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A train of memory

A unique mobile museum — Victory Train — has arrived in Belarus from Russia. It is running on the Belarusian Railway from June 11th-28th. The campaign is timed to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War and the Year of National Unity declared in Belarus. → 6



Cornerstone of investment



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By Yevgeny Kononovich,
Varvara Morozova

Belarus became one of the first European countries to respond to China's call to participate in the implementation of the *One Belt, One Road* global initiative. The Republic has never regretted it; nor have its Chinese partners. The Great Stone is now rightly called 'a pearl' of the new Silk Road. The Park's ecosystem is attractive due to its special financial conditions, developed infrastructure and logistics and favourable geolocation between Europe and Asia.

"This is evidenced by a steady growth in the number

In total, 69 residents from 13 countries are registered in the Park and their declared investment volume exceeds \$1.25bn

of the Park's residents (by 10-15 percent annually) and the production facilities they create," the Head of State noted. He recalled that the Great Stone was established to attract the highest technologies to the country, train our people to deal with them and transfer the Park's experience in production and other areas nationwide. In this regard, Aleksandr Lukashenko asked what effect had been obtained for the country after creating a preferential regime for the Park's residents,

"It is very important. We cannot pass legal acts, especially Presidential decrees, if we are not sure that the previous resolutions were productive."

According to the Head of the Great Stone Administration, Aleksandr Yaroshenko, about \$295m has been invested in the Park's infrastructure — including \$31m of state funds. In his talk to journalists, the official spoke of other figures as well, "We get about ten additional Roubles to the Belarusian economy per one Rouble of tax benefits in the

Great Stone Park. This is an even higher figure of one in sixty, if we are talking about investments.

The main thing now, including after the adoption of a new legislative act, is to scale up and build on this success."

As reported to the Head of State, the Park is currently implementing projects of 69 residents with founders from 13 countries, including China,

Simplification of administrative procedures, new types of activities and preferential conditions for large investors. What changes will the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park undergo?

Prospects for the development of the Great Stone Industrial Park have been discussed at the Palace of Independence with the President's participation. The project is truly unique. In the seven years since construction began, the Park has actually turned into an independent modern city, becoming another Belarusian brand. However, it's true: there is no limit to perfection. The Government has prepared a draft decree which proposes to correct some working conditions of the Park and further improve its business climate. Aleksandr Lukashenko is not against innovations, but he stressed the key point, "We will proceed exclusively from investors' interests and the interests of our economy, state and society"

Germany, Switzerland, and the USA. Capital investments account for almost \$1.5bn. Aleksandr Lukashenko commented with satisfaction,

"This is a good result. However, experience has shown that certain areas of legal regulation may require clarification and development. A whole city has already developed there with its own mores, morals and production — which

are not contradictory to the Republic of Belarus."

A special pride of Mr. Yaroshenko — which he shared as part of his report — is the infrastructure. Moreover, thanks to the Park, the conditions in the nearby territories have also improved. "In the first development area (850 hectares), all the necessary roads, communications and treatment facilities have been completely built," he said.



Fast MAZ JSC controller of machine-tool and fitters' works, Zhang Xiaogang, and instrument builder Timofey Makarenko

Over \$670m has already been invested in the Park's development by its participants. At the same time, the share of state funds is minimal — 5 percent, or about \$31m. This money was spent on the infrastructure alone.

INNOVATIONS ON OFFER

Simplification and de-bureaucratisation of doing business

Administrative procedures will be simplified, while the management bodies of the Park will gain greater independence: the powers of its administration will be expanded.

Almost 60 new administrative procedures will be supervised by an integrated service centre operating under the 'one-stop-shop' principle. This will increase the speed and efficiency of decisions made.

"The use of the already existing standards has enabled us to reduce construction time several times," Mr. Yaroshenko told reporters. "For example, the MAZ-Weichai joint project was completed in record time — in eight months; it is now already actively manufacturing products. The situation is similar for many other companies and this helps us advance quickly in making decisions."

In total, the administration will have about 90 administrative-per-

mitting procedures — or about 45 percent of all procedures necessary for doing business anywhere in Belarus. Mr. Yaroshenko added, "All administrative procedures are carried out in an electronic form and we strive to ensure that the maximum number of them is carried out without paper — that is, to introduce a digital mode."

Support for start-ups

Last December, the Park opened a centre for the transformation of sci-tech achievements. The President was asked to allow the ideas that come there to work in a preferential mode for the first two years.

"These are not residents," Mr. Yaroshenko noted. "These are innovative start-ups that will be supported through the provision of such benefits as we provide to residents. After selecting the appropriate project on a competitive basis, we will look at its interim results six months after incubation. Projects with positive results are given the opportunity to grow into a commercial project with a possibility

of becoming a resident of the Great Stone."

According to Mr. Yaroshenko, world experience shows that about 10 percent of projects are a success without support. If the state and investors actively participate, then this share might reach 70-80 percent.

Special conditions for 'anchor' investors

The draft decree envisages additional preferences for projects with investments of at least \$50m. Among them are preferential prices for land plots and simplifications in the field of customs administration. Attracting large investors will help expand the cluster principle of activity.

In line with special decisions of the Government, companies outside the Park will also be able to use preferences; these will be the ones which participate in the capital and production process of the Park's residents. The arrival of the Geely Corporation with its engine production project might become a pilot.

Expansion of business areas

Among the new areas are the production of medical products, medical care, laboratory diagnostics and biopharmaceuticals. There are also developments related to the production of medicines and drugs; there are plans to simplify their registration. One of the residents has already planned a project to create a centre for traditional Chinese medicine.

"We asked the Head of State to include the development of 5G technologies in the draft decree," noted Mr. Yaroshenko. "We already had such a pilot project. With the adoption of a new legislative act, there will be a legal norm for the introduction of 5G technologies and artificial intelligence."

On June 11th, Aleksandr Lukashenko signed Decree No. 215 which perfects the legal regulations aimed at improving the investment climate in the Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park.

The defence industry is being tempered this way

The industry of our country is no stranger to working under external pressure, and even more so when it concerns the defence industry. At present, the military-industrial complex and the defence sector of the economy are in a special situation because of EU sanctions. However, the industry has never gone unnoticed. The Chairman of the State Authority for Military Industry, Dmitry Pantus, and Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Nazarov came to the Palace of Independence to report on the state of affairs. They spoke of figures, exports, new weapons and the upcoming *MILEX 2021* exhibition. The issues were of special importance since — as the President stressed — the military-industrial complex makes a decent contribution to the economy of Belarus. Aleksandr Lukashenko described the military industry in the following way, “This is a high-tech production, comparable only to space and nuclear technologies. It is impossible to create modern weapons without modern advanced technologies.”

By Dmitry Umpirovich,
Varvara Morozova

Tests of benefit

To start with, let’s recall the key issue: four enterprises of the State Authority for Military Industry have been sanctioned by the collective West. The situation is unpleasant but — speaking of the industry as a whole — it is withstanding such attacks with dignity. The Head of State explained this clearly: our military-industrial complex has no extensive ties with those who threaten us with sanctions. “We do not have close and mutually dependent contacts with America or the European Union. It’s clear

that we maintain good relations with our partners in the production of weapons: we have good relations with Russia, China and Turkey. However, I would like you to outline the situation,” he said.

Dmitry Pantus confirmed: true, the West is constantly escalating the situation around Belarus. However, the defence sector of our country has managed to turn to a positive avenue even amongst such pressure. Mr. Pantus assured the journalists that the State Authority for Military Industry has got an additional incentive to develop, “Thanks to the sanctions, we have carried out additional work on import substitution. A corresponding programme has been developed and is in effect for the next three years. This year

alone, we plan to replace about \$37m; in 2022, this sum is expected to triple — to reach \$77m.”

Protect ourselves and those who are dear to us

The issue of providing the Armed Forces with modern weapons — exactly the types the law enforcement agencies need — is always relevant. The President noted that he’s primarily concerned about the production of small arms — for the following reason, “We are not going to war with anyone.

We must be able to inflict unacceptable damage on an enemy and defend ourselves and our families. If, God forbid, some conflict or war breaks out, every family and territorial bodies should be armed with the whole range of small arms. Then the adversary will understand that it’s better to steer clear of us.”

The Commander-in-Chief believes the country needs its own weapons and should produce them domestically. At the same time, the President openly stated that Russia’s experience can also be useful for weapon production in Belarus, “It’s our

A meeting at the Palace of Independence focused on sanctions, new weapons and *MILEX* exhibition as part of discussing the work of the military-industrial complex



During a meeting with the President: Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Nazarov and Chairman of the State Authority for Military Industry Dmitry Pantus

close country, with which we are developing and producing weapons. Russia is not against us making weapons here using their technologies. Much has already been done.”

There is something to show and be proud of

The President was also interested in other promising types of weapons — i.e. the development of a new rocket for the ‘Polonez’ multiple launch rocket system. Mr. Pantus reported to the Head of State on other interesting developments of the State Authority for Military Industry: in particular, the completely Belarusian armoured personnel carrier from the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant. Many innovations (including this one) will be on show at the 10th International

Exhibition of Arms and Military Machinery — *MILEX 2021*. The event is scheduled for June 23rd-26th at the Minsk-Arena and is also in the President’s field of vision.

Mr. Pantus assured those present that the exhibition is being prepared for very seriously and more than 300 samples of the latest weapon, military and special equipment from Belarus alone will be presented. 177 of them will be shown for the first time; 88 new modernised samples will be presented. Russia is also preparing a wide exposition, with 22 organisations representing the neighbouring country.

“Several pavilions of foreign partners will attend. 31 delegations have already confirmed their participation,” added Mr. Pantus.



MILEX exhibition maintains its reputation. Belarusian machinery is traditionally highly appreciated.

Ready for dialogue, not for being browbeaten

Deputies of all levels and members of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly adopt an appeal to the international community in connection with the situation regarding Belarus

The appeal reads, “We, the deputies and members of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus — the authorised representatives of the Belarusian people — appeal to the international community with an open mind to assess the situation concerning our country, when under the guise of a struggle for democratic values, in fact, there is aggressive all-round pressure on the sovereign state and its citizens, a gross violation of the basic principles of international law on non-interference in the internal affairs of states. Such actions pose a real threat to international peace and security and violate the universally recognised provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, of which our country was one of the founders. Independence, human development, economic growth and the strengthening of Belarus are the obvious basis for the well-being of the people of our country and the key to geopolitical stability in the vast region linking Europe, Russia and Asia.”

The authors of the appeal believe that — instead of supporting and developing mutually beneficial co-operation — a number of states actively contribute to the destabilisation of the situation in Belarus. A massive programme of information aggression has been launched against us — aimed both at involving our citizens in destructive activities with the aim of committing a coup d’état, and at forming an extremely negative image of the country in the international arena.

Unprecedented and unjustified sanctions are being imposed. Actions aimed at depriving the Republic of Belarus of the rights to host international sports competitions, participate in creative and professional competitions, bans on air travel, discrimination against companies and organisations, and ultimately ordinary citizens of our country, look absurd.

Belarusians will survive these tests, because we have much to lose. In the 20th century, we restored our country twice — from the ruins of the

Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 and the fragments of the USSR destroyed in 1991. Therefore, not only a strong state power and strong law enforcement agencies didn’t allow Belarus to turn into another hot spot on the political map of the world, but every Belarusian feels personal involvement in the creation of the country, understanding their responsibility for its future.

“Today, the political and economic pressure on our country does not stop, but only increases. The stated goal is to promote the strengthening of democratic values and freedoms. However, the actual result is completely different: undermining the economic potential of our country, slowing down development, reducing social programmes, reducing the well-being of people and, as a result, the scrapping of the sovereign Belarusian statehood, the formation of a zone of economic, geopolitical and social instability in the heart of Europe, which is already experienc-

ing a whole series of crises — migration, economic and the COVID-19 pandemic,” state the deputies and senators. “We appeal to our foreign partners: observe the principles and norms of international law in relations with Belarus, because once you change them, it will be difficult to give them significance again.

We are ready for dialogue, but not for being browbeaten, and we responsibly declare the futility and short-sightedness of any encroachments on our right to independently build the path of development of the Republic of Belarus.

We call on the international community to oppose the unjustified, counterproductive and discriminatory policy towards the Republic of Belarus, to show solidarity with our country in defending the right to sovereignty and a peaceful life, to return to responsible and constructive co-operation for the benefit of all countries and peoples, in the name of peace, security and prosperity.”

New revealing facts

A complete picture of the incident with the Athens-Vilnius flight, the ungentlemanly conduct of the Polish special services, the provocations on the Belarusian-Lithuanian border and the unexpected revelations of Roman Protasevich. A number of previously unpublished factual materials were presented during the briefing at the National Press Centre. Read all the details in the forthcoming issue of our newspaper.

Last year was not easy for the light industry. The coronavirus pandemic has introduced changes to the work of almost all enterprises in the industry. There are 72 of them. Closed borders, broken logistics and co-operation chains are evident. Under such circumstances, many light industry companies around the world have had to close their businesses. It's well-known that our country didn't succumb to the global panic and chaos and not only preserved its production potential but also managed to saturate the market with the necessary goods — all thanks to the timely adaptation to the current conditions and the support of the state. The Bellegprom Concern enterprises have very quickly refocused on the production of personal protective equipment and were able not only to meet the needs of the domestic market but also to make good money on exports.

The Chair of Bellegprom Concern, Tatiana Lugina, notes that, this year, the branch is demonstrating positive dynamics, "Exports by the companies affiliated with the Belarusian State Light Industry Concern Bellegprom rose by 15 percent in January-April 2021 against the same period last year to total \$142.3m. The foreign trade balance was positive: \$67m. In January-April, Bellegprom's exports to the EU exceeded \$20m, up by almost 22 percent

Export subtleties

A good trend is registered: exports of Bellegprom organisations in January-April increased by 15 percent to reach \$142m



This year, the industry is demonstrating positive dynamics

year-on-year. Sales to the long-distance countries amounted to \$21m."

As for the structure of exports, 14 percent of products head to the EU, about 15 percent to the far arc. The EAEU market accounts for the remaining share. In total, 55 enterprises of the Concern

have delivered light industry products to 48 countries this year. Sales to 26 countries have been increased, in particular, to Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Estonia, the United States, Belgium, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Sweden, China, Uzbekistan, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, France (by

over 15 times), Israel and others.

The Chinese market is actively being mastered. "We don't discount the Chinese market. We see it as promising for a number of commodity groups, such as leather and textiles. For the time being we cannot boast about export growth dynamics to this market but we keep on working. We exhibit our samples there and are looking for dealers," Ms. Lugina said, adding, "As for the products that were in demand in foreign markets, linen products by Orsha Flax Mill were popular in the markets of long-distance countries and the EU. In European countries, sewing products sold well last year."

The official also highlighted the positive dynamics of Bellegprom across key indicators — reaching 10 percent in all organisations of the Concern. Net profit made almost Br26m (over \$10m in equivalent). "The number of loss-making enterprises has reduced. We have been working on this and are doing well," Ms. Lugina stressed.

Test passed

Minsk Motor Plant (MMZ) engine successfully tested at Swiss vacuum road sweeper BKM-2020: the small-capacity four-cylinder MMZ-4DTI has successfully replaced an Italian one



The Belarusian engine was made to a custom order for the manufacturer of municipal vehicles with consequent sales in Russia. MMZ specialists have been working on it since March. "It was a complicated task. The

Swiss vacuum street sweeper uses only hydraulics: a hydraulic drive for the engines, hydraulic lift for the bunker, brushes and a lot of mounted equipment. The vehicle has no drive shafts or gearboxes. The engine's design

had to be reworked to adapt it to the vehicle. Many parts were made anew to match special technical parameters. Cooling, power supply and coupling systems were modified. The locations of the electric equipment were changed. The vehicle's electronic control module was coupled with the mechanical fuel pump of the engine. As a result of a joint brainstorming session, original solutions to unconventional tasks that go beyond standard equations and rules of hydraulics were found," said the MMZ press service.

The engine went through testbed trials without a hitch. "The engine is adapted to the vehicle perfectly. All the systems operate without a fault. It can be

described as a genuine success of MMZ designers, who demonstrated an example of combining a perfect knowledge of technical matters and the creative approach. The achievement is particularly tangible because such a promising engine has been

adapted to a new kind of vehicles. MMZ sees a strong demand for MMZ-4DTI engines among manufacturers from various countries," the source said.

The sweeper will be shipped to the manufacturer after trial runs at MMZ premises.

The MT reference

Minsk Motor Plant produces modern diesel engines, gas and diesel engines, and gas reciprocating engines. The company offers over 100 modifications of engines aimed to power agricultural machines, road construction machines, forestry vehicles, automobiles, buses, power supply plants, compressors, and other kinds of machinery. MMZ engines are shipped to assembly lines of 49 enterprises in Belarus, Russia, CIS and beyond. The products are sold in more than 50 countries of Europe, Asia, Africa, North and Latin America.

European interest

Italy starts buying leather at Belarus' commodity exchange



"The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange has registered the first transaction to sell Belarusian leather products to Italy. At the recent trading session, an Italian company has purchased a trial batch of semi-finished wet blue leather to the amount of \$35,000. The total amount of transactions made by foreign buyers approximated \$500,000. The supplies of wet blue leather to Italy and other European countries are expected to grow, since the demand for these products significantly exceeds

the supply," the BUCE press secretary, Roman Yaniv, has informed.

Since late April, hides and semi-finished wet blue leather have been traded for export at the exchange every week. Foreign participants in trading sessions show great interest in the lots on display. Currently, the main markets for these products are the UK and Russia, however the geography of sales is gradually expanding. "For example, quite recently, Polish and Lithuanian companies have struck the first deals to buy wet blue," Mr. Yaniv added.

Since the beginning of the year, leather products worth \$2.1m have been exported through BUCE.

Reserves up

Belarus' gold and foreign currency reserves increased by 6.7 percent to reach \$7.8bn



According to the preliminary data, Belarus' gold and foreign currency reserves totalled \$7,763.1 million as of June 1st, 2021 — as the Information and PR Department of the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus has announced.

In May 2021, the country's gold and foreign currency reserves went up by \$485.2m (by 6.7 percent) following the April growth of \$337.9m (4.9 percent).

"The increase in the volume

of the gold and foreign currency reserves in May was mainly due to the purchase of foreign currency by the National Bank via the Belarusian Currency Stock Exchange, the increase in the cost of monetary gold and also foreign currency budget revenue," the source added.

In May 2021, the Government fulfilled external and internal obligations in foreign currency to the amount of about \$132m.

According to the country's main monetary guidelines for 2021, the volume of international reserve assets is expected to reach at least \$6bn on January 1st, 2022.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



The first unit launched

How the Belarusian NPP is working after the acceptance of the first power unit



The decision to build the Belarusian nuclear power plant was made in 2008. We have come a long way since then. A week ago, a significant event took place: the acceptance certificate for the first power unit was signed, with journalists attending the site of BelNPP and watching the work of the station at a new stage.

The station can be seen from a distance of 30km — thanks to the cooling towers. The height of each is 167m — comparable to a 50-storey building.

The evaporative cooling towers are the tallest concrete structures in Belarus. Some people think that it's smoke rising above them, but in reality, it's steam. The cooling towers are designed to cool large quantities of water through a directed air flow.

At the BelNPP site, special attention is drawn to the spray pools, which are also part of the cooling system.

The first power unit of the BelNPP is more than 5,000 units of various equipment and parts, as well as a huge number of technological systems. All these work as a single organism.

The turbine room of the first power unit greeted us with noise and hot air. "This is the epicentre of electricity generation. Its heart is a turbine unit. At the moment, the first power unit is at 100 percent capacity. The power — supplied to the grid — is approximately one-fifth or one-sixth of the country's current consumption. Everything is op-



erating normally, the equipment has confirmed the characteristics laid down by the project," noted Dmitry Krivin who heads the turbine room.

The journalists also managed to visit the central control panel. "The parameters are controlled here and the equipment of the 330kV switchgear and control gear is managed, as well as the link to the power-generating units and communications with the country's power grid," explained the shift supervisor, Anatoly Stanilevich.

Close attention is paid to safety issues at the NPP. The reactor building has a double protective shell and it cannot be damaged by



a point seven earthquake, hurricane, flood, tornado, explosion or even falling aircraft.

Low-enriched uranium dioxide, which is shaped as pellets 9-12mm in diameter and placed

into hermetically sealed tubes, is used as fuel in the reactor's core. A pellet weighs only 5 grams but it can substitute 350kg of oil, 360 cubic metres of natural gas and 400kg of coal.

Work on the second unit of the Belarusian nuclear power plant is in full swing. The unit is scheduled for launch in autumn. It is expected to be commissioned next year.

Nearly three billion kWh of electricity has been generated for the country's power grid since the first unit of the Belarusian nuclear power plant was connected. Once both units are commissioned, the nuclear power plant will be able to generate about 18.5 billion kWh of electricity per annum, which ensures roughly 40 percent of Belarus' demand for electricity.

Based on materials of belta.by

NEWS IN BRIEF

State holiday — National Unity Day — established in Belarus



The corresponding decree No. 206 was signed by the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, on June 7th.

National Unity Day will be celebrated on September 17th (not a day off). "This day became an act of historical justice in relation to the Belarusian people, divided against their will in 1921 under the terms of the Riga Peace Treaty, and forever entrenched in the national historical tradition," the President's press service said.

Unity — restored in 1939 — enabled Belarus to withstand the years of the Great Patriotic War and to take an honourable place in the international community while also becoming one of the co-founders of the United Nations.

"The establishment of National Unity Day on September 17th underlines the continuity of generations, the inviolability and self-sufficiency of the Belarusian nation and statehood," added the press service.

8th Forum of the Regions of Belarus and Russia to take place from June 29th to July 1st in the Moscow Region

This was announced at a working meeting dealing with preparations for the forum, held in the Council of the Republic



of the National Assembly of Belarus.

The topic of the upcoming forum is *Scientific and Technical Co-operation between Russia and Belarus in the Era of Digitalisation*. The format is traditional: a plenary session and work of specialised sessions, as well as a youth forum. As the State Secretary of the Union State, Dmitry Mezentsev, noted earlier, the current forum is expected to fill interregional interaction with new content, "If, at the previous forums in St. Petersburg and Minsk, agreements worth over \$500 and \$700m respectively were signed, today there is every reason to expect that — despite the pandemic — this milestone will be confirmed and overcome."

Results of the competition for the best logo of the Year of National Unity announced

A competent jury of an open remote competition for the best symbol (logo) of the Year of National Unity, which consisted of famous artists and designers, determined the winner. 104 applications were submitted for the contest, including 174 works and original concepts. Each of them is original and interesting. The best work was named 'We' by Vitaly Ortyukh — the designer



and author of the mascot of the 2014 IIHF World Championships in Minsk.

The logo submitted for the competition was made using elements of Belarusian decoration and a shade of cornflower blue — one of the symbols of our country. The slogan of the work reads: 'Every one of us is a part of a single entity, one big 'WE' — the Belarusian nation'.

The website dedicated to the Year of National Unity has recently been launched at <https://www.godedinstva.by>.

Belarusian State University up in the world rankings

In the current version, BSU took the 295th place in the QS World University Rankings, moving up 22 positions. This is the best result for the university in the entire history of participation in QS.

In total, there are about 30,000 universities in the world. Getting into the first thousand is a sign of the prestige of the university and its recognition in the international educational arena. The QS World University Rankings are the world's most popular and referenced source of university information.

The positive dynamics of BSU's position in QS is due to the improved reputation of the higher educational es-



tablishment among experts, as well as an increase in the number of foreign students. According to the new version of the rankings, the BSU is now ahead of Polish universities and universities of Lithuania and Ukraine.

A train of memory

A unique mobile museum — Victory Train — has arrived in Belarus from Russia. It is running on the Belarusian Railway from June 11th-28th. The campaign is timed to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War and the Year of National Unity declared in Belarus.

By Olga Korneeva

The Victory Train is the world's first immersive installation placed directly in carriages. Its main feature is not a train frozen in time from the past, but a fully-fledged moving train in which you can immerse yourself in the stories of real heroes of the Great Patriotic War.

The Victory Train set off for the first time from Belorusski railway station in Moscow in October 2020 and, since then, the museum has been visited by more than 90,000 people from 38 Russian cities. Recently, the train has arrived in the hero-city of Minsk!

Of 12 stylised cars, 9 are exposition ones and each features a new chapter of the Great Patriotic War in which the dramatic events of the war years, historical facts, destinies and memories of people are intertwined.

Acquaintance with the train-museum resembles time travel. Each car is dedicated to a separate story: from the train that transports soldiers to the front, visitors move to a front trench, a fascist concentration camp, then a sanitary car, to besieged Leningrad, a laboratory of a Soviet scientist who is creating weapons of Victory and, finally, they meet the train of victorious soldiers... One of the expositions is dedicated to the feat of the defenders of Brest Fortress — telling its visitors of the participants of the heroic



defence, soldiers and commanders of the Red Army, members of their families who were the first in the USSR to take the brunt of the German troops.

Symbolically, the Victory Train will arrive in Brest on June 21st: on the eve of the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War.

The train is full of incredible realistic 3D panoramas, multi-figure compositions and sculptures. The latter were created on the basis of photos of real people. The impression is enhanced by the music composed specially for each exhibition car.

There are no guides but there is a powerful multimedia accompaniment: 50 video projectors, 18 video walls, 12 touch tables.

Thanks to light and sound effects, they all reproduce the fierce intensity of air battles and tank attacks, draw pictures of marching soldiers' life and quiet memories of peaceful pre-war times. All this makes the exposition more touching and the feelings more acute. Moreover, the locomotive itself seems to have come off the screen of a war film.

In addition, the voice of driver Lidia is heard in every car. She shares her memories with visitors and tells them about the everyday life of the military. It's not surprising that the train is driven by a woman: in war times, this was not uncommon. The prototype for Lida is our fellow countrywoman: Yelena Chukhnyuk. Before the war, she worked at Gomel's locomotive

The large-scale historical and educational project was created in Russia by a team of the Nevsky Batalist creative workshop jointly with the Red Square media group and under the support of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, Russian Railways JSC and the Victory Volunteers public organisation — as part of the celebration of the 75th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War.

depot but, in the terrible 1940s, began driving military trains with weapons and ammunition to the front line. For the 90th anniversary of Yelena Chukhnyuk (she lived a long full life), her name was given to one of the diesel trains of the Gomel branch of the Belarusian Railway.

The route of the train is designed so that as many residents of Belarus as possible can visit it. From June 11th-13th, the museum had a stop in Minsk; on June 14th-15th, it moved to Orsha; on June 16th-17th — to Vitebsk; on June 18th — to Polotsk; on June 19th-20th — to Grodno. In Brest, the Victory Train will stay longer: from June 21st-24th. Gomel will welcome it on June 25th-26th. The Belarusian route of the exhibition will finish in Mogilev: on June 27th-28th.

The Victory Train is open for visitors free of charge.

By Irina Ovsepyan

The forum in Molodechno from June 11th to 13th brought together the best creative forces of the country, with talented youth and a whole constellation of popular artists appearing on the stage.

The grand opening, as always, took place on the stage of the Summer Amphitheatre, with the National Academic Concert Orchestra of Belarus — under the direction of the People's Artist of Belarus, maestro Mikhail Finberg — preparing a new concert programme, entitled *Talaka* — dedicated to the works of the classical writer and poet of Belarusian literature, Vladimir Korotkevich, and the famous songwriter, Igor Palivoda.

"Igor Palivoda was a super-talented person, he worked in our orchestra and in the *Pesnyary* ensemble. He was not only a composer, but also an excellent pianist," says Mikhail Finberg. "In recent years, his name hasn't been heard as often as we'd like, and I'm afraid that people will start to forget him. We tried to correct this injustice, and all the most popular songs of Igor Palivoda have been performed for those that have been living with us for many years, together with the whole of Belarus. Don't think that Palivoda is an average person; no, this is the real genius of the Belarusian song. The concert programme was also dedicated to Vladimir Korotkevich and his poems

Starry evenings

Lots of events within just three days: the 20th National Festival of Belarusian Song and Poetry *Molodechno-2021* received guests, preparing the most eventful and stellar programme for the public in its jubilee year



were recited from the stage of the Summer Amphitheatre. People often talk about him as a prose writer, but Korotkevich's poetry is also brilliant, we grew up on it, although it's rarely performed at concerts. This poetry must be known, loved and studied, and we facilitate this."

Traditionally, during the opening of the festival, a solemn ceremony of awarding the winners of the competition for young performers of Belarusian pop songs was held. As Mikhail Finberg said, talent-

ed young people attended the competition this year, "All the youngsters who became laureates of the *Molodechno-2021* competition are worthy of attention. The main thing I want to say is that it is necessary to work with them! It is necessary to love them, to help them after the competition, so that talented vocalists do not disappear."

Little pop stars have also got their chance to receive applause: a gala concert of laureates of the competition of young vocalists *Maladzichok-2021* took place at

the Molodechno Palace of Culture. Singing children, their parents and teachers view it as an important step in professional development, which is largely due to the serious and impartial jury.

"I was surprised by the level of the youngsters," admitted the singer Janet, who was among the judges this year. "Despite the fact that, since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, many have been working with educators online, the preparation of the participants is impressive. We evaluated many criteria to de-

termine which of the youngsters performed better. There were a lot of applicants in all categories, and it was difficult to make a decision. This is actually great, as judging from experience, it often happens that the leader is immediately visible. However, this time we had heated debates, since the choice of the winners wasn't easy. Overall, I drew attention to the fact that many of the young performers did a great job, although, again, I cannot imagine how the children studied and interacted with teachers in an online format. We were very pleased with the result. It is nice to know that we have a future — there are those who will continue to represent the Belarusian stage."

Also, residents of Molodechno were expected to get to know the updated version of *Paulinka* from the Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre: the sensational production fits perfectly into the festival format, as it has plenty poetry and folk songs, while the musical talent of the young actors can only be envied.

The festival ended with a Sunday concert *Molodechno — Towards the Hits*: the closing ceremony again gathered spectators in the Summer Amphitheatre.

What is written in ink...



Wartime letters, faded notes on postcards, burned prenuptial agreements and damaged bills of debt: how to recover the broken text



Andrei Kuchin: 'With the help of special equipment, we found out that this was the stamp of military censorship, and even read the number of the censor'

Photo courtesy of the State Forensic Examination Committee

liberated thanks to the courage of Fiodor Donets.

Sherlock Holmes is no match for this device

Paper hasn't changed significantly since its invention by the Chinese in 105AD. Surprisingly, some of the 19th century records are better preserved than those made five years ago. It turns out how well a record will be readable years later depends not on paper, but on ink. Blue and purple inks fade faster than black, which contain carbon. For the same reason, pencil notes will last the longest. However, the disadvantage of pencil is that notes can be erased with an eraser. But even then, you can try to restore them.

specialists had to manually select the right filter from a set of optical glasses. Today, the work of forensic experts of the State Forensic Examination Committee is greatly facilitated by technology. The special device enables specialists to explore the recording in different light sources using additional filters, and the whole process is fully automated!

Experts will also be able to recover documents passed through the shredder. More than once they've managed to read the text even on burnt papers. However, in the case of fire, the result depends on the state of the paper. You've probably noticed that when it burns, the paper changes colour from dark brown to black. At temperatures above 400 degrees, charred paper turns grey and turns into ash. However, colorants that are resistant to high temperatures — printing paint, ink and graphite — appear more contrasting against the base. This is how the content of the burnt documents is established.

Sometimes important words become unreadable for various reasons. Then the forensic experts of the State Forensic Examination Committee come to the rescue. They help restore texts that have lost their readable appearance under the influence of water, sun, fire and time. Thanks to them, more than once it has been possible to shed light on the fate of the Great Patriotic War soldiers. This time, forensic experts have restored a postcard from the front and a letter of thanks from a Soviet soldier.

By Inna Gorbatenko

The fate of a hero

Time-worn and slightly yellowed... The military postcard was sent from the front back in 1942, in which the soldier informs his family that he is alive and is on the front line. This was the last news from him... Many years later, having found a military postcard in the home archives, the granddaughter of the Red Army soldier decided to find out about the fate of her grandfather and turned to a forensic expert of the central office of the State Forensic Examination Committee for help.

"It was forbidden for military personnel to give out their deployment. The author of this postcard showed ingenuity and wrote: 'I am sending you a Bydgoszcz greeting'. Bydgoszcz is a city in Poland," says a leading state forensic expert, Andrei Kuchin,

referring to the restored text of the document. "There is a barely distinguishable stamp on the postcard. With the help of special equipment, we found out that this was the stamp of the military censorship, and even read the number of the censor: 'Viewed by the military censorship. 17031'. The information will greatly facilitate the search. Knowing the censor's number, the granddaughter will be able to track the movement of her grandfather and his part using archival documents."

Continuing the topic of military documents, the expert shows me another copy: a letter of thanks from Stalin. Submitting this document for examination, the grandson of the Red Army soldier, Fiodor Donets, said that his grandfather hardly ever spoke about the war. It's only thanks to this letter — preserved in the family archives — that the descendants learned their grand-



Two decades ago, experts had to manually select the necessary light filter from a set of optical glasses

father had performed more than two dozen heroic deeds during the Great Patriotic War.

The photo 'before' shows that the document was badly damaged: a stain — presumably from water — blurred part of the record in the very centre. The experts had a great deal of work to do to return it to a readable form. After all, these words were worth reading. Here is what they managed to restore: 'The Supreme Commander-in-Chief Generalissimo of the Soviet Union, comrade Stalin, announced to you twenty-one gratitudes for your bravery, courage and skills shown in the capture of the cities of Berdichev and Zhitomir, in the destruction and encirclement of the Korsun-Shevchenko group of German troops... during the breaking through the heavily fortified defence of the Germans northeast of Budapest and reaching the Danube River... during the defeat of eleven German tank divisions in the area of Lake Balaton...' The letter lists several dozen cities that were



The work is now greatly facilitated by a special device: a video spectral comparator

Mr. Kuchin demonstrates this technique to me, "In detective series, you often see the following trick. Let's say the perpetrator made a note in a notebook, then ripped out the page and destroyed it. If we lightly shade the next page of a notebook, an imprint of what was written on a torn sheet appears on it. We can make it easier. We just put the surviving page in a special device, select the desired angle of illumination and get the text."

This device with a complex name — a video spectral comparator — deserves special attention. In the days of Sherlock Holmes, detectives used different types of lamps. Then a case with light filters appeared in the arsenal of forensic experts. Twenty years ago,

Prose for life

The bulk of the forensic expert's work is not handwritten, but printed text. The State Forensic Examination Committee specialists worked with everything: donations, wills, passports, military letters and even pages of books.

Finally, the forensic expert gave some tips on how to prolong the life of important documents and whether it's worth restoring them if something has gone wrong, "It's better not to fold documents since they crease and tear on the folds. If this happens, in no case should they be glued, especially with tape or silicate glue. These will completely destroy everything written, and no expert will be able to restore such a document."



Protests in Poland

Some four thousand Polish coal mining and power workers protested in Warsaw against the gradual phasing out of coal extraction and use and against a European Union court order to immediately close down a mine

Trade unions organising the protest with banners and noisy horns said Europe's shift from coal — which is abundant in Poland but polluting — towards renewable energy will eliminate hundreds of thousands of jobs in the country.

The protesters also argued that the policy would threaten Poland's energy security and make the country dependent on fuel and power imports from Germany and Russia.

"We are threatened with the loss of energy sovereignty if we close our mines, our power plants and will be forced to import power," said Krzysztof Gonerski, head of a Solidarity union chapter at the ENEA energy company in Gorzow Wielkopolski.

"Tens of thousands of good jobs will be eliminated. We are protesting against that," Gonerski added.

He said wind and solar energy are not enough to substitute for coal, while the only viable option is nuclear energy.

The demonstrators accuse the right-wing government of caving in to EU demands and charting out the timetable for the full closure of mines by 2049. Energy experts say that will happen much sooner, because Poland's coal mines are becoming increasingly deeper and costlier, making extraction unviable. Some users are already importing cheaper coal, including from Russia.

The protesters also criticised the European Union and the recent deci-

sion of the EU Court of Justice that ordered an immediate halt to the mining of lignite in the Turow mine, close to the border with the Czech Republic.

"I cannot imagine Turow being closed, it is too important in Poland's grid," Gonerski said, stressing that the Czech Republic and Germany operate a number of lignite mines in the same area.

Moreover, nurses from 40 hospitals across Poland staged a 'warning strike' last week in protest against proposed pay rises they regard as too low. According to the National Board of the Trade Union of Nurses and Midwives, the new pay legislation 'does not guarantee a stable framework for raising the basic remuneration of nurses and midwives'.

COVID-19 lab leak theory to be plausible

A report on the origins of COVID-19 by a US government national laboratory concluded that the hypothesis of a virus leak from a Chinese lab in Wuhan is plausible and deserves further investigation, the *Wall Street Journal* said, citing people familiar with the classified document

The study was prepared in May 2020 by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California and was referred to by the State Department when it conducted an inquiry into the pandemic's origins during the final months of the Trump administration, the *WSJ* report said.

The journal said Lawrence Livermore has considerable expertise on biological issues and drew its assessment on genomic analysis of the version of the SARS virus which causes COVID-19.



There has been renewed interest in the debate around the origin of COVID-19 in recent weeks, and the theory that it was from a possible lab leak has also been fanned to a great extent. A couple of weeks ago, US President Joe Biden ordered a closer intelligence investigation into the origins of COVID-19, asking for a report in 90 days.

Largest dinosaur species



Scientists in Australia have classified a new species of dinosaur, discovered in 2007, as the largest ever found on the continent

The *Australotitan cooperensis* or 'the southern titan', is among the 15 largest dinosaurs found worldwide. Experts said the titanosaur would have been up to 6.5m tall and 30m long, or 'as long as a basketball court'. Its skeleton was first discovered on a farm in south-west Queensland.

Palaeontologists had worked over the past decade to identify the dinosaur — distinguishing it from other known species by comparing scans of its bones to those of other sauropods.

Sauropods were plant-eating dinosaurs known for their size. They had small heads, very long necks, long tails and thick, pillar-like legs. These dinosaurs roamed the continent during the Cretaceous Period, about 92-96 million years ago.

The team of researchers had nicknamed the dinosaur 'Cooper' while working on it, after the nearby Cooper Creek where it was found. The identifying process had been a lengthy one due to the remote location of the bones and their size and delicate condition. But many of the remains were found intact, said researchers from the Queensland Museum and the Eromanga Natural History Museum.

The team found the *Australotitan* was closely related to three other sauropod species — the *Wintonotitan*, *Diamantinasaurus* and *Savannasaurus*.

Train crash in Pakistan

The death toll from a horrific collision of two trains in southern Pakistan rose to at least 65 after rescuers pulled 15 more bodies from crumpled cars a day after the crash, government officials said

The collision took place on a dilapidated railway track in Ghotki, a district in Sindh Province, when an express train barrelled into another that had derailed minutes earlier.

Most of the passengers — there were about 1,100 on both trains — were asleep when the Millat Express, travelling between the southern port city of Karachi to Sargodha in eastern Punjab Province, derailed and many of its cars overturned. As passengers scrambled to get out, another passenger train, the Sir Syed Express, crashed into the derailed coaches.

Shafiq Ahmed Mahisar, Commissioner in Sukkar District, said all the

bodies had been retrieved after the overnight efforts. Besides the 65 passengers who died, more than 100 passengers were injured, he said.

Army engineers and soldiers dispatched from a nearby military base assisted in the rescue and heavy machinery arrived in Ghotki hours later to cut open some train cars. Engineers restored rail service after repairing the track where the accident happened.

Senior railway official Arshad Khan said an initial investigation into the crash suggested the Millat Express derailed because a recently welded joint of the track broke.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Features of noble splendour

Early 20th century photos feature the Puslowskis' ancient estate: Albertine

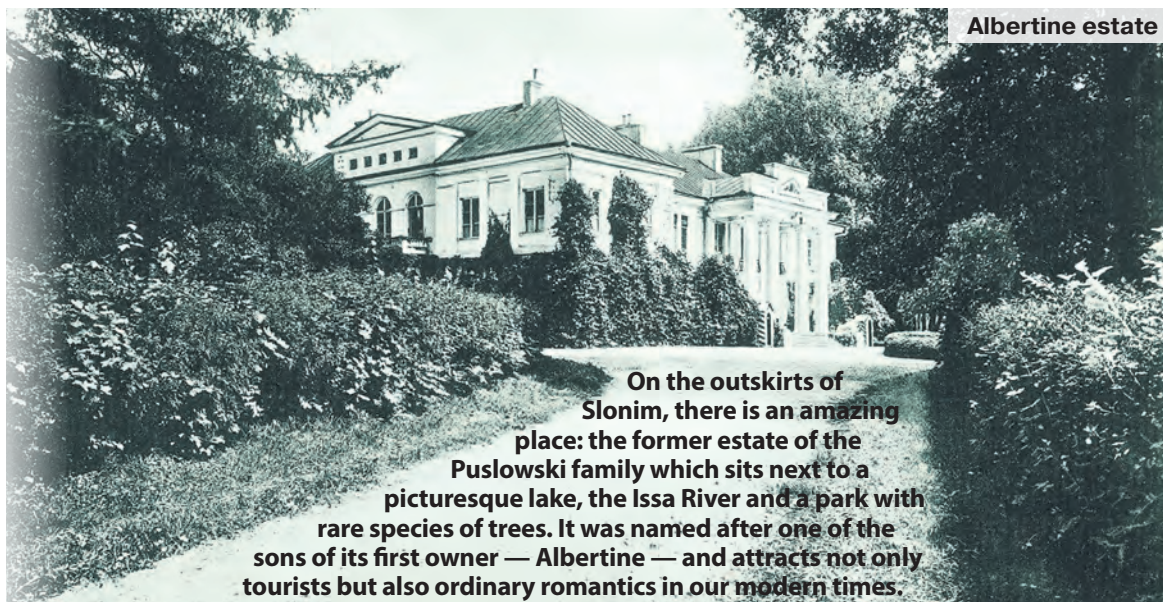
By Marina Kuzmich, Vladimir Likhodedov

I remember as a child, when I was passing through Slonim with my parents, I heard that good doctors lived there. People from all around the country came to the city for medical help. At that time, I didn't realise that the male name of Albert — which is rare in our latitude — and the hospital with four columns and sculptural figures of lions at its entrance have something in common. It turned out that the hospital, the adjacent buildings and even Slonim's residential district in Kolkhoznaya Street were a part of the famous Albertine estate.

In Soviet times, the buildings of the settlement were given over to an educational institution. Later, a sports and recreation centre and the sports club of a cardboard and paper factory were located here. At present, they house a local centre of culture. Largely owing to the festivals and open-air shows held here, the site still enjoys popularity among tourists and the Albertine estate complex is included in the State List of Historical and Cultural Values of Belarus.

There is a legend about the name of this picturesque district of Slonim. The leader of the nobles of the Slonim District, Wojciech Puslowski, noticed these beautiful places (the original name of the settlement was Yurzdyki) and decided to build a large industrial centre there. He had three sons: Albert, Magdalin and Tit. After the tragic death of Albert, the estate was named in his honour. Local residents said that Albert accidentally drowned in the lake with his daughter. According to another version, the count's son wanted to hide his jewels in the pond. Over time, there have been many people who've wanted to find them but their searches didn't yield any results.

The estate complex in the style of late classicism was founded in the second half of the 19th century. The



Albertine estate

On the outskirts of Slonim, there is an amazing place: the former estate of the Puslowski family which sits next to a picturesque lake, the Issa River and a park with rare species of trees. It was named after one of the sons of its first owner — Albertine — and attracts not only tourists but also ordinary romantics in our modern times.



Outbuildings

Photos from the personal collection of Vladimir Likhodedov



A greenhouse

The entrance gate and the stable built in the early 20th century from the front red brick are well preserved. On seeing the building for the first time, it's possible to mistake the stable for the palace itself as it looks amazingly well built. Tourists especially like to take photos near this Art Nouveau building.

In times of Wojciech Puslowski, a powerful industrial complex was built next to the estate. In the late 19th — early 20th century, there were about a dozen enterprises that produced cloth and silk, matches and nails, paper and cardboard. Local factories produced carpets, cast iron, bricks, and flour. A factory village of peasants who worked at the production facility was built close to the estate.

In the late 1870s, there was a school, an inn and shops there and, in 1885, a railway was laid. In 1886, a hydroelectric power station was built and, according to the 1897 census, 518 people lived there.

In the late 19th century, the Puslowski family fell out of favour with the tsarist authorities. Their estate was confiscated and renamed Alexandrinsk — in honour of the Russian Emperor, Alexander II. In the 1920s, the estate returned to its former name.

In 1939, when Western Belorussia was under Polish rule, only a paper and cardboard factory operated here but it was destroyed during the Great Patriotic War. The facility was restored in 1961. Today, the building of the old mill houses the workshop of the Albertine cardboard and paper factory.

While looking at old photos of the Puslowski palaces, we are transported to the late 19th century — to enjoy well-kept courtyards decorated with sculptural compositions, spacious reading rooms and a library. Those who happen to visit the ancient estate, go home inspired by the history that lurks here in every detail. Everything preserves the memory of the former beauty and grandeur of the park and instils confidence that the glorious history of this place will continue.

count built not only festive, winter and summer palaces here, but also a park with a pond. In the festive palace, he received guests. Balls and theatrical performances were held on the first floor. The reception rooms were decorated with paintings by Italian artists. It's impossible to see any of them now: the estate hosts took thirty wagons of heirlooms out of the country in the 1930s. It's possible to imagine how luxurious the estate was by looking at the remains of stucco on the walls, the vases and lion figures at the front entrance. Interestingly, the king of animals is seen not only here: the lion is also depicted on Slonim's coat of arms.



A factory building

Usine d'Albertine



A library at the Albertine estate

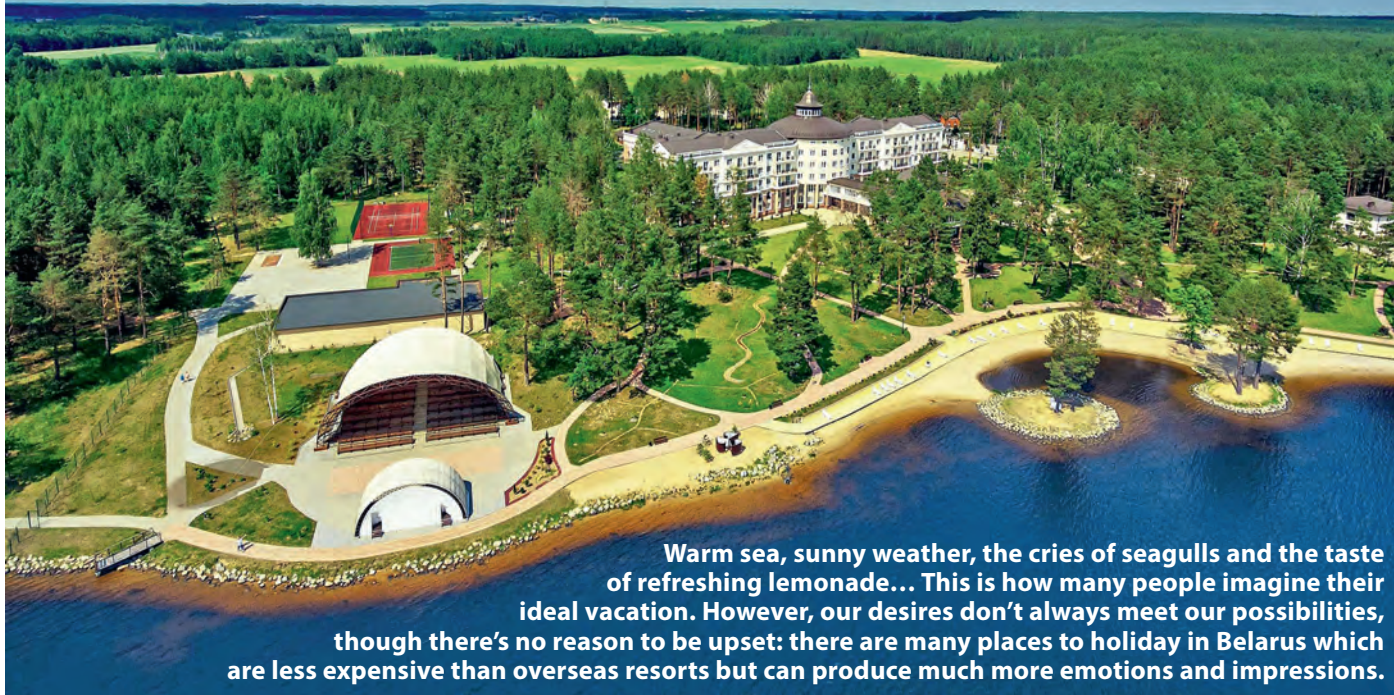


Albertine estate on the pond side



One of the halls of the palace

Vacation is here!



Warm sea, sunny weather, the cries of seagulls and the taste of refreshing lemonade... This is how many people imagine their ideal vacation. However, our desires don't always meet our possibilities, though there's no reason to be upset: there are many places to holiday in Belarus which are less expensive than overseas resorts but can produce much more emotions and impressions.

By Diana Shestakevich

Option one: rural flavour

Are you ready to wake up not by an alarm clock but by crowing, to eat fried eggs with bacon cooked in the Russian stove for breakfast and to go out into the garden to site there in a hammock with a favourite book in the shade of spreading trees?.. If so, then feel free to book a farmstead.

Many homestead hosts understand that people are no longer attracted by a banya, a petting zoo and national cuisine. Therefore, they have turned to their imaginations and come up with something that can win over the tourists. Some offer their guests the chance to grind flour with centuries-old millstones, others help them feel like Vikings and sail a dragon ship.

Meanwhile, one of the cottages in Polesie propose not only comfortable but also healthy sleeping places. Two beds in a special house situated at a small bee apiary have no ordinary mattresses: theirs are filled with hay and fragrant herbs. Host Pavel Kononovich has kept bees for many years and knows all of them. "The indoor air is saturated with propolis, which has unique antimicrobial properties and improves metabolism. A beehive is a natural inhaler. It's very easy to breathe here, both sleep and mood are improved," he explains.

The price of such a vacation depends on the location. For example, it will cost around \$140 (equivalent) per day for a couple to stay in a house 20km from Minsk near the Dubrovsky reservoir.



However, the same sum could be spent by a company of four people for four days in a homestead in the Zhlobin District.

Option two: wellness

Those who want to spend a vacation with health benefits should take a closer look at sanatoriums. Some young people view this option with irony since it's a vacation for the elderly, they believe. However, this is not true. Health resorts offer many diagnostic and medical services, use various spa technologies which annually attract thousands of guests — including those from abroad. The popularity of sanatorium recreation is confirmed by reservation figures: rooms in many spas are booked for several months in advance. However, it's still possible to find a free date.



If you are not sure about such a resort vacation, then you simply need to book a couple of days — i.e. the Antistress Complex offers a five-day stay on the Minsk Sea bank. It includes accommodation, four meals a day, daily access to the pool with banyas and three spa treatments to choose from. This programme will cost about \$315 per person.

If you are already familiar with a sanatorium, then feel free to buy a voucher for a longer stay. For example, a health resort in the Pruzhany District will cost you from \$600 for 21 days.

Option three: active

If you don't wish to spend a vacation in one place and like to sleep in the fresh air, then take a tent and go camping. If long walks with a backpack don't look attractive, then consider the option of cycling which has gained popularity in recent years. Slightly more than \$100 will be needed to join a group cycling 400km in eight days; as part of it, you'll visit the castles in Lida, Novogrudok, Mir, palaces and historical monuments in Nesvizh, Kossovo, Ruzhany. Entry tickets to local museums and the travel to the starting point of the trip will have to be paid for.

Brave people can go kayaking but those who choose this option for the first time should join a team of experienced tourists. One of the companies offers a 6-8-hour 'water hike' for \$80 per person. The price includes equipment rental (kayaks,



paddles, life jackets), instructor support and a hot lunch. Those who are confident in their strength and ready for a weekend tour will have to pay twice as much.

Option four: local history

It's possible to take a picture for Instagram with the Paris geolocation without leaving Belarus: you simply need to go to the agro-town of this name in the Postavy District. It has its own Eiffel Tower, the height of which is ten times less than the original. In turn, to get to Missouri, you don't need to have an American visa: the village with this name is located in the Lida District. You can also go straight to Bali: not in Indonesia but in the Shchuchin District.

Actually, this is only beginning of the list of interesting places to travel. At the beginning of your vacation, buy a map of the country and start your adventure. As a result, you might visit each of the 118 districts of Belarus — you never know. That would be truly great!

A holiday that unites

Kobrin hosts *Vytoki* cultural and sports festival

A.V. Suvorov War History Museum, the city Palace of Culture and other iconic sites in Kobrin attract increased attention from those keen on national history and culture, as well as adherents to a healthy lifestyle. After Lida and Orsha, one of the most dynamically developing district centres of the Brest Region is hosting the *Vytoki (Origins)*. A *Step to Olympus* cultural and sports festival.

economic, cultural and sports potential of the regions.

In the first few days of the event, residents and guests of Kobrin were able to participate in the work of cultural and educational platforms and find out about modern Belarusian fine art while also enjoying the chords of organ music and meeting famous personalities. An educational seminar on the development of creative and innovative projects took place, as did a cultural and economic programme, entitled *The Capital of Place* at Kobrin Butter and Cheese Factory with a discussion of the development and promotion of national and regional brands.

It was crowded in Kobrin's Palace

of Culture during the *Kola Chasu* (The Wheel of Time) and children's drawing exhibitions.

The Director of the Arthaos Gallery, Lilia Lukashenko — who is one of the organisers of the event — stressed that the presentation united the works of eminent Belarusian authors, whose pieces are well known to both the general public and new young talent from the regions, "The main exhibition displays the works of contemporary Belarusian painters. Children's drawings can also be seen here. We are trying to find talented youngsters who have a desire and aspiration to create and show their works. Children's drawings are in the same room with the paintings

by famous artists, symbolising the continuity of generations. Three of the best works will be selected, and children will be awarded well-deserved diplomas on the big festival stage."

Many residents of Kobrin took part in the round table discussion at the A.V. Suvorov War History Museum, exploring the *Promotion of Historical and Cultural Heritage*. The participants of the discussion familiarised themselves with the rich exposition of the museum, making sure that today it is devoted not only to military history. The event ended with a big sports fest — a holiday for the whole family, a concert with the participation of Belarusian pop stars and colourful fireworks.



By Aleksandr Kurets

The organisers of the *Vytoki* — the National Olympic Committee, the Federation of Trade Unions of Belarus, Arthaos and BelBrandAudit — said that the purpose of the festival is to reveal the

The future is here

Belarusian fighters acquitted themselves brilliantly at the BRAVE CF tournament

Mixed martial arts (MMA) have long become the main global trend among fighting tournaments, with their popularity continuing to grow and the ratings breaking records. Belarus also has someone to look up to: one of the first champions of the most prestigious UFC promotion in the heavyweight category was our sambo wrestler, a graduate of the Minsk Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Andrei Orlovsky — known to fans as Pitbull. He still goes to the octagon, although his best sporting years have already gone. However, as it turned out, we also have young fighters capable of putting Belarusian MMA into new orbits in the near future. This was clearly demonstrated by the BRAVE CF51 tournament, which was successfully held in Minsk with the support of the National Olympic Committee.

By Sergei Kanashits

The BRAVE promotion belongs to the royal family of Bahrain and is considered the second most important in the world after the American UFC. Athletes from all over the world (now also several Belarusians) are members of this organisation on long-term contracts while tournaments are annually held in different countries. Belarus became the 22nd on this list.

Our young guys, having signed agreements with BRAVE, got a unique chance to loudly declare themselves, to try to set their sights on the championship belt, to become

famous and to glorify their native country. Some — as the fights in Minsk showed — seem to have serious prospects of growing into real MMA stars.

The main event of the evening at the Falcon Arena, smoothly flowing into the night, was planned to be a duel between Brazilian Lucas Martins and Brazilian Marcel Grabinski. The pair managed a bunch of barbs to each other on the eve of the match and stretch the nerves of anticipation of the fight to the limit. However, to the surprise of the audience, Grabinski never appeared in the octagon. As it turned out later, the battle was interrupted by sudden stomach problems. Thus, fate

chose our Denis Mager as the main hero of the tournament; his meeting with Kazakh Rinat Sagyntai preceded the final battle.

Before the personal meeting, both fighters had no defeats: Sagyntai won all ten fights while Mager boasted seven victories, with six of these ahead of schedule: four times by suffocation and two — by shock knockouts. Denis also fought his next bout impeccably by completely dominating the opponent and 'turning off his light' already in the first round, carrying out an uppercut — amazing in its power and technique. Nevertheless, he didn't celebrate his victory, but first of all he dampened the enthusiasm



A fight between Kurbonsho Jamolov (Tajikistan) and Vadim Rolich (Belarus)

of the audience and bowed over the defeated opponent, as nobility was always in the blood of Belarusians. After such a brilliant victory, now Mager should certainly expect another fight under the auspices of BRAVE, but on a more serious level.

The same applies to Vadim Kutsy. Master of sports in free-style wrestling and winner of the Junior Belarusian Championship, he's strong not only in par terre position, but is also good at giving blows, since the title of world champion in hand-to-hand fighting speaks for itself. So this evening, Daniyar Abdibaev from Kyrgyzstan had no chances in the confrontation with Vadim.

The judges gave the victory to the Belarusian athlete by unanimous decision, and the main surprise for the audience was that Abdibaev managed to stay on his feet until the final bell. "The future is here!" Kutsy immediately proclaimed from the octagon, addressing the President of BRAVE CF Mohammad Shahid. It seems he heard him.

Another Belarusian who celebrated a beautiful and confident victory was Vadim Rolich. A roundhouse kick in the stomach plunged his rival — Kurbonsho Jamolov from Tajikistan — into shock, and then it was just a matter of technique. Bravo, guys, keep it up!

Hockey trophy in Minsk

The winner of the Gagarin Cup as part of the Omsk Avangard, Andrei Stas, brings a hockey trophy to show sports fans in Belarus

By Arina Novikova

On this day, the cup visited three arenas in the capital. In the morning it was exhibited at the Chizhovka-Arena. Then it could be seen at the indoor skating rink in the Gorky Park while the next stop in the capital was the Sports Palace.

Last season in the KHL Championship, three Belarusian ice hockey players who played for Avangard Omsk became the owners of the Gagarin Cup: Kirill



Gotovets, Andrei Stas and Nikita Komarov. In addition, Belarusian specialist Yuri Kuzmenkov won the honorary trophy as one of the members of the coaching staff of the Siberian team.

Andrei Stas will spend the next season with Chelyabinsk Traktor, but he used his winner's privilege and brought the trophy to Minsk, where he first began to play hockey.

Avangard Omsk has won the Gagarin Cup for the first time in its history, beating



CSKA Moscow in the decisive stage of the tournament. Previously, the trophy was won by Ak Bars Kazan, Salavat Yulaev Ufa, Dinamo Moscow, Metallurg Novokuznetsk, SKA St. Petersburg and CSKA Moscow.

Photo of the week



BELTA

During Vytoki cultural and sports festival in Orsha

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



June 17th marks the 95th anniversary of the birth of Nikolai Yeremenko (1926-2000) — a Belarusian theatre and film actor, People's Artist of Belarus, People's Artist of the USSR, laureate of the State Prize of Belarus. He

worked on the stage of the Belarusian State Academic Drama Theatre named after Yakub Kolas and the National Academic Theatre named after Yanka Kupala. He starred in the films *Ivan Makarovich*, *Moscow-Genoa*, *Eternal Call*, *Son for Father*, etc.

June 19th — 95 years ago (1926), the 1st issue of the *Narodnaya Sprava* newspaper was published in Vilno — the organ of the Belarusian peasant workers' community. It was published in Vilno in the Belarusian language twice a week, criticising the domestic and foreign policy of Poland, writing about the establishment of new organisations, alongside the economic and political situation in Belarus. It also published the works of Tetka, Pilip Pestrak and articles about Yakub Kolas. Thirty-nine issues were published, of which six were confiscated. It was closed by the Polish authorities on November 27th, 1926.



June 19th is World Children's Football Day, announced by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International



Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) in order to draw the world's attention to the problems of children and to promote healthy lifestyles among young people.

June 20th marks the Day of Medical Workers in the Republic of Belarus, celebrated on the third Sunday in June. Everyday care for the health of the population, prevention of diseases and the return of patients to a full life — all this gives special status to medical workers, people of high social conscience.



June 20th marks the 455th anniversary of the birth of Sigismund III (Zygmunt III) Vasa (1566-1632) — Grand Duke of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, King of Poland (1587-1632), King of Sweden (1592-99). He was the son of the King of Sweden, John III Vasa, and Catherine Jagiellon — daughter of



King Sigismund I the Old. The policies of Sigismund III led to a further decline of the state and a decrease in its role in European political life in the 17th century.



On June 21st, 1941, the USSR Government adopted a decree on the adoption of rocket artillery — launchers BM-13 ('Katyusha'), created at NII-3 (Research Institute) — into service with the Red Army. On June 29th, the world's first rocket artillery battery of 7 BM-13 combat vehicles was formed under the command of Captain I.A. Flerov.

June 21st marks the 280th anniversary of the birth of Doctor of Medicine Gilibert Jean Emmanuel (1741-1814) — French and Belarusian naturalist, surgeon and anatomist. In 1775-1781, he organised and directed the Grodno Medical Academy — the first in Belarus. Moreover, he founded obstetric and veterinary schools, a clinical hospital, a botanical garden in Grodno. He is also an author of works on the flora of Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, as well as on the epidemiology of endemic diseases in these countries. He died in 1814.



June 21st — the Day of Summer Solstice — the moment in the annual rotation of the Earth around the Sun, when there is the shortest night

and the longest day of the year, when the Sun reaches its highest position. Overall, this day symbolises the fertility of land, cultural heritage and millennial traditions.

June 22nd marks the Day of National Memory of the Victims of the Great Patriotic War. Eighty years ago, on June 22nd, 1941, the Great Patriotic



War began. Fascist Germany — perfidiously violating the non-aggression pact — began a war against the Soviet Union. From the first day of the war, Belarus became the arena for the largest battles, the beginning being the heroic defence of Brest Fortress. For three long years, the Belarusian land languished under the fascist yoke. The Nazis chose the policy of genocide and mass bloody terror as the main means of implanting their 'new order' here. In total, 260 death camps and 70 ghettos were created within the Republic. In this war Belarus lost every third inhabitant — the memory of them will live forever.