gold is missing

Argentina is facing a problem: 62 tonnes of gold worth \$4.5bn — the country's entire gold reserve — have gone missing

Argentina's reserves, held by its Central Bank, include almost two million troy ounces of gold, valued at about \$4.5bn. But lately, there is a question that is on everybody's lips: where is it? Was it taken out of the country? Did some of it remain within Argentina, while the rest was transferred abroad? The official information only offers partial answers.

The news about the transfer of the gold was not officially announced by the government or the Central Bank. Rather, the information came from the bank workers' union, known as *La Bancaria*.

The government reluctantly disclosed that Argentina's gold was loaded onto British Airways charters and sent to London.

The erratic leader, Javier Milei, had worked at the British bank HSBC before entering politics.

Many citizens were angered not so much by the fact of the secret export of money abroad, as by the export to the UK, which has been considered an enemy since 1982. The reason for this is the Falkland Islands, the war for which claimed the lives of 649 people. The ownership of the archipelago is still disputed by both countries, although Milei has repeatedly promised to lift the occupation of the islands and return them to Argentina, which earned him respect during the election campaign. Now, according to ordinary citizens, he has betrayed his country and deserves to be impeached.

VR tours in Japan show Hiroshima A-bomb reality

A project has been created in Japan, enabling people — with the help of VR — 'survive' the bombing of the Japanese city of Hiroshima, RIA Novosti reports

In 2021, it all started with a pilot project developed by Tabimachi Gate Hiroshima, and a year ago it was presented in a video sequence lasting several minutes at an exhibition as part of the G7 leaders' summit, before being transformed into an 80-minute VR tour of key places of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park — available to everyone both in Japanese and English.

The images begin with the city before the bomb was dropped, and, after showing its immediate impact, present glimpses through the decades leading to the city's

current state. The VR tour uses images created based on the lived experiences of Eizo Nomura, who was the only survivor of the bombing inside a building, as well as photographs and material that documented the blast. The images have been updated since the tour's launch based on feedback from survivors, some of whom said the reality was even worse than that portrayed. They now show the burned-out remnants of the city under a blood-red sky and specks of ash, as well as survivors with their blast injuries and the dead.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

War over resources

The fight for minerals is escalating around the world

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), over the last 60 years, at least 40 percent of all internal armed conflicts have been linked to the exploitation of natural resources. Over the past two decades alone, blood has been shed 18 times in different parts of the world for this reason. In the backdrop of the intensified conflict between the declining West and the rising star of the East, increasingly more regions of the world are engulfed in flames because of the riches deep in the bowels of the earth.



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“The carpet bombing of Dresden and atomic bombing of Japan were echoed in Korea, Vietnam, Angola, Nicaragua, Panama, Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, and Syria. All these are new geopolitical goals due to the redistribution of the markets for oil, gas, rare metals and other minerals. People were killed for those! Western multinational businesses, mainly Anglo-Saxons, have significantly enriched themselves in recent years. This is true. But tell me — have Washington and London become stronger in terms of political reputation and authority in the international arena over the years? No. On the contrary, we see how the global image of once really influential powers is collapsing.”

From a speech at the meeting of the 7th Belarusian People’s Congress, on April 24th, 2024

Looking into the earth’s depths

The largest conflict of our time — the confrontation between the coalition of US-led states and Russia on the territory of Ukraine — has a number of reasons, and not all of them lie in the field of geopolitics.

According to pre-war studies, the bowels of Ukraine contain up to five percent of the earth’s mineral resources. The *Mining-World* business platform reports that the country possesses significant proven and prospective reserves of non-ferrous and rare earth metals, including unique deposits of beryllium, zirconium, tantalum, as well as a complex of phosphorous rare earth and rare metal ores.

Experts pay special attention to the fact that Ukraine has the largest lithium reserves in Europe, as well as considerable amounts of cobalt, nickel and manganese ores.

It is not surprising that the resources left after the collapse of the USSR in the unreliable hands of Ukraine’s unconscien-

tious leadership immediately attracted the attention of the West, and especially the EU countries.

Washington, which has embraced the worst features of European civilisation, has also set its eyes on Ukraine, including because of its natural resources. In this regard, the number one issue for the United States is overcoming critical dependence on supplies from China.

The 2014 coup d’état in Ukraine initially seemed like a successful American project in terms of access to mineral resources. However, the armed conflict in Donbass followed by the beginning of the special military operation and referendums in Kherson and Zaporozhye have seriously devalued the US investments.

Last year, the Ukrainian version of the *Forbes* ranking publication reported that the total value of all Ukrainian underground riches made up about \$14 trillion. The ‘wealthiest’ areas on the map that account for over 50 percent of valuable minerals have already slipped out of the Kiev regime’s control, and the remaining ones have more modest reserves — for example, those in Kiev area are estimated at \$21 billion.

Living in hell

The raider seizure of Ukraine is nothing compared to what the West has done and continues to do in Africa.

The most striking case is perhaps the fate of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Even by undemanding African standards, this country is catastrophically unhappy.

However, outside the trap of Western colonisers, it could become one of the economic leaders of the continent, since the territory of the DRC is rich in deposits of minerals crucial for modern civilisation — primarily columbite-tantalite (coltan), which

is the most important element in the production of modern electronics.

In addition, the DRC supplies 70 percent of the world’s cobalt, while being Africa’s first and the world’s third-largest exporter of copper, as well as boasting significant reserves of gold, diamonds, tin and tungsten.

The Congolese do not receive even a thousandth of the income from the riches extracted from their land. The fact is that many resource rich territories have been captured by forces hostile to Kinshasa, which are covertly directed by global capital.

A particularly fierce battle is being waged for the coltan deposits in the east of the country. Vast territories of several provinces in the DRC have turned into a post-apocalypse zone, where dozens of barbaric gangs fight amidst the jungles and swamps for the interests of neighbouring states that dance to the tune of Western bigwigs.

The proceeds from the sale of the valuable mineral are used to purchase weapons so that field commanders could continue the endless war with the DRC government forces and their allies. While the militants’ leaders, their sponsors and Western companies are quite satisfied with this situation, the Congolese live like in hell and do not

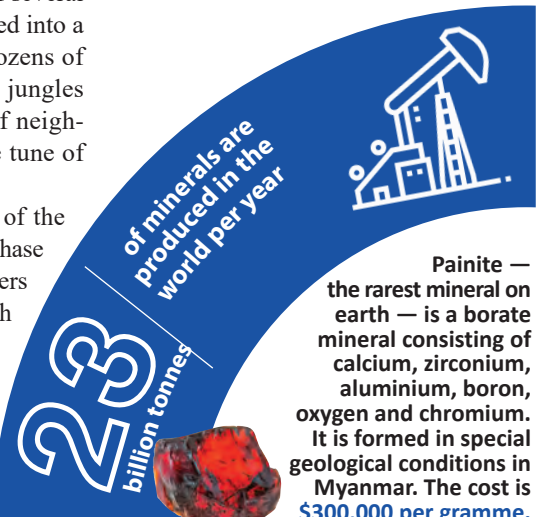
have the slightest opportunity to get out of there. The working conditions are horrible — the mineral is mixed with uranium ore, labour protection is out of the question, and the only tools are spades and basins. The mortality rate among prospectors is off the scale, while their babies are often stillborn.

All this is compounded by the endless war of everyone against everyone, which makes the life of the local population unbearable. Mass rapes, ethnic massacres, and murders just for fun have become commonplace. There are no large animals left in the surrounding forests — the fighting armies have eaten all the elephants, giraffes, gorillas and hippos.

World’s countries in terms of total natural resource value, in trillions of U.S. dollars



- 56% — polymer materials,
- 25% — metals (copper, iron, aluminium, nickel, tin, gold, silver, platinum, indium, tantalum, palladium),
- 16% — glass and ceramics,
- 3% — other materials.



They have eyes on lithium

The fight for minerals is going on all over the world, the failed coup attempt in Bolivia at the end of June being one of the most notable examples. In fact, the attempt by General Juan José Zúñiga to overthrow socialist President Luis Arce quite corresponded to the interests of the United States, which would not mind getting its hands on the coveted 24 percent of the world’s lithium reserves — 21 million tonnes — again.

There is another potential minerals-related hotbed of tension that is smoldering in South America. This refers to the territorial dispute between Venezuela and Guyana over the Essequibo region rich in oil and gas.

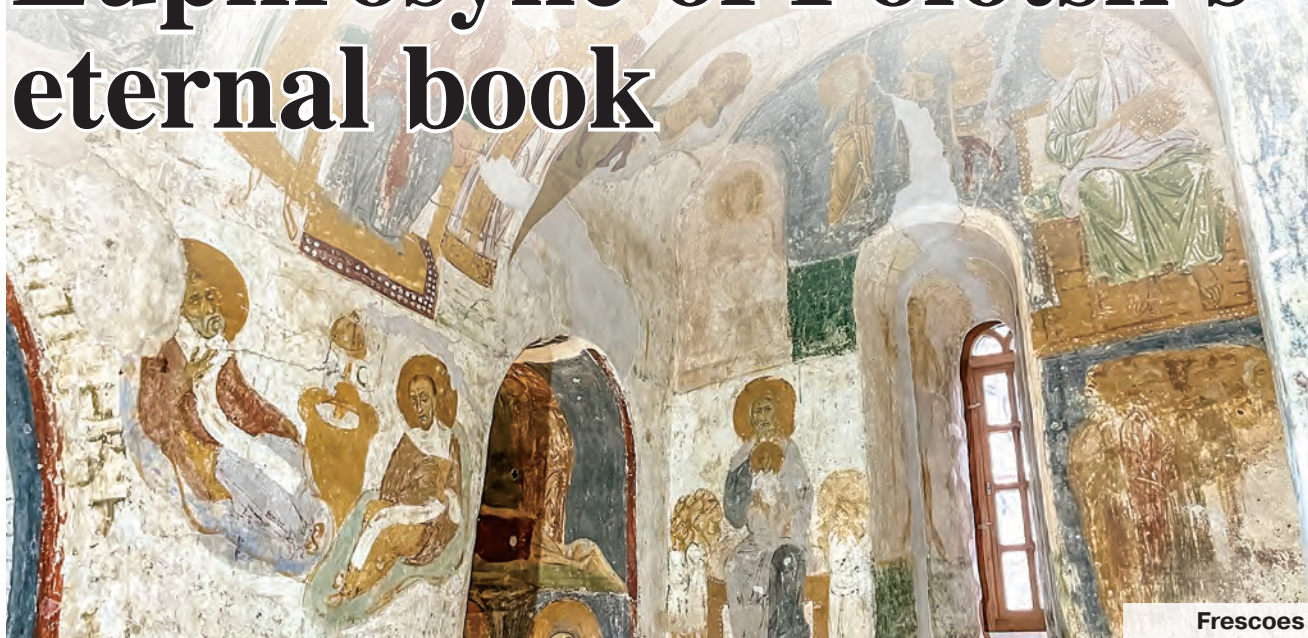
Large oil and gas fields were found in Essequibo in 2015. Almost immediately, multinational companies like ExxonMobil appeared there and signed concession deals with Guyana to carry out drilling operations in the disputed region. Venezuela’s reaction was predictable since it considers the province its territory illegally taken away by the British, and the involvement of multinational companies in oil extraction — a robbery of the national treasure.

The ability to independently manage minerals on the national territory is an important part of the multipolar world ideology.

The fight for mineral resources in the context of global confrontation will continue to escalate. Therefore, the wise management of one’s own resources and the ability to establish a profitable co-operation with other players for the benefit of a common cause will play a critical role in it.

Nurturing children, who are a source of our everlasting anxiety and hope, is the holiest of all holy things. After all, the well-being of our society depends on what we nourish their souls with. According to Schema-Archimandrite John Maslov, ‘children can become both angels and devils; everything depends on upbringing’. Mother Superior Evdokia (Levshuk), the Abbess of the Saviour-Euphrosyne Convent, which is preparing to celebrate the 900th anniversary of its foundation, wholeheartedly concurs with him.

Euphrosyne of Polotsk’s eternal book



Frescoes

By Natalia Tyshkevich

“The written manuscripts and writings of St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk have not survived to this day. However, the Church of the Saviour, built with her blessing and frescoed according to her plan, forever remains her spiritual legacy,” Mother Superior Evdokia joined in the conversation.

This temple is a unique monument of painting, writing, and theological thought that has miraculously reached us through the centuries. This is the only 12th-century temple in Belarus, where the most ancient frescoes have been preserved almost in full.

Narrative about virtues

The history of the discovery of ancient frescoes in the Church of the Saviour is both fascinating and astonishing. No one could imagine that the ‘messages’ from the 12th century were hidden under the layers of late plaster, inscriptions and paints. Fragments of these frescoes were first uncovered in 1928 under a late 19th-century oil inscription. In the early 1990s, fine art restorer Vladimir Rakitsky began systematic work to disclose the ancient frescoes. It was not until the 21st century that, thanks to the latest unique peeling technology for oil paintings developed by Moscow specialists under the guidance of fine art restorer Vladimir Sarabyanov, frescoes from the era of St. Euphrosyne were fully revealed.

All the frescoes were created using the technique of raw lime plaster, which has preserved them for many centuries. The craftsmen used high-quality natural pigments — malachite, lapis lazuli, azurite, cinnabar, red ochre and others — many of which were imported from different countries. The specialists managed not only to uncover the 12th-century frescoes but also to remove all the 19th-century oil paintings from the walls and vaults, which are now housed in the Art Gallery of the Polotsk National Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve. This unique operation has no analogues in the world restoration practice.

When asked how it became evident that Euphrosyne herself supervised the temple’s painting, Abbess Evdokia clarified, “Fine art restorer Vladimir Sarabyanov, who revealed the ancient frescoes, was sure that Reverend Euphrosyne personally selected the plots and compiled the iconographic programme. The most remarkable discovery made by paleographers suggests that all the texts on the scrolls, which depict saints on the temple’s walls, have characteristic features. According to those distinctive features, scientists

came to the conclusion that the inscriptions had been made not by artists but by an experienced scribe, and Euphrosyne was exactly a woman-scribe.”

Today, it is safe to say that the Saviour Transfiguration Church serves as her message to future generations, forever imprinted in the wall frescoes.

Each fresco embodies an edifying narrative about the high Christian virtues that are necessary for every person — humility, forgiveness, obedience, meekness, generosity, mercy, courage, valour, love for the Motherland.

Reverend Euphrosyne considered spiritual enlightenment as an integral part of benevolence and love for humanity. She meticulously copied liturgical books by her own hand, spreading literacy and a love for the word of God in her native lands.

To change the outside, you need to change inside

— What is the basis of spiritual and moral education?

— *It is the commandments: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and Love your neighbour as yourself. By visiting a sick person, helping those in need, forgiving the offender, showing mercy and compassion, we thereby manifest our love for God.*

Mother Superior Evdokia believes that genuine morality is impossible without a religious foundation. This refers to both children and adults. It is necessary to nurture — that is, to nourish and cultivate the soul.

— *In order to change the outside, it is necessary to change inside. Only then will the world around you become different. In education, it is not merely words that are needed, but rather an example that leaves a vivid imprint on the child’s mind, enabling them to rely on it throughout their entire*



Scrolls

earthly journey. Enlightener Euphrosyne of Polotsk serves as such an example for us today.

Abbess Evdokia is convinced that obedience lies at the heart of everything. The Bible teaches obedience to both parents and mentors. In our challenging times, children do not obey first their father and mother, then their teachers, and then their leaders. Therefore, serious problems arise within families, society and the state.

It is all about your neighbour

— **It seems to me that love for one’s neighbour, along with mercy and compassion, are diminishing in our lives.**

— *For the current young generation, life primarily revolves around the words ‘I’, ‘my’, ‘mine’. In contrast, true love is selfless, focusing on the words ‘you’, ‘your’, ‘yours’. In the western part of the southern nave in the Church of the Saviour, two scenes from the same narrative are depicted on the vault arch. Monk Martyrius was walking from his monastery to another, when he encountered a leper, whose whole body was thickly covered with wounds. Exhausted, the poor man could not walk. The monk took off his robe, wrapped the sick man in it and car-*

Let us unveil what messages the patron saint of Belarus left to posterity through the frescoes in the Saviour Transfiguration Church of the 12th century



Venerable Sabbas the Sanctified and Euthymius the Great with scrolls

ried him on his shoulders. As he approached the monastery, he heard the abbot shout, ‘Quick, open the monastery gates! Brother Martyrius is coming, carrying the Lord.’ As soon as the monk reached the entrance, the one who seemed to be a leper emerged in front of everyone in the image of Christ and ascended to heaven. Martyrius later remarked that while carrying him, he felt no weight at all. It is not surprising! How could he feel any weight while carrying the one who bears the weight of the entire world? This is how sincere mercy connects us with the Lord Almighty. The more compassionate we are, the more surely we rise up.

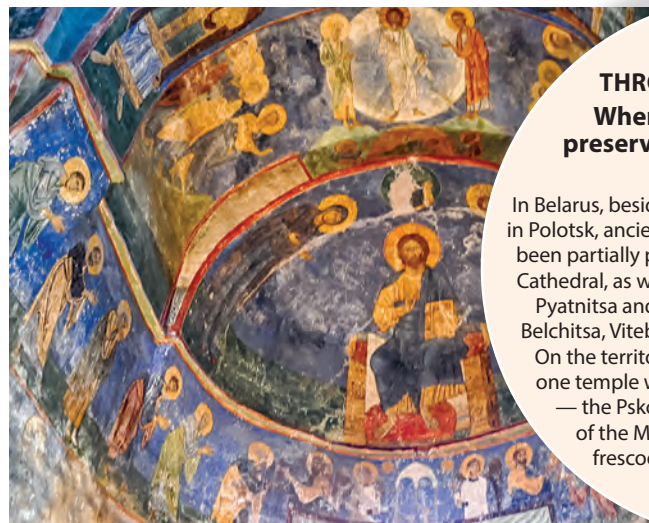
— **The northern part of the western wall in the Church of the Saviour, right at the exit, features frescoes of the Last Judgement, depicting sinners hanging by their tongues. Is swearing a scourge of our time?**

— *Slander, condemnation, profanity permeate our earthly existence like radiation, having a*

destructive effect on all living beings on Earth. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,’ we read in the Gospel. The Holy Fathers convince us that our words, along with our actions, are the weights that will be placed on the scales when our fate is decided at the Last Judgement.

According to Abbess Evdokia, the expressive plots of the ancient frescoes are meticulously crafted. One can explore the multifaceted nature of St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk through them, much like through treatises of profound content. The frescoes in the Church of the Saviour, like a bridge from the past, invisibly yet surely and reliably connect us with the holy men of faith.

— *It takes a lot of effort to keep the soul beautiful and unblemished. Nurturing such moral qualities as mercy, kindness, patience, obedience, generosity, compassion, and diligence is the way to make modern youth healthier. We have exemplary figures to learn from. Reverend Euphrosyne left a considerable legacy of spirituality, true faith and wisdom that will endure for many years.*



MESSAGES THROUGH THE CENTURIES Where to find miraculously preserved frescoes that are over 800 years old

In Belarus, besides the Saviour Transfiguration Church in Polotsk, ancient frescoes from the 12th century have been partially preserved in the interiors of St. Sophia Cathedral, as well as in the Church of Saint Paraskeva Pyatnitsa and the Church of St. Boris and Gleb in Belchitsa, Vitebsk Region (*Candlemas, Lamentation*). On the territory of the former USSR, there is only one temple with frescoes of similar preservation — the Pskov Saviour Transfiguration Church of the Mirozhsky Monastery. Its famous frescoes were painted by Byzantine masters in 1130-1140.

Goodbye Paris, we will not miss you!



Yauheni Tsikhantsou

PRESIDENT OF BELARUS ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO HAS CONGRATULATED YAUHENI TSIKHANTSOU ON WINNING THE BRONZE MEDAL AT THE 33RD SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES,

“Thousands of fans were waiting for this success and believed in you. In the fight against the strongest athletes in the world, you demonstrated high skill backed by a steely character, and graced the Olympic podium,” the congratulatory message reads.

The Head of State expressed confidence that the successful performance of Belarusian weightlifters at the Paris Olympics would serve as a good incentive for coaches to continue their fruitful work. Aleksandr Lukashenko wished Yauheni Tsikhantsou good health, peace, well-being and new great victories for the glory of Belarus.

One of the most scandalous Olympics have become history

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) did not allow 16 Belarusian athletes to participate in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, which were held under the Jesuit slogan *Games Wide Open*. Having shown unsurpassed resilience, will power and iron character, Belarusian athletes managed to win licences to Paris in conditions of wild discrimination only to see the red light banning them from participation almost before the Olympics' start. At least as many of our athletes did not even have the opportunity to qualify — just because they were not allowed. Among them are such world sports stars as Maksim Nedasekau, Maryna Litvinchuk, Volha Khudzenka... Therefore, Belarus was watching *the Games Wide Open* with eyes wide shut. However, all Belarusians rejoiced loudly and from the bottom of the heart at the success of our medallists, who, under the given circumstances, could be called real sports heroes.

By Sergei Kanashits

The Belarusian Olympians have put four medals in their piggy-bank. Ivan Litvinovich won gold in trampoline jumping, becoming the first two-time champion in the history of this sport. The young and daring Belarusian athletes, who made their debut at the Olympics, have returned home with silver medals. Yauheni Zalaty marked the beginning of the Belarusian Olympic awards in men's rowing, and Vyaleta Bardzilouskaya — in women's trampoline jumping. Belarus' weightlifter Yauheni Tsikhantsou closed the medal programme — having lifted 402 kilogrammes (183 + 219) in the combined event, he became the third in the 102-kg weight division. If the result of the Belaru-

sian national team had been taken into account, it would have closed the top 50 among 206 participating national teams. It is not bad at all, you should agree! Especially considering the fact that only a total of 17 athletes were allowed to get to Paris.

Not all of those who took part in the Olympics can take credit for that, due to both objective and subjective reasons. The feedback meeting is yet to take place, and each result will be given a proper assessment. Obviously, we expected to get the highest result from each Belarusian athlete. Yet, is there anything to blame Alina Zmushka for, who set a new record for Belarus in the 100-metre breast-stroke semifinals? And how is it possible not to praise Suzanna Volodko, who almost jumped

onto the Olympic weightlifters' podium and occupied a bitter fourth place, whereas her best performance was the sixth place at the World Championships? It remains only to lament that we did not see Vanesa Kaladzinskaya and Iryna Kurachkina, Mariya Gnedtchik and Anastasiya Prokopenko, Kiryl Maskevich and other prominent

Belarusian Olympians on the Parisian platforms and carpets. If they had competed in the Olympics, there is no doubt that the team's medal haul would have been even richer.

The next Summer Olympics are scheduled to take place from July 14th to July 30th, 2028 in Los Angeles. However, no one can predict what they will be or

whether they will take place at all. In the meantime, the main Olympic news is the statement by the IOC head, German Thomas Bach, that he will not seek to remain in charge for a third term. On this occasion, one can only say: hopefully, he will not change his mind! However, there is small choice in rotten apples — the main candidate for the vacant place of the IOC chief is the president of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), British Sebastian Coe, whose position towards Belarusian and Russian athletes is tough and categorical. The IOC heads have long ceased to be independent in their decisions, and are mere obedient executors of someone else's will. We can only hope that the world will come to its senses soon.



The memory of the Tashkent Pakhtakor players, who perished in a plane crash, was honoured in Minsk

Match for peace



By Tatiana Pastushenko

The 'unplayed match' was preceded by other events. In the morning, Pakhtakor veterans and family members of the deceased players went on a tour of Minsk, which ended at the Dinamo stadium. After looking around the arena, the guests attended a teleconference between Minsk and Tashkent. The memories of those who knew the Pakhtakor players in 1979 brought tears to their eyes. Ahmad Ubaydullayev, a veteran of the Tashkent team, shared, "On August 10th, it was the last time I saw the guys at the training base. Anatoly Mogilny and I were injured, so we had an independent training session and left the Pakhtakor base. On the morning of August 11th, we found out about the tragedy... Forty-five years have passed since then, but the pain does not go away. I grew up with many of the guys and we

played together. I remember when we all dreamt of playing for Pakhtakor. In those days, when we were just serving balls, 50-60 thousand people would gather at the stadium. Fans loved the team very much, even idolised them, and the players treated their fans the same way. When the players were invited to play for other clubs, they chose not to transfer because they were patriots of their team and country."

The news of the tragedy shocked the players of Dinamo Minsk. Reflecting on August 1979, Liudas Rumbutis recalled that there had been no such accidents before, and initially, the players simply did not understand what had happened, "The realisation that something terrible had happened came later. It was a complete shock to all of us. We were on friendly terms with some players and played together for the national team. In general, the Soviet football was like that:

it did not matter which team a player represented — everyone would hug before the game, fight hard during the match, and wish each other good luck afterwards. This tragedy affected us greatly."

Marat Kabayev, a former Pakhtakor football player and one of the organisers of the memorial match in Minsk, noted that he had played in the team for about ten years and felt it was his duty to honour the memory of the players who died in the plane crash, "That football team showed a modern, original, technical game and, of course, it remained in the hearts of the fans. On the day when the tragedy happened, people went out into the streets in Tashkent — there were flows of people. People's love remains forever."

Veterans of Dinamo Minsk shared stories related to the team and its players. Thus, Vladimir Kurnev recounted how he

Dinamo — Pakhtakor. The match of the USSR Football Championship with the participation of these teams was supposed to take place on August 11th, 1979. On that day, the players and coaching staff from the Tashkent team set off to Minsk but never reached their destination. The plane they were flying collided with another airliner in the sky over Dneprodzerzhinsk. All 178 passengers on board lost their lives, including 17 representatives of Pakhtakor. Forty-five years later, the match still took place — to honour the memory of the deceased football players, veterans from both clubs took to the field of the Dinamo-Yuni stadium.

joined the Tashkent team at the invitation of head coach Aleksandr Kochetkov and why his student ID card was found at the crash site. Anatoly Baidachny recalled Mikhail An, one of Pakhtakor's leaders, whom he first met in the USSR youth national team. He admitted that it was painful to recall the guys they fought alongside to uphold the honour of the country, and expressed gratitude for keeping their memory. They thanked the organisers and the families of the deceased players for this tribute.

Of course, the score was not important in the match at the Dinamo-Yuni stadium. What mattered most was that the veterans of the two teams and those touched by the tragedy came together to remember the players of Pakhtakor. Strengthened by the DMedia players, the teams showed a great game in which there were no losers — 6:6.

Photo of the week



Aleksandr Gorbash

A distinctive feature of the *Nanosy Otdykh* Ethnocultural Tourist Complex, located in the Narochansky National Park, is the special atmosphere of ancient Belarusian buildings and amazing beauty of Belarusian nature

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



August 15th is Archaeologist's Day. All historical events are established either based on written sources or archaeological

data. There are very few written messages, but household materials can sometimes be in abundance. Among the famous archaeological discoveries are the ruins of the Temple of Artemis in Ephesus — one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, Pharaoh Tutankhamun's tomb in Egypt, China's Terracotta Army, Lucy the Australopithecus, and more.

On August 15th,

1877, inventor Thomas Edison suggested using the word 'Hello' as a telephone greeting. A year earlier, American scientist Alexander Bell had for the first time publicly demonstrated his device, which soon became known as the 'telephone'. Since phone users were supposed to greet each other, the option offered by Thomas Edinson — who, by the way, did a lot to improve the phone — quickly caught on.



On August 15th, 1914, the first ship passed through the Panama Canal. The Panama Canal opened shipping from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific via the Isthmus of Panama. The



The construction took 33 years. The total length of the Panama Canal is 81.6 km, while the average passage through the canal by a vessel takes nine hours.

On August 17th,

1977, the Soviet nuclear-powered icebreaker *Arktika* reached the North Pole for the first time in the history of navigation. It left Murmansk and headed towards the northern tip of Novaya Zemlya. More than 200 people took part in the expedition. Having overcome the powerful three-metre ice cover of the Central Polar Basin, the *Arktika* icebreaker was the first in the world to reach the North Pole.



Defence Forces of the country. In 2001, two types of troops were combined into one unit,

project's practical implementation in terms of engineering and technology became possible only at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

the purpose of which is to defend towns and military bases of the republic from enemy air strikes and to hit enemy troops, if necessary. Today, the unit includes Belarus' Air Force, anti-aircraft missile forces, radio engineering troops, as well as special forces and services.

August 19th is World

Photography Day. On this day in 1839, a technique for obtaining a photo print — a daguerreotype, which is a prototype of photography — was presented to the general public. This invention belongs to Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre. Daguerreotype is considered the ancestor of modern photography. Photography is now firmly established in almost all areas of our lives.



flight. Cosmonaut dogs Belka and Strelka are the first animals to enter space and return to Earth unharmed. That experiment made a significant contribution to the study and exploration of outer space, and the scope of research carried out allowed drawing conclusions about the possibility of man to make an orbital flight around the Earth.

On August 19th, 1960, the Soviet spacecraft *Sputnik-5* with dogs Belka and Strelka on board performed a one-day orbital space

On August 19th,

Orthodox believers celebrate the Transfiguration of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ. In Russia, this holiday is known as Apple Feast of the Saviour, or the Second Saviour, Honey Feast of the Saviour being the first one. It is one of the 12 most important Orthodox holidays. The first apples collected on this day were consecrated in church.



On August 20th, 1944, the first subscription to the national newspapers *Zvyazda*, *Sovetskaya Byelorussia*, and *Chyrvonaya Zmena* was opened after the liberation of Byelorussia from fascist invaders in the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War. The *Sovetskaya Byelorussia* newspaper has been published since August 1927. In August 2024, the *SB*.



Belarus Segodnya newspaper issued by the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House celebrates its 97th anniversary.

On August 21st, 1911, the iconic *Mona Lisa*, or *La Gioconda* — one of the most renowned paintings by Leonardo da Vinci — was stolen from the Louvre by the museum's employee, Italian mirror master Vincenzo Peruggia. The thief was arrested two years later. Peruggia claimed that he wanted to return the national treasure to its homeland.