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Cadets of Minsk's City Cadet School No. 2 attend *Towards Victory* photo exhibition at the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History

Sacred memory

Among the heroic events and dates of the Great Patriotic War are those that occupy a special place in the historical memory of our people. → 7





By Varvara Morozova

Such excursions have already become a tradition for patriots of Belarus, with the first two taking place shortly before the New Year. The press secretary of the President, Natalya Eismont, who greeted the guests that day, assured us that warm greetings from the guests were given to Aleksandr Lukashenko.



It was the Head of State who promised that all interested patriots will be able to visit the Palace of Independence.

The President doesn't like it when the Palace of Independence is referred to as his working residence. Aleksandr Lukashenko has repeatedly emphasised that this property belongs to the country, therefore Belarusians should know the capabilities of their fellow countrymen. After all, the main thing is that this symbol of sovereignty was built entirely from materials sourced domestically.

...The participants of the event learned that the Palace was built in only 30 months instead of the planned 58. During the visit, it was physically impossible to visit all the halls and offices, but the guests attended the Fireplace Hall, the Hall of State Awards, the Hall of

Excursion for true patriots

At the end of January, the Palace of Independence welcomed the participants of the *For Belarus!* rally

Official Ceremonies, the Winter Garden and the Museum of Gifts to the Belarusian People.

With its already legendary building, unique stories and details: there is no need to question the importance of the Palace. It is clear that the guests have taken lots of selfies and photos as keepsakes. They also asked Natalya Eismont to convey their words of gratitude to the President, and assurances that they will preserve the unity of the country.

A hundred participants of the excursion included some young citizens of Belarus, as well as older people and whole families. These are some of the impressions of the guests at the Palace.



Olga Vecher:

I feel great pride in our country. I feel pride in the fact that we have a large Presidential Palace built by our Belarusians: both the designer and the builders. Materials, ornaments and the furniture are also Belarus-made; it gives me great pleasure to know that our Republic has specialists in these enterprises. I have been taking part in motor rallies for a long time and I was really looking forward to this visit. I am an architect; therefore, I also evaluate the design solutions and interiors from a professional position. We have always supported the President. Now we have won a moral victory and I hope also a physical one.

Vitaly Leonovich:

This is a grandiose structure. I entered and felt that this was the face, the centre, and the symbol of our state, of our Belarus. Its beauty is incredible. We should all be like that: solid, strong, beautiful and self-confident. My friends and I are like that at patriotic demonstrations. And it was such an honour to visit the Palace. I am greatly impressed and very happy. Just wonderful.

Marina and Andrei Guzge:

It gave me the shivers. Our emotions were wild. When we were driving here we were very worried. When we watch it on TV, we don't understand how large, beautiful and bright the Palace is. We are constantly participating in car rallies, so it was impossible to stay at home. Back in August, we heard that people were allegedly forced to attend rallies for Belarus. I bought a flag and went to see the reactions of the people in order to understand: are they in chains, or what? No. The people are free,



and people want to see support. Yes, at first it was scary to express my position. Some people also threatened to burn my car... But you can't sit at home and wait until we are kicked out of our own houses! In the Year of Nation Unity, I would like the people to understand the truth. We hope that we will develop the country together.

Telephone conversation

President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke on the phone with President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping



The heads of state exchanged congratulations for the occasion of the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and China (this topic was the leitmotif of the conversation) and discussed in detail various areas of co-operation.

Aleksandr Lukashenko and Xi Jinping acknowledged a high level of Belarusian-Chinese political relations which have been successfully developing in the format of a trust-based comprehensive strategic partnership and mutually beneficial co-operation.

Given the dynamic liaisons, both parties are prepared to further increase the levels of co-operation and are working on the text of a relevant declaration.

Aleksandr Lukashenko thanked the President of the People's Republic of China for supporting Belarus in the international arena. With this in mind, the Chinese leader commented that only the people can decide on and determine the future of their country. In general, the strategic partners of Belarus and China will together confront external threats. Belarus will also continue to support China on all key issues.

Much of the conversation focused on the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. Both parties exchanged information on measures taken to counter the spread of infection. As the Chinese President noted, there is no reason to let our guards down yet. This is why, in accordance with the agreements, Belarus and China will continue to be as open and prepared to co-operate

on this front as possible. The People's Republic of China also confirmed its readiness to supply the COVID-19 vaccine to Belarus in the necessary quantities.

Both presidents welcomed the growth of bilateral trade as an undeniably positive fact. They were pleased to note that business activity has not declined in the difficult conditions of the pandemic. Shipments of Belarusian agricultural products to the Chinese market were cited as a case in point. Food and timber products remain the key points of growth. Belarus is working to expand the range of products to supply to China in 2021-2022. The two countries have set up a team of experts to facilitate trade and promote exports.

Belarus has suggested a list of products bound for export to China. It includes 88 products for agriculture, mechanical engineer-

ing and the chemical industries.

The heads of state also discussed ways to boost the export of Belarusian potash fertilisers to China. The Belarusian party has already suggested this, and the Chinese partners are ready to look into the matter.

During the phone conversation, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Xi Jinping also considered co-operation with Chinese financial institutions in the implementation of several large-scale infrastructure and investment projects.

The presidents focused on ways to boost the development and tap into the potential of the Great Stone Industrial Park, which is the key element of Belarus' participation in the *Belt and Road* initiative. Aleksandr Lukashenko assured Xi Jinping that Belarus will remain an active participant in the initiative.

It is strategically important to step up co-operation in the Great Stone and expand the presence of China's major companies and banks in Belarus.

The participants also suggested declaring the Year of Regions of Belarus and China in 2021-2023 to give an impetus to interregional co-operation.

Aleksandr Lukashenko and Xi Jinping also discussed the next face-to-face meeting. They agreed to meet in person to discuss the current agenda as soon as the pandemic subsides. Until then, the intergovernmental commission for the two countries will oversee the co-operation in general, especially the aspects in focus during this meeting, and keep the heads of state informed about these matters.

Based on the Presidential press service's report

Building the future together

The President visited the Belarusian State University where he met with students

The event was initiated by students themselves, and as soon as the work schedule made it possible, the Head of State took advantage of the invitation. The conversation turned out to be straightforward and honest. The Belarusian leader answered many questions and spoke on a number of topical issues, particularly, the independence of our country, which has been attacked from the outside. Here is what Aleksandr Lukashenko said, “Sovereignty is not only a matter of preserving the state. This is a matter of our national ambitions, a matter of our civil status. I will never believe that we have raised a generation of independent Belarusians who hope that foreign politicians will determine their future.”

Good base

The Head of State was informed about the state of affairs and prospects for the development of the university. BSU Rector Andrei Korol said that the institution is represented in 12 global and 7 subject world rankings, including the *Big Three QS-317, THE-1001+* and the subject Shanghai ranking in physics, 201-300. The BSU electronic library has the status of the first in Europe and is the third among university electronic libraries in the world in the *Transparent Ranking of Repositories*.

Aleksandr Lukashenko then met with students and teachers. It is worth noting that students in the regions could send the Head of State a question and virtually attend the meeting, as the event was held in the format of a live video broadcast from the classrooms of universities in regional centres.

According to the President, the current adult generation are pinning high hopes on young people, “It’s up to you how you will build your life but I dare say, not only yours. We are undergoing a change in generations, and if you think that we, the older generation, will allow you to take apart what we have created, especially in the last quarter of a century, you are mistaken. This is not a generational conflict. This is the foundation of all development. But all the same, you and your children will build your country in the future.”

The President noted that a powerful base for education has been created in Belarus by now. There is no need to create new universities: there are enough higher educational establishments in the country that will train our students in the specialties that we need today, and even for export of their skills to other countries. People from different countries also come to study in Belarus.

Owners of the native land

The President talked about what drives external forces as they strive to destabilise the situation in Belarus. In his opinion, they are not concerned with the interests of the Belarusian people abroad, they simply want to solve their problems at our expense. Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised that, in recent years, a lot has been said about the protection of Belarus’ sovereignty. This theory has become quite popular, since everyone is con-



cerned about the issue, “But how then should we explain the fact that some of the Belarusians nevertheless responded to appeals by those who have now settled in Lithuania and Poland and live on foreign grants? Furthermore, and this is obvious, they represent the interests of other states... Does anyone seriously think that abroad they are concerned about the interests of our people? They have no time for Belarus, but to solve their problems at the expense of Belarusians is a point worth making.”

The Head of State also spoke about the calls to impose economic sanctions against Belarus, noting that only our competitors benefit from this. At the same time, the Belarusian leader asked the young people whether they understand what enormous efforts our political independence costs, “How many countries in the world do you know that are as small, and not as rich in resources as ours, but who have managed to establish themselves in the international arena as a self-sufficient and strong state? As we did not kneel down, or bend to their will, so they pressure us.”

Nevertheless, the Head of State, in his meeting with the young people, stated with confidence,

“You and only you will be the owners of your native land. Wherever you are, you will proudly say: ‘I am a Belarusian!’ The fact that you have invited me to participate in this conversation strengthens my belief in this.”

Don’t cross the line of the law

The Belarusian leader also touched on the issue of expressing his opinion on current events. The Head of State believes,

“It is possible to express an opinion, but it is unacceptable to cross the line of the law. The university is not a place for political rallies.”

“Please take this into account. Rudeness and aggression towards teachers is always unacceptable. We have seen this happen in many higher educational establishments. It is a matter not only of education and ethics but also of legal responsibility.”



The Belarusian State University

According to the President, in trying to rebel against the system, one must understand that no country in the world would allow its foundations to be shaken: to break the laws, destroy traditions and endanger people’s lives. He offered to take look at Belarus’ neighbours: ‘European democracies’ are also quickly and firmly putting things in order.

On national Student Day

During the meeting, a student of the Faculty of Jour-

nalism, Maksim Tyutenkov, proposed to establish a new holiday in the country, the Belarusian Student Day. The young man even suggested the date of February 25th, since in 1919, on that day, a decree was adopted for the creation of a state university in Minsk.

The Head of State responded positively to the initiative and invited the young man to take up the legalisation of this proposal, “The decision was made: to form a team and assess the issue. It must be a day which is warm and beautiful. We could gather somewhere in a clearing in the forest and organise a powerful event. Then to hold it annually, it would quickly become a tradition because the state is strong in its traditions.”

The President noted that this is a very good initiative; it would be implemented by the summer.

On protests in Russia

The students recalled that a wave of protests swept across Russian cities over the weekend, which completely reflected the Belarusian scenarios. In this regard, it was noted that Aleksandr Lukashenko had

then it will take place in other places as well. The second peculiarity of Belarus was that it was necessary to use Belarus as a springboard for a permanent attack against Russia.”

However, the blitzkrieg, stressed the President, was not successful in Belarus. In addition, the Russian leadership drew the appropriate conclusions from the Belarusian experiences, and they have already prepared for this scenario.

On military service by profession

One more question to the President: how does he feel about conscription into the army on a professional basis, similar to how IT specialists are called into an IT squadron? The opinion of the Head of State on this matter was, “It must be done.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko added that the IT squadron is a very successful example, “Yes, we have created an IT team. They are good guys, and we really need military men such as these. Let’s say he is not an IT specialist, but an expert in another area that is also needed in the army. Why not? I

will instruct the Defence Ministry to make a proposal for me to take this into account.”

At the end of the conversation, the Head of State presented his own pen to the moderator of the meeting, Anastasia Rudzkaya whose work he praised highly. In turn, the BSU students prepared a set of herbal products for a healthy lifestyle for the Head of State, made by themselves.

Based on materials of sb.by

Iron brotherhood

Minsk and Beijing share common views on the prospects of co-operation



Yuri Senko

By Marta Astreiko

— Aleksandr Lukashenko and Xi Jinping have recently talked by phone and their conversation attracted special attention among the media due to a wide range of issues discussed, as well as its duration and a particularly warm tone of communication between the two leaders...

— True, I'd note that — on the one hand — the conversation took place under a new anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and China: on January 20th, we celebrated their 29th year. On the other hand, the talk between the leaders of Belarus and China was very significant in content and will undoubtedly have important results.

The conversation took place in a very good atmosphere. The President of Belarus and the President of the People's Republic of China particularly noted the good relations that have developed between our countries and a very high level of co-operation in various fields: economic, cultural, humanitarian and political. Words of mutual gratitude were expressed for support in the international arena and for the objective assessment of the situation.

Our countries stand together against external threats and support each other in this direction.

— Mr. Ambassador, 2020 was not easy for everyone due to the coronavirus. Has this had any impact on Belarusian-Chinese trade and economic co-operation?

— Despite the difficult external factors, Belarus and China enjoy positive dynamics in the issues of mutual trade and a good growth rate. Putting aside out potash fertilisers, Belarusian exports to China in 2020 increased by 38 percent against 2019. Volumes of supplies of potash fertilisers also increased by 24 percent. Taking into account the agreements reached

between Aleksandr Lukashenko and Xi Jinping during a telephone conversation, we see opportunities to increase potash exports to China: our countries are mutually interested in this.

The negotiation process regarding the volume and price of goods under the new contract is in full swing. Since there has been an increase in demand for fertilisers in the Chinese market, we expect an increase in exports of our strategic product to China.

As a follow-up to the agreements reached by the two heads of state, the issue of Belarusian products entering the largest electronic platforms in China



The Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park

will be worked out. China is interested in high-quality Belarusian products. Chinese consumers have already tried and appreciated a lot of what Belarus produces. Belarus knows how to make products, China understands this and openly talks of it.

In general, the Chinese side today sees the possibility of providing assistance in placing Belarusian goods with high added value on electronic platforms.

There are also good grounds for creating a single brand for Belarus in China.

Work is underway to en-

Belarus and China are seriously focused on intensifying co-operation, and our countries have everything necessary for this — including the political will of the two heads of state. This opinion was expressed by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the People's Republic of China, Yuri Senko, in an interview to the *SB. Belarus Segodnya* newspaper.

courage direct investment in the Republic of Belarus, in the Great Stone Industrial Park.

The heads of state also noted the need to increase the volume of trade; this is due to the need to eliminate various barriers. Back in the end of 2020, jointly with our Chinese partners we took a number of steps to start working on the removal of such barriers: we've created a corresponding working group, as well as a commission on customs and quarantine co-operation within the framework of the Belarusian-Chinese Intergovernmental Co-operation Committee. We are convinced that this will give a positive result in the near future.

Despite many global epidemiological restrictions, Belarus and China have launched a direct flight between Minsk and Beijing. We've truly benefited from this. After all, human ex-

amples of Belarusian enterprises already successfully operating in China. I'd like to draw your attention to the following important points: it's important to maintain all the contractual nuances with the Chinese side, to comply with all the administrative requirements of China: quality and safety. Our companies that have wanted to gain a foothold in the Chinese market for a long time know this and meet all the requirements, realising that China is a platform with very broad opportunities.

At the moment, 105 Belarusian enterprises producing meat, dairy and feed products are accredited for exports to China. So far, not all of them have entered the Chinese market, but the Embassy is systematically making every effort to ensure that, in the near future, the Belarusian presence in this regard will increase.

Belarus and China over three years, from 2021 to 2023...

— This has been proposed with the aim of developing interregional co-operation. I'm convinced that this will enable Belarus and China to make significant progress in many areas of co-operation. In recent years, a large number of agreements on twinning and liaisons in various fields have been signed between the regions and cities of our countries. With this in mind, the Year of Regions is a good opportunity to make the most of the existing potential.

I am currently staying at the largest city in China, Chongqing, where about 35m people live. Chongqing has signed a twinning agreement with the Minsk Region and is actively co-operating in agriculture, industry and culture.

— The two countries' leaders paid considerable attention to the situation with the pandemic and the issue of supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine to Belarus. How will work in this area be carried out?

— The President of Belarus and the President of the People's Republic of China agreed that the parties will continue to co-operate in the fight against the pandemic. The Chinese side confirmed that Belarus will receive assistance in the form of supplies of the Chinese vaccine that has passed the appropriate certification.

As part of this agreement, the parties are actively working to resolve all the formalities in an expedited manner. The format and mode of transport by which the vaccine will be delivered to Belarus will soon be determined.

In addition, Belarus was the first foreign country to respond to the outbreak of the disease in China — sending two aircraft with medical products as assistance. In turn, when we were faced with COVID, China promptly rendered us the necessary assistance.

In general, the whole conversation of our leaders and the decisions taken as a result of it once again clearly emphasise the highest level of comprehensive strategic partnership and 'iron brotherhood' between our countries.

The primary task of our Embassy (this was highlighted by the President when I was being appointed) is to provide all possible assistance to business to overcome the concerns that confuse our exporters (long logistics, language barriers, unknown market, etc.). However, I'd like to stress once again: the companies that have worked out all the options with logistics, market presence and nuances of sales to the Chinese market no longer see any difficulties in working in China.

— Our countries intend to hold the Year of Regions of

changes and business contacts continued — of course, taking into account the implementation of all quarantine and testing requirements. We didn't stop the interaction between our countries, and this has resulted in positive statistics in almost all areas.

— Is it now difficult for Belarusian producers to enter the Chinese market and gain a foothold there?

— The Chinese market is now extremely competitive but puts no special requirements for Belarusian products. This is clearly proven by the exam-

Quicker than wind

The new train can travel as fast as 160km/h — offering 262 first-class and second-class seats. There are 16 seats in the first-class compartment. Those are comfortable reclining seats with individual armrests. The first-class compartment is separated with a powered glass partition from the rest of the train. Buttons to call train conductors are also installed in the first-class compartment. There is space for storing large luggage and a coat rack for outdoor clothes. The second-class compartments are fitted with soft seats with the '3+2' scheme armrests.

The train also offers seats for people with disabilities. One of the cars offers space for transporting prams, large luggage or three bicycles.

The five-car electric trains are also equipped with air conditioners with an antibacterial module. Wi-Fi Internet access and GSM signal boosters are also part of the package.

Belarusian Railways and Stadler Minsk launch experimental trials of the first five-car interregional business-class electric train



Belarusian Railways now uses 18 electric trains made by Swiss Stadler Rail Group

A number of trials have to be completed before Belarusian Railways authorises the use of the new trains for passenger service. Brakes will be tested as well as other functions. The impact on the railway track will be evaluated. The compliance of the electric equipment with standard requirements



will be verified. Control devices, fire safety, and ecological safety will be checked. The new electric train will have to travel for at least 5,000km as part of the trial runs.

Seven-car electric trains acted as the basic model for new five-car trains. The former have been used by Belarusian Railways since 2016 to transport passengers between Minsk and Gomel.

A contract on supplying ten five-car electric trains was signed in January 2019. The first three are planned to be delivered to Belarusian Railways in Q3 2021. They will be used in the electrified sections of Belarusian Railways that see the heaviest passenger traffic.



\$2.4m of sawn timber sold to China at Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange

Over 11,000 cubic metres of sawn timber worth \$2.4m have been sold to China at the 2021 first timber trading session of the Belarusian University Commodity Exchange (BUCE). "With prices rising during the trading session, Belarusian exporters received \$91,000 in additional revenue," BUCE spokesperson Roman Yaniv said.

The Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange launched special trading sessions to sell timber products to China with delivery in containers to points of destination in December 2020. The main goal of the project is to diversify exports of the Belarusian timber industry, and to ensure regular shipments of Belarusian timber to China.

Trade in full swing



Special exchange trades sell timber products with delivery to the final consumer in China. At the same time, the buyer can choose the most convenient basis of delivery. For example, at the last trading session, all the volume of sawn products put up for sale was purchased with delivery to Qingdao, the largest seaport in Shandong Province. In this way, Belarusian goods are becoming more attractive for Chinese buyers while domestic exporters get an opportunity to expand the geography of sales and increase revenue.



Founded in 2004, the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange conducted its first trading session in June 2005. BUCE is among the largest commodity exchanges in Eastern Europe. Its main function is to assist Belarusian enterprises with exports and foreign companies with entering the Belarusian market. BUCE sells a wide range of metal, forestry, and agricultural products, industrial and consumer goods.

Based on materials of belta.by

NEWS IN BRIEF

Consulate General of Belarus solemnly opened in Chinese Chongqing



The opening of the consular office is timed to coincide with the 29th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China. The ceremony was attended by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to China — Yuri Senko, the Vice Mayor of Chongqing — Li Bo, representatives of the diplomatic corps and Chongqing leadership. The parties expressed the hope that the opening of the Consulate General will bring dynamics to trade, economic, investment, humanitarian co-operation between Belarus and Chongqing.

Currently, there are four Belarusian foreign missions in China: the Belarusian Embassy in Beijing and three consulates general in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chongqing.

Belarus' national pavilion erected at the World EXPO

The construction of the national pavilion of Belarus at the site of the World Expo 2020, which will be held from October 1st, 2021 to March 31st, 2022 in Dubai, has been completed. Construction has been completed at the facility, in particular, the work on facing the facade of the building



with mirror panels and installing graphics on the external facades. The main interior finishing works have been also completed, including the installation of systems for audio and video equipment, a fire prevention system, as well as ventilation and air conditioning systems.

In the near future, the general contractor will begin interior design on the pavilion's themed areas, filling them with exhibits. These works will be completed by September 2021, after which the final stage of the pavilion's construction will take place, downloading the audio and video content.

BSU second nanosatellite to be launched in 2021

Despite its small size, the new scientific and educational nanosatellite will contain lots of special equipment. In particular, it will be equipped with systems enabling the conduction of radio occultation sounding in the atmosphere and the study of magnetic anomalies. Its production functionality is aimed at educational tasks; this is a kind of laboratory that ensures the development of new areas in education. Students are involved in developing the satellite and



analysing the incoming information.

The 'BSU Sat-1' nanosatellite of the Belarusian State University was launched into orbit on October 29th, 2018, in China from the Jiuquan launch centre. It became the first university satellite in the Belarusian education system and the third domestically produced object in near-earth orbit.

Own breed of cows registered in Belarus

"A new breed of domestic dairy cattle has been created and registered, Bel-GolShtin, of which there are 1m heads. The potential for productivity is high, with an expected 12 tonnes of milk per animal with a fat content of 3.6 percent and a protein content of 3.2 percent. Experts know that these are very good indicators," said Vladimir Gusakov, the Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences, at a press conference. He emphasised that the Academy of Sciences is a large research centre developing like a research and production business. Belarusian scientists actively co-operate with foreign colleagues from more than 90 countries. At the National Academy



of Sciences of Belarus, 43 joint laboratories have been created and are functioning with organisations from Russia, China, Vietnam as well as other countries.



The large family of Nadezhda and Aleksandr Davydko from Vitebsk

Health is the key

Br11.45bn (about \$4.5bn) will come from the Republican budget, while local budgets will allocate about Br32bn (about \$12.4bn). It is planned to attract Br2.5m (almost \$1m) of organisations' own funds, Br3bn (almost \$1.2bn) from the income-generating activities of budget organisations. In addition, Br290.5m (more than \$112m) of borrowed funds are expected to be attract-

ed to finance the state programme.

The total birth rate by 2025 is likely to reach 1.32-1.46 births per woman. Since 2016, there has been a downward trend in the total number of children born in Belarus and, in 2019, the number of births decreased by 25.6 percent compared to 2016. The total fertility rate for this period decreased from 1.73 to 1.38 children per woman of fertile age.

The Government expects alcohol consumption to fall to 9.8 litres per capita. In 2010, this figure was 13.3, in 2019 — 10.5. In 2021-2022, the authorities will prepare the concept of an anti-alcohol policy, work out the issue of increasing the minimum prices for strong alcohol by an amount exceeding the forecast level of core inflation by 20-40 percent. There are also plans to restrict the sale

of energy drinks to minors.

By 2025, consumption of all types of tobacco products among 18-69 year-olds is likely to fall to 27.4 percent.

In addition, the death rate from tuberculosis should be reduced to 2.11 per 100,000 people. Compared to 2015, it decreased in 2019 by 45 percent: from 4 to 2.2 per capita.

The state programme envisages the construction (reconstruction) of 44 health facilities: 28 hospitals and centres, 13 outpatient clinics and 3 health-care organisations.

Based on materials of belta.by

Winning business partnership

Food and craft cluster to be created in Brest Region

The Country Escape Public Association has launched *Navakolle Cluster Model: Creating and Promoting Local, Natural and Craft Products* initiative which has previously won a contest held as part of the *Support for Economic Development at the Local Level in the Republic of Belarus* project — financed by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with Belarus' Economy Ministry



Andrey Sazonov



BELTA



Aleksandr Talochko

By Olga Korneeva

Kobrin and six neighbouring districts (Malorita, Zhabinka, Pruzhany, Berezovka, Drogichin and Kamenets) were chosen as pilot areas. The initiative here aimed to enhance the competitiveness of small businesses in the field of farming and handicrafts through construction of a cluster partnership model. The cluster will bring together artisans and food producers, as well as homesteads that produce or use them in their work.

"We have many craftsmen and farmers, those who are engaged in baking bread, producing eco-snacks and other natural products. Therefore, the idea was born to create a food and craft cluster for small businesses to promote their products under a local brand," Valeria Klitsounova, the Chair of the Country Escape Public Association, says.

It is expected that realisation of the initiative will create a network of like-minded people who can jointly work on the 'Navakolle'

[neighbourhood] brand — promoting products of the region. According to Ms. Klitsounova, trainings and webinars are planned to enable participants to polish their entrepreneurial skills. Special criteria will also be developed for the selection of cluster participants.

Small business representatives will get an opportunity to sell their products at various venues, major fairs and events. "We hope this initiative will help small businesses in rural areas reach a new level and we'll be able to spread this experience throughout the country in the future," Ms. Klitsounova noted during the first information meeting in the Studinka homestead (in the village of Girska, Kobrin District). She added that there are plans to develop a tourist route envisaging visits to craft workshops, farms and homesteads.

The Brest Regional Executive Committee and the Kobrin District Executive Committee, private companies and agricultural estates of the region partner the initiative.

Sacred memory



Among the heroic events and dates of the Great Patriotic War are those that occupy a special place in the historical memory of our people. 77 years ago — on January 27th, 1944 — the siege of Leningrad was completely lifted. On the day of the anniversary, the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History opened a photo exhibition — *Towards Victory* — provided by the Petersburg Photo Chronicles International Fund.



Yury Mozolevsky

“We are passing you down over a hundred tablet-photos — which are actually a chronicle archive of the Great Patriotic War,” Dmitry Mezentsev, Russia’s Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Belarus, said. “On this day, when dozens of veterans, residents of the besieged city who see Belarus as their native homeland, gathered here in the museum, we compared our notes on how we live today, whether we are worthy of the feat that brought peace to the land of

Belarus, Russia, and the Commonwealth. The scale of what Leningrad and the hero-cities did for the Victory is so great that we need years to comprehend all that was done by great Soviet soldiers.”

In turn, Belarusian publisher, collector and philanthropist — Vladimir Likhodedov — donated genuine postcards and letters from besieged Leningrad to the Russian side.

“The day the siege was lifted will always remain in our memory as a symbol

of the courage and heroism of the Soviet people,” said Natalia Kochanova, the Chair of the Council of the Republic, addressing the exhibition guests. “Belarusians understand the pain of that loss like no one else, because they were the first to take the brunt of the fascist invaders... It is absolutely correct that the President of our country said that Belarus is a living monument to that war. For us, this memory is sacred and the truth is sacred. We are doing everything to pass this memory and truth to the generations that follow

us. We understand clearly that there is no future without the past... Therefore, we will never betray this memory. Let the whole world know that, for the peoples of Belarus and Russia, the history of the Great Patriotic War is a symbol of unity and pride: pride for our people.”

Ms. Kochanova then warmly addressed the veterans, “Your life inspires us. It supports us to withstand the trials that fall to us. We cannot betray the memory of our older generation and we will never do so. We won then and we will win now.”



Vladimir Likhodedov

Another memorable date was celebrated on January 27th: International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this day in 1945, Soviet troops liberated the largest Nazi death camp, Auschwitz, which killed, according to various estimates, 1.5-4m people... A commemorative event was held at the Yama Holocaust Memorial in Minsk, which was attended by Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei, heads of diplomatic missions of some states, deputies, representatives of the diplomatic corps, public and religious organisations.

On this day, by tradition, Belarus commemorates all the Holocaust victims: those who drew their last breath on Belarusian soil and those who died at the hands of the Nazis and their accomplices in numerous ghettos and death camps throughout Europe.

“In my opinion, Belarusians, like no other nations, understand the horror and tragedy of the Holocaust. We remember dozens of ghettos around Belarus, hundreds of thousands of murdered Jewish people; these bloodiest crimes of Nazism remain deeply entrenched in our collective memory. This historical memory and recollections resonate in our hearts, calling to protect human life and dignity and to do everything possible so that the tragedy of the Holocaust will never happen again,” Mr. Makei said. He noted with regret that not everyone in today’s world has learned the terrible lessons of World War II. “We see the loss of trust, a growing confrontation in the world. We witness attempts of individual countries to whitewash the crimes of the Third Reich, up to the glorification of the Nazis and their accomplices. This is absolutely unacceptable for us, for Belarus,” the Minister said, adding that Belarus is making consistent efforts to preserve the memory of the Holocaust victims, to prevent the revival of neo-Nazism and any manifestations of racial hatred and bigotry.

“The Belarusian state seeks to promote among the young generation values and culture that would help them protect human life and dignity, preserve peace, stability and calm in society,” Mr. Makei noted.

Jointly with its international partners, Belarus has already done a lot to perpet-



The Yama Holocaust Memorial

uate the memory of the victims of World War II, of the heroic deeds of soldiers who saved the world from the ‘brown plague’. “We are not going to stop at this and we will continue opposing the revival of neo-Nazism, any manifestations of ethnic and religious hatred, intolerance and bigotry. On this path, Belarus is open to co-operation with all states that are interested in maintaining peace and stability on the planet, promoting a sustainable and tolerant society,” the Minister stressed.

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Israel to Belarus, Alex Goldman-Shaiman, who was present at the event, noted the importance of universal work to preserve the memory of the horrific scale of the Holocaust. After all, unfortunately, the number of living witnesses of those events is falling annually. “To preserve the memory of the Holocaust tragedy is our duty: it’s our duty both to them and to those who didn’t survive, who failed to live to be liberated and learn that the Jews have their own state. This is our duty to those who are yet to be born,

and remember historically dark moments, I want to mention that there were also rays of light: the righteous of the world. Belarus can rightfully be proud of them: the people who saved Jews in those terrible years. According to official data, about 700 citizens of Belarus are recognised as the righteous of the world. In fact, there were many more people who gave shelter to Jews at the risk of their own lives. We will never forget it and we will be grateful.”

At the same time, the Ambassador mentioned that there are people who downplay and even deny the very fact of the Holocaust — proposing an alternative vision of history. “We cannot silently look on this, since silence today leads to oblivion, while oblivion leads to a repetition of the tragedy tomorrow. The civilised world must learn from the past, learn from this and fight against any manifestations of hatred, Nazism and racism,” Mr. Goldman-Shaiman stressed.

He thanked the Belarusian side for holding the commemorative event at the Yama memorial. “Israel very much appreciates the co-operation with Belarus in preserving the memory of the Holocaust victims,” the Ambassador concluded.

The participants of the event laid flowers at the memorial.

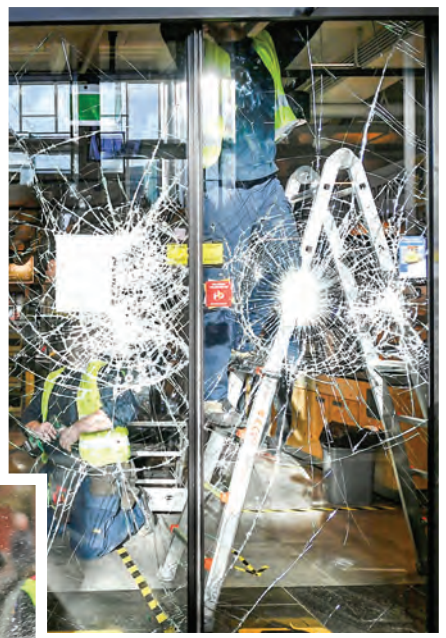


Vladimir Makei and Alex Goldman-Shaiman lay flowers at the memorial

because it is our responsibility to free the world they will come to from anti-Semitism, hatred and xenophobia,” he stressed.

“We greatly appreciate the efforts made in Belarus to preserve the memory of the Holocaust. It is very important that, in a country that lost many hundreds of thousands of citizens, Jews in the war, people don’t forget about them,” the diplomat continued. “On this day, when we celebrate

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Dutch protests turn violent

Plans for new COVID-19 restrictions in the Netherlands provoked violent riots, with protesters clashing with police over the country's first curfew since the end of WWII

Dutch people are now banned from leaving home between 9pm and 4.30am, although the country has been on a tough lockdown since December and due to last at least until February 9th.

Police reported that demonstrators threw fireworks and rocks at officers, who responded with force to dispel the groups in cities across the country including the capital, Amsterdam, as well as The Hague and Rotterdam.

Police and local media re-

port that at least 150 people were arrested in the latest flare-up. Fires were lit on the streets of The Hague, and bicycles were again used to build barricades and then lit on fire or simply thrown at police.

In Rotterdam, police again used water cannons and tear gas to dispel crowds. Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb issued an emergency order instructing residents in the town centre to leave the area. He told reporters that at least 300 peo-

ple took part in the demonstration.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte condemned the demonstrations as 'unacceptable'. He said, "This has nothing to do with protesting, this is criminal violence and that's how we'll treat it."

Eindhoven was worst hit by the unrest, with rioters setting fire to cars, smashing windows, throwing rocks and fireworks at police, and looting a supermarket and other shops. Mayor John Jorritsma said his city was

'crying, and so am I'.

In the eastern city of Enschede, rioters threw rocks at the windows of a hospital and youngsters in the village of Urk torched a coronavirus testing facility.

Police in the southern province of Limburg said military police were sent as reinforcements to two cities.

The police trade union, NPB, said there could be more trouble ahead as people grow increas-

ingly frustrated with the country's months-long lockdown. "We haven't seen so much violence in 40 years," said one union official, Koen Simmers.

Rutte and his cabinet resigned on January 22nd over a child benefits scandal in which more than 20,000 families were wrongly accused of fraud by the tax office, but they continue to govern in a caretaker capacity until elections scheduled for March 17th.



100m confirmed COVID-19 cases

The 100 millionth coronavirus case has been recorded worldwide last week — just over a year since the first officially diagnosed case of the deadly virus

The three worst-affected countries — the US, India and Brazil — account for more than two-fifths of all global cases. At more than 25m, the US has the highest number and has suffered more than 400,000 deaths. India is the second worst-hit country, having recorded more than 10m cases and more than 150,000 deaths. With nearly 9m, Brazil has fewer cases but more deaths than India — at least 217,000.

Health experts have warned that the more contagious and possibly more deadly variant sweeping through Britain will probably become the dominant source of infection in the US by March. It has been reported in over 20 states so far. Another mutant version is circulating in South Africa.

A mass vaccination programme is underway as governments rush to protect their populations against coronavirus.

Suit against NATO

A team of legal experts file first cases against the NATO alliance on behalf of people who developed cancer after being exposed to depleted uranium munitions during the Serbian bombings in 1999

The first lawsuit was recently filed before the Higher Court in Belgrade, following years of extensive work by a team of legal experts led by lawyer Srdjan Aleksic. Dozens of other lawsuits will be filed before other courts across the country as well. The team is seeking to win compensation of at least 300,000 Euros for each Serbian victim who developed cancer.

"We are talking about the highest courts, to which we will file five lawsuits. The victims are natural persons — deceased and sick soldiers and police officers of the Federal Republic of

Yugoslavia, who were in Kosovo in 1999. At the first stage, we want them to be identical cases, as in the Italian military," Aleksic noted, referring to hundreds of Italian NATO soldiers who suffered from cancer and other severe conditions after being exposed to depleted uranium (DU) during the alliance's campaign against Serbia.

While the use of DU munitions in the Balkans has been openly admitted by NATO, proving a link between them and cancer proved to be an extremely difficult task, with the alliance denying any such correlation.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

A dream city

By Yuliana Leonovich

This exhibition is a kind of retrospective, where each decade is noted for certain achievements and significant events for city residents: construction of new residential districts, revival of the historical centre, and city holidays. Famous artists, each in their own way, have depicted Minsk on canvas and paper but they all managed to convey what is called 'the soul of the city'. For Leonid Dudarenko, these are cozy old suburbs and streets, for Boris Arakcheev — parades and demonstrations, for Leonid Shchemelev and Vladimir Tovstik — the history of Minsk and its present...

The Director of the Minsk History Museum, Galina Ladisova, explains, "In 2020, the Minsk History Museum (of which the Mikhail Savitsky Art Gallery is a branch) celebrated its first decade. The collections of each of the nine artists are replenished annually, but we are proud of the collection of paintings and graphic works dedicated to Minsk. The new exhibition is also an interesting, in my opinion, documentary material for researchers of architecture and urban life. For example, Vladimir Stelmashonok's drawings from life accurately convey the scale of the military destruction of the 1940s and the beginning of a difficult stage of the city's revival."

Meanwhile, the artists of the 1950s and 1960s left a particularly rich heritage in Minsk. "The paintings and graphic works of this period are imbued with hope for a bright future, peaceful and calm moods, and anticipation for the 900th anniversary of Minsk," continues Ms. Ladisova. "This is especially noticeable in Ivan Medve-

The embankment of the Svisloch River, desolate, with no people and no cars. Have you ever seen the centre of Minsk like this? The artist Leonid Dudarenko not only witnessed it, but then captured it on canvas. Now, the Mikhail Savitsky Art Gallery invites everyone to see the city through the eyes of famous Belarusian artists as part of the *Lights of My City* exhibition featuring painting, graphics and pieces of decorative and applied art, which make it easy to trace how Minsk changed during the 75 peaceful post-war years.



Winter Evening. Aleksandr Puteiko



Vankovich's House in Minsk. Leonid Shchemelev



Gorky Park. Vladimir Tovstik



Dancing on Nemiga. Aleksandr Puteiko

dev's watercolours, Aleksandr Puteiko's warm paintings and Boris Arakcheev and Nikolai Nazarchuk's evening landscapes. The exhibition also features the urban landscape of the late 1950s, by People's Artist of Belarus, Mikhail Savitsky: *Svisloch*."

In turn, the works from the 1970-1980s are marked by a touch of nostalgia for the old city; these are common for the likes of Leonid Dudarenko and Viktor Markovets. At that time, painters were increasingly turning to the theme of the historical city's reconstruction.

Vladimir Isachenko also depicted the outgoing sadness in old Minsk and his *Evening in Sukharevo* reminds viewers of what the quiet residential areas looked like in the early 1990s. This landscape is already a part of Minsk's history.

As for the image of the 21st century capital, it was created by artists from a new generation: Vasily Zenko, Vasily Peshkun, Gleb Otchik and others. Each of them has their own version of the city: large, changeable and diverse.

A special video zone featuring documentaries about Minsk is a nice addition to the show open to the public until February 14th and revealing how the architecture looks without traffic jams and people, and how Minsk has changed over the past seven decades.

Inspiration in tandem

An exhibition dedicated to the artists Georgy and Natalia Poplavsky on show at the National Library



Georgy Poplavsky

By Lyudmila Minkevich

The Belarusian artist Natalia Poplavskaya recently celebrated her 90th birthday. Her husband, People's Artist of Belarus, Georgy Poplavsky, would have celebrated the same birthday this year, but died in 2017. The artist's fans can now only remember the talented master and continue to be inspired by his works.

Nowadays, anyone can become familiar with the works of Georgy and Natalia Poplavsky

at the National Library: until February 22nd, the *Inspiration in Tandem* book and illustrative exhibition dedicated to the couple is held here.

The world of the painter, graphic artist and illustrator Georgy Poplavsky is rich and diverse. He visited Cuba, Australia, Mexico, Singapore, India and many other countries, went as a sailor to the Atlantic and the Caribbean and crossed the Arctic on ships carrying ore, capturing his travels on paper

and canvas. However, all these works can hardly be compared to the pictures drawn in his village workshop in the Braslav District. The artist was closely connected with the Belarusian land, its history, culture, literary traditions and folk art and a special section of the *Inspiration in Tandem* show, dedicated to Belarus, demonstrates lyrical landscapes of his native country, portraits of people and pictures

of their working lives.

Mr. Poplavsky's books of illustrations are also at the forefront of the show. The artist painted for the books of Yanka Kupala, Yakub Kolas, Arkady Kuleshov, Vasil Bykov, Ales Adamovich, as well as school textbooks and children's books, including Belarusian folk tales, fairy tales

of the USSR nations, works by Kipling, Perrault and others. She worked in watercolours, lithographs, etchings and linocuts.

According to the show's organisers, *Inspiration in Tandem* largely reflects the significant contribution that the Poplavsky couple made to the development of Belarusian fine arts. Over 60 documents are exhibited, including original works with the artists' autographs.



A work by N. Poplavskaya



Protection of the Theotokos. Georgy Poplavsky

In the depths of past centuries



The open-air archaeological museum in Belovezhskaya Pushcha will complete the Stone and Bronze Age exhibitions by spring

The land on the wide floodplain of the Pravaya Lesnaya River, between the village of Kamenyuki and the administrative centre of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, has been of interest to archaeologists for many years. Today there is an open-air museum here, where visitors can find out about the life of ancient people: from the Stone Age to the early Middle Ages. The spirit of our history, of ancient Belarus, is present here. For the creation of the Skansen museum, a team of authors, consisting of the Director of the History Institute at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Vadim Lakiza, researcher of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, Ruslan Kniga, and chief architect of the projects at Belrestavratsiya JSC, a branch of Brestrestavratsiyaproekt, Olga Nichiporchik, received the President's special prize for cultural and artistic work.

By Valentina Kozlovich

Pushcha sharing its secrets

The fact that more than one bison lived in the Pushcha's forests became evident back in 2008, when the first large-scale excavations took place on the eve of the 600th anniversary of the establishment of the protected area. Then the state programme was adopted, the excavations were resumed (the number of artefacts amounts to thousands), and work on the creation of the open-air museum was in full swing. Vadim Lakiza says,

"We have studied foreign experiences but we're following our own path. In our country there was no similar facility, and some of our colleagues doubted whether it was necessary, and whether we would succeed."

They carried out large-scale research work and obtained important materials for characterising the spiritual and material culture of people who inhabited these lands thousands of years ago.

"We've found dozens of artefacts, which were probably left by ancient craftsmen for ritual purposes. A valuable find is a Scythian bronze arrowhead from the 5th-4th centuries BC. Materials from the Bronze Age, dishes from the Trzciniec culture, were also discovered. A naval battle axe, flint polished axes, fragments of ornamented vessels and triangular silicon arrowheads of the Corded Ware culture are all very interesting," Mr. Lakiza describes the most valuable finds.

Artefacts for the museum's exposition were reconstructed based on these materials. As a result, the open-air facility includes six museum complexes from different eras. In reality, it consists of mini museums, where each building from different historical periods and cultures reveals the past.

Two hours in someone else's shoes

We leave our car in a parking lot and go on a journey back in time with Ruslan Kniga on foot.

We start at the Stone Age. The cone-shaped seasonal huts are covered with tree bark and animal skins. Inside there is a hearth. These are replicas of dwellings that deer hunters built in these places 10-12 thousand years ago.

"Later, we will place exhibitions with knives, scrapers, stone tools, and an archery course will be equipped nearby. We will show tourists how silicon was processed, and fire was made," says the scientist.

The buildings for the Bronze Age, residential and for

storing food, were restored according to a similar archaeological site found in the Ukraine. Here, tourists will be shown where ancient people slept, stored food, how boats were hollowed and how they asked the gods for a good harvest; for this purpose, a ceremonial building was erected.

Further along is a settlement from the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age: a moat, a rampart, double-row walls and an observation tower. The dwellings of the period using crosshatch ceramics (7th century BC — 5th century AD) and Milograd culture (7th-1st centuries BC) are reproduced by studying examples at archaeological sites found in our country.

Walking around the settlement, we look at the ancient German courtyard of the Iron Age, to the Goths, from whom we have adopted the words 'barn' and 'bread'. Ruslan Kniga shows us a cheese-blowing oven, a smithy, smith's bellows and a forge. Despite the fact that, by that time, the local population was already skilled at using iron, the Wielbark culture (2nd century AD) brought more skills in jewellery and iron-smelting.

The Gothic house stands on pillars that were burnt from below. The roof is intertwined with pine roots. Inside the dwelling there are letters and ornamental ceramics on the table. The pots are made of the same clay and using the same method of firing as our ancestors, following the same pattern as exhibits from museums in Belarus and Poland.

A three-faced wooden sculpture depicting the gods Veles, Perun and the goddess Makosh, the mistress of fate and patron of weaving, is visible from afar. The idol stands in the middle of the temple — but that's a Slavic story. It is no less interesting to visit the Slavic courtyard to become acquainted with the life and crafts of the ancestors.

Ruslan Kniga recalls how difficult it was to fill the museum buildings with exhibits,

"The Academy of Sciences sent resources for me, I researched, looked for similar examples and spoke with artists. As a result, it will be difficult for experts to find fault with the exhibits, utensils, beds and weapons. Each exhibition corresponds to a chronological period, and it's not contained in a glass cabinet, but a living experience."

Our tour of the picturesque hills and exotic dwellings (in the eyes of a modern person) lasted for almost two hours. Since 2019, tourists have been shown the settlement, but since 2020, the ancient German and Slavic courtyards have opened. By the spring, the formation of the Stone and Bronze Age exhibitions will be completed, and time travel will become even more exciting.

Vadim Lakiza believes this is a unique scientific, as well as important tourist object for education, formation of a global perspective, and love for the country's history



Ruslan Kniga



Pavel Bogush



Aleksey Stolyarov

Belarus' national ice hockey team is coming out of hibernation and beginning preparations for the World Championship

It's hard to believe, but the last international tournament, in which the Belarusian ice hockey team participated, took place a year ago: in early February 2020, in Slovakia. Mikhail Zakharov's trainees took third place and the head coach called the competitions a preparatory show, since there were the World Championship in Switzerland in May and the August Olympic qualifiers for Beijing-2022. However, soon the world was devastated by the pandemic, several quarantines and our team found itself frozen in time, the year went down the drain.

Time to test the skates



Belarusian hockey players at a training session

By Sergei Kanashits

Now for the good news: the thaw is coming, and the hockey world is awakening again, as is the Belarusian national team which are beginning to show the first signs of life. Very soon our squad will have a qualifying test, which fans, who miss watching the matches of the national team, will surely follow with interest: from February 10th-13th, our ice warriors will take part in the PariMatch Qazaqstan Hockey Open 2021 tournament in Nur-Sultan, which will see two national teams from Kazakhstan and the Russian Olympic team, alongside the Belarusians. Then there will be the same schedule of competitions that were planned to go ahead last year: the World Championship in May and the Olympic qualifiers in August. It's a pity that our fans won't be able to see their team in Minsk, to cheer loudly for them on home turf and to enjoy their winning results together (and they certainly will). The right to host the World Cup was swiftly taken away from Belarus, thanks to those who shan't be named. Furthermore, Mikhail Zakharov's team could get close to being the strongest they have been in the last 10 or even 15 years.

Indirect signs that Belarusian ice hockey is slowly coming out of the crisis are obvious. Firstly, in the strongest league in the world, the NHL, the Belarusian team are playing again (after five years of absence from our premier play-

ers): Yegor Sharangovich gets enough playing time on the ice and is actively trying to become one of the team leaders of the New Jersey Devils. He became the 11th Belarusian player to ever play at least one NHL match, and the first since March 15th, 2016, when the last of the greats, Mikhail Grabovsky, made his final appearance on the ice in the New York Islanders kit.

Maksim Sushko, who, like Sharangovich, was pulled out of Dinamo Minsk at the height of the season and was drafted into the ranks of another overseas club, the Philadelphia Flyers, has not abandoned his attempts to break into the NHL. So far, however, our striker hasn't been able to pave the way for the main team and is currently training

Never in the history of Dinamo

Minsk have we seen so many young ice hockey players. What is even more encouraging is that they are not obscured on the ice, they improve from match to match, playing more significant roles in the team throughout (this can be seen by analysing the statistics of the 'bison' performance in the KHL). There is reason to believe that the influx of young talent won't dry out over the years; but to the contrary, after the 2014 IIHF World Championship in Minsk, there was a noticeable influx of children on the rinks, who, impressed with the hockey holiday, decided to test themselves in this field and make their dreams come true: to reach the lofty heights of Mikhail Grabovsky, and, perhaps, Aleksandr Ovechkin, who was then a star on the Minsk ice.

Thirdly, perhaps it was only in the late 1990s and early 2000s that such a number of Belarusian players successfully defended the colours of Russian clubs. There are an unusually large number of our representatives in the KHL, and almost all of them are in good standing in their clubs. So, Mikhail Zakharov might have to rack his brains over determining the composition of the players who will have to defend the honour of the country at the World Cup, and fight for the right to get to the Beijing 2022 Olympics. But it will certainly be a pleasant job, because competition, as you know, is the product of mastery and hard work.



Mikhail Zakharov, head coach of the Belarusian national team:

DIRECT SPEECH

Mikhail Zakharov, head coach of the Belarusian national team:

The national squad will include all the young players of which there are currently many. We want to get to know more promising players and see them in action. We also want to give hockey players from the domestic championship a chance to assess their capabilities. Andrei and Sergei Kostitsyns have just started playing again after the break. It's also unclear what physical state they are in. Therefore, the tournament will be a real test.



It's also unclear what physical state they are in. Therefore, the tournament will be a real test.

ARENA

Belarusian freestyle jumpers win Synchro Jumps event in Raubichi

Belarus' ski acrobats Pavel Dik and Stanislav Gladchenko, as well as freestyle jumpers Anna Guskova and Anna Derugo have won the Synchro Jumps event at the 2021 FIS Aerials World Cup in Raubichi.

The final winning jump from Pavel Dik and Stanislav Gladchenko received 92.42 points from the judges. Second place was also taken by Belarusians Maksim Gustik and Andrei Kuzmin; their final result was 92 points. Bronze went to Canadians Miha Fontaine and Émile Nadeau: 90.73 points.

The winners Anna Guskova and Anna Derugo scored 76.9 points. Second place



Anna Guskova

was taken by the Canadian-Kazakhstani duo of Marion Thénault and Marzhan Akzhigit who scored 61.94 points for their jump in the final stage of the competition. Kazakhstan's freestyle skiers Zhanbota Aldabergenova and Akmarzhan Kalmurzayeva were placed third: 53.07 points.

Belarusian runners Alina Talay and Kristina Timanovskaya capture silver and bronze at international tournaments

Alina Talay went to Dusseldorf (Ger-

many) to participate in the World Athletics Indoor Tour stage: ISTAF Indoor Dusseldorf. The athlete from Orsha shined in the 60m hurdles — finishing the final race in 8.01 seconds which was her best of the season, to be placed second. Nadine Visser, from the Netherlands, took the lead: 8.00 seconds. Bronze went to Zoe Sedney, also from the Netherlands: 8.04 seconds.

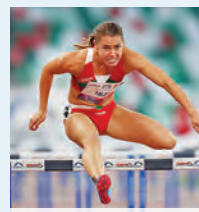
Kristina Timanovskaya went to France to win bronze at the international indoor tournament: Meeting De Mondeville — 2021. She covered 60m in 7.32 seconds. Only Bra-

zilian Rosangela Santos (7.23 seconds) and French Cynthia Leduc (7.27 seconds) were ahead of our Klimovichi-born runner.

Danish handball players become world champions for the second time in a row

In the first half of the final match for gold at the 27th World Championship, the Swedes mostly led but, by the break, the score equalised — 13:13. In the second half, the Danes took the lead and managed to bring the game to victory — 26:24.

Bronze went to Spain — after beating France in the match for 3rd place, with a score of 35:29. In the semi-finals, the Spaniards lost to the Danes — 33:35, while the French lost to the Swedes — 26:32.



Alina Talay



Photo of the week

The Bolshoi Theatre dedicates its *Don Quixote* ballet to the 85th anniversary of the People's Artist of Belarus, Klara Malysheva

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On February 4th, 1746, Tadeusz Kosciuszko was born (Andrzej Tadeusz Bonawentura) in the Ivatsevichi District of the Brest Region — a statesman and leader of the 1794 uprisings in Poland, Lithuania and Belarus and Lieutenant General (1792). In 1793, he accepted the offer of representatives of the conspiracy in Rzecz Pospolita to take over the leadership of the uprising, which began on March 24th, 1794. On April 4th, 1794, the troops under the command of Kosciuszko achieved victory at the village of Racławice. Kosciuszko published his *Połaniec Manifesto* which proclaimed freedom to the peasants, but without allotting them land. On October 10th, 1794, he was captured in battle near the village of Maciejowice and was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, from where he was released by Paul I in 1796. He died in 1817.

February 4th is World Cancer Day, held by the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) with the support of the World Health Organisation. The purpose of this day is to draw public attention to this



global problem and to remind people about how dangerous and widespread cancerous diseases are today, while also significantly reducing cancer deaths.

On February 6th, 1981, the Uzda Regional Museum of History and Local Lore was founded. It has five full-time exhibition halls, a main hall and a separate workshop-exhibition, entitled 'Potter's House'. The exhibits include artefacts found during the archaeological excavations and burials from the 10th-11th centuries, as well as household items from peasants and artisans' tools from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Furthermore, personal belongings from participants in the civil war in 1918-1920 are also on display, as are materials depicting the life of the population of the area, handicrafts and manufacturing, education and culture of that time.



On February 6th, 2006, the Holy Spirit Cathedral in Minsk hosted the rite of canonisation of Saint Valentina of Minsk (Valentina Sulkovskaya),



the first in the history of the Belarusian Orthodox Church.



On February 8th, 1866, Leon Bakst was born (present Rosenberg) in Grodno — a theatrical and graphic artist and painter. In 1906-1909, he taught painting at a private school in St. Petersburg, among his students was Marc Chagall. From 1910, he lived in Paris. He was one of the leading painters of the Russian Seasons by Sergei Diaghilev. He created many works and portraits. He died in 1924.

On February 8th, 1921, Ivan Melezh was born in the village of Glinishche (Khoyniki District, Gomel Region) — a People's Writer of Belarus (1972). He worked in the *Polymya* magazine, taught at the Belarusian State University and worked for the party. His novels from the *Polesie Chronicle* cycle, *People of the Marsh*, *Breath of a Thunderstorm* and *Snowstorms in December* are recognised as outstanding works in Belarusian literature. Ivan Melezh's novels have been



translated into many languages. He is a laureate of the Lenin Prize (1972) and the State Prize of Belarus (1976). He died in 1976. The Ivan Melezh Literary Museum was opened in the village of Glinishche.

February 9th is World Internet Safety Day. The idea of the celebration belongs to the European Commission (January 2004), which was supported by the European non-profit organisations, European SchoolNet and Insafe (European Safer Internet Network). The purpose of the holiday is to promote the safe and responsible use of online technologies, especially among children and young people around the world.

February 9th is International Dentist Day, a professional holiday for dentists and dental nurses. Dentistry is one of the oldest branches of medicine. It is well-known that the first drill prototype was used nine thousand years ago, while the first electric drill appeared in 1907.

