



Sociological research records an increase in the satisfaction of the population of Belarus with their lives

4



Scientists from the National Academy of Sciences have developed a unique sodium-graphene battery

7

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 14 (972) ● THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023 ● WWW.SB.BY

Anna Kasper



You can not only see and try to paint an Easter egg yourself, but also get acquainted with the technique of making Easter willow branches, see a collection of rare postcards for the main Christian holiday in the Pisanka Museum in the agro-town of Sopotskin, Grodno Region

Bright holiday of Easter

Belarus is a multi-confessional state. Different religions coexist peacefully in the country without overshadowing each other. Easter is one of the most important Christian holidays in Belarus. Representatives of the Catholic denomination celebrated Easter, or the Resurrection of Christ, on April 9th. Orthodox Christians will celebrate it next Sunday. The Easter holiday is associated with numerous rituals and traditions, many of which are still performed today. For more than 2,000 years, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ has been celebrated on this day. This important day for believers is accompanied by the end of a strict fasting.

On Easter, it is customary to bake Easter cakes, make paskha (cottage cheese dessert) and paint eggs — these are mandatory attributes of the holiday. It's also important to attend a service in the temple on this holiday and see the procession — a truly bewitching sight. The most important tradition of Easter is to celebrate the Great and bright holiday with the whole family.



Belarus and Russia had successfully withstood the first wave of massive economic attacks

The meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State took place on April 6th in Moscow. The day before, Presidents of Belarus and Russia, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin, held lengthy and fruitful talks — the leaders talked for more than six hours. During this time, they discussed in detail a wide range of topics.

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted the significance and important role of the Union State at the beginning of the meeting of the Supreme State Council,

“Taking into account current circumstances, it is difficult to overestimate the significance of this unique interstate association. Judging from the combination of results accomplished over such a brief period our union is rightfully a leader among other integration associations.”

As never before, today it is important for us to fully realise provisions of the treaty on establishing the commonwealth of Belarus and Russia, which was signed during these April days 27 years ago in 1996.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that by persistently expanding the legal base of interaction, Belarus and Russia have opened up broad thoroughfares for invigorating business, co-operation of scientific circles and art collectives, partnership of youth associations. Freedom of movement of citizens and capital, equal opportunities for education and labour are seen as undeniable advantages of integration by ordinary Belarusians and Russians.

The Belarusian leader noted that the Union State had developed an effective system of defence and security, within the framework of which the regional grouping of troops (forces) and the unified regional air defence system operated successfully. Moreover, steps taken to strengthen border security have significantly increased the protection of the Union State from international terrorism, uncontrolled migration flows, weapons and ammunition smuggling, drug trafficking, and illegal economic activity.



Amkodor products

“Yesterday I told the President of Russia that a great number of weapons from Ukraine is flooding into Russia as well as into Belarus through Russia. Our border with Ukraine is sealed. Weapons went through Bryansk Region and other regions. Together with Alexander Vasilievich Bortnikov [Director of the Federal Security Service of Russia] we have completed the operation today. We will inform the public about it in the near future. You know, we detained this ter-

rorist who entered the territory of Belarus and was heading to another country through Russia,” the Head of State said.

According to the Belarusian leader, the KGB and the FSB carried out a joint operation:

“We have tracked down the whole network. The Russians are finishing their part of the work here, in Russia, and are working on some other things. So they won’t leave us alone. There are caches — in Belarus and in Rus-



In Moscow the reporters asked the Belarusian President to comment on French President Emmanuel Macron’s statements made during his trip to China, where he said that no country could deploy nuclear weapons in the territory of another country.

“I agree with him. This is why Americans should remove all the nuclear weapons from five or six countries where they are deployed. And that’s it. All in all, I am quite a radical about that. I believe that nuclear weapons should be dragged into one pile and should be destroyed literally within a certain period of time. That’s it. It is easy to blab like this comrade of ours. Everyone can do it. This is why okay, let’s pile everything together and destroy it. It is the best option. But for now we will act like them,” Aleksandr Lukashenko replied.

sia — containing weapons and explosives. They come and take it. That was how it happened in St. Petersburg [the explosion in a cafe that killed blogger and war correspondent Vladlen Tatarsky]. Most likely, no one transports ammunition and explosives in their pockets across the border. There are caches here. And we have detected several

In what concerns information confrontation and the formation of a strong ideological support for our Union State construction, a lot has been done by our citizens. We have no right to lose the battle for the minds and hearts of our people on the printed, TV, radio and digital battlefields. The ideological confrontation between East and West will not weaken even after the guns fall silent. It is to stay that way for a long time.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that Belarus and Russia had successfully withstood the first wave of massive economic attacks. The Belarusian leader stated that the failed attempts at an economic blockade were followed by military blackmail in the form of a consistent build-up of NATO forces and means near the Union State border, especially around Kaliningrad Region.

The President emphasised that in the context of the political, economic and information warfare unleashed against Belarus and Russia and amid the international law crisis and the apparent inaction of international institutions, Belarus and Russia need to defend and promote national interests in an even more coordinated and efficient manner.

The Head of the Belarusian State recalled that the governments of Belarus and Russia have been working in the anti-crisis mode since last year and have achieved noticeable results in adapting the economy to the new reality and building new trade and logistics routes.

The President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, warmly welcomed the participants of the event at the meeting,

“Our countries are united by traditional friendship, common spiritual, cultural and moral values. It is on this basis that we are building the Union State together, and we have already managed to achieve a lot... The effectiveness of such joint efforts is confirmed by the growing indicators of mutual trade. Russia firmly occupies the place of the largest trade and economic partner of Belarus.”

grammes continues.

According to the President of Russia, the development of joint oil and gas markets of the two countries continues. An agreement on a common electricity market is being prepared for signing.

Vladimir Putin also said that Russia and Belarus would continue to increase their co-operation in defence and security, and expand co-operation in the military and technical sector, “It certainly meets the fundamental interests of our countries and peoples. Aleksandr Grigoryevich raised the issue of extending some of our previous agreements. I fully and completely support this and for my part I ask our Security Council to work on everything that the President of Belarus has set today as a priority task in this area.”

The Russian President did not specify what kind of agreements those were.

Vladimir Putin also spoke about the work on the Security Concept of the Union State. According to him, the document will formulate the main objectives of co-operation in the context of growing tensions on the external borders and the sanction and information wars unleashed against Belarus and Russia.



Belarusian port infrastructure in Ust-Luga (Russia)

The Head of the Russian State also noted significant achievements in the integration of key sectors of the economy. According to him, the implementation of the main areas of the provisions of the Union State Treaty for 2021-2023 and union pro-

“We should certainly get down to strategic planning. We will continue to strengthen the security systems of the Union State, thereby guaranteeing the conditions for its sustainable, progressive social and economic development,” the Russian leader summed up.

Among the key decisions signed following the meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State were:

- Resolution of the Supreme State Council of the Union State ‘On the development of the Security Concept of the Union State’.
- Resolution of the Supreme State Council of the Union State ‘On the provision of humanitarian assistance from the budget of the Union State to students and educational institutions of the Donetsk People’s Republic and the Luhansk People’s Republic’.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



Security guarantees

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, held a meeting with Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu in Minsk on April 10th. The Russian Defence Minister arrived in the Belarusian capital following the recent agreements between the two Heads of State.

“When parting with Vladimir Vladimirovich [Putin] after our latest negotiations we agreed that you and your experts will come to Belarus, and we will sit down with you to discuss the security issues of Belarus. You know that I raised this issue at the Supreme State Council meeting. But before that, we had discussed it with Vladimir Vladimirovich,” the President of Belarus said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stated that Western countries do not comply with the agreements on security guarantees, which were given within the framework of the Budapest Memorandum in exchange for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons,

“I am talking about the time after 1994, the famous Budapest Memorandum, where all the Western powers and Russia swore to provide full security to Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Belarus. You know, of course, that Western states have trampled all these treaties, agreements and statements and there is no security. It referred to economic security among other things. What kind of economic security is there if they impose sanctions against us, Russia? Therefore, I raised this issue in talks with the President of Russia. He fully supported me. He said we needed to revise all our treaties and agreements — those of Belarus and

Russia — to see what legal act of interstate nature should be adopted now to fully ensure the security of Belarus... In general, it was said at the talks that in case of aggression against Belarus the Russian Federation protects Belarus as its own territory. We need such security guarantees.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed once again that the West has forgotten about its obligations.

“What security guarantees can the United States give us? None. Except for spurring aggression against us, as we see it now. We need full security guarantees from our brotherly Russia. So when parting with Putin, we discussed this issue once again. We agreed that you and your experts would come here today, and we would discuss this issue in the context of the situation that is taking shape around us today, including the special military operation. I am grateful to you for coming here. I think that today we will discuss all the issues that relate to our bilateral relations and the situation in Belarus and Russia,” the Head of the Belarusian State noted.

Another topic that Aleksandr Lukashenko discussed with Sergei Shoigu was the combat training and cohesion of the joint group of forces, which includes Russian military stationed in Belarus.

“I am grateful to you that despite all the difficulties you keep several thousand Russian servicemen deployed here. We have contributed as far as necessary. Together with your officers we are training these guys, improving their combat cohesion. We train them as we should. We must keep our guards up. You can see that Poland, Lithuania are beginning to take action in our direction. Therefore, this is a good help and support for the Belarusian army, which defends the Union State on the western flank,” the President of Belarus said.

Sergei Shoigu, on his part, confirmed that he came to Belarus following the agreements of the two Presidents.

“I have the appropriate authority and instructions from our President, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. I would like to express special thanks to your Defence Ministry, and to you personally. Five Belarusian firing ranges have been allocated. They are well-equipped. Moreover, a sufficient number of instructors, officers of the Belarusian Armed Forces, are involved in training our military personnel. This group of forces is indeed a large one. Today we will consider all the issues related to its further stay and training here and, probably, the expansion of the framework that you and Vladimir Vladimirovich have discussed,” Russian Defence Minister explained.



The goal in trade is to surpass \$1 billion

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, discussed new promising areas of co-operation and projects with Governor of the Kaluga Region of Russia Vladislav Shapsha on April 3rd. The Russian delegation arrived in Minsk with a package of specific economic proposals.

“In recent years — and we state this openly — our countries, Russia and Belarus, have become much closer to each other. This is not only thanks to our relations at the highest political level, but, as always, thanks to our contacts with the regions of the Russian Federation. We have launched a lot of efforts at the level of governments, enterprises and organisations, looking for ways out of the difficult situation around our countries together. This has united our nations even more (and we can see it) and made us stronger,” Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised.

The President is convinced that a significant contribution to the record-high trade between Belarus and Russia in 2022 was made by the implementation of agreements with the heads of



Vladislav Shapsha

Russian regions. Active contacts with Kaluga Region is no exception here.

“I will not hide it — our goal is to surpass \$1 billion in trade and achieve a full balance. Minsk and Kaluga should make the most of their co-operation. As experience shows, our economies are complementary. Belarusian and Russian enterprises are naturally integrated into joint production chains,” the Head of State said.

According to him, this is taking on new significance as the two countries are working to promote industrial co-operation, introduce new high-tech technologies, and substitute import.

The construction sector is the core of trade and economic co-operation between Belarus and Kaluga Region, the Head of State noted. Belarusian construction workers build housing and social facilities in the Russian region.

“As far as I know, you are by and large satisfied with the pace and quality of the works. We are ready to engage in a detailed and substantive dialogue on this topic and will pay heed to all remarks, suggestions and wishes on ongoing projects,” Aleksandr Lukashenko added.

Belarus is also ready to meet the needs of Kaluga Region in

passenger, municipal and agricultural machinery. According to the President, the availability of certain financial instruments can make Belarusian goods even more attractive to consumers.

“The sanctions imposed by the West disrupted the established international supply chains in the food sector. We foresaw such scenarios and took the necessary steps in advance. As you know, Belarus is one of the world’s leading exporters of meat and dairy products,” the Head of State stated.

The head of the Russian region, in turn, noted, “Belarus is a reliable and trusted friend for Kaluga Region. For a long time, our co-operation has been built on the principles of mutual respect and mutual benefit. The history of bilateral relations is rich in successful projects in

industry, agriculture, science, education and culture.”

He also stressed that Kaluga Region and the Republic of Belarus have become even closer, “We have arrived here by the first regular flight from the international airport of Kaluga to Minsk after a long break. We are sure that both Kaluga residents and residents of the Russian Federation — our neighbouring regions — as well as Belarusians will take advantage of this opportunity. We ask you to support our initiative, if there is such an opportunity, to launch a return flight of the Belarusian airline to Kaluga. It is now in great demand among our residents.”

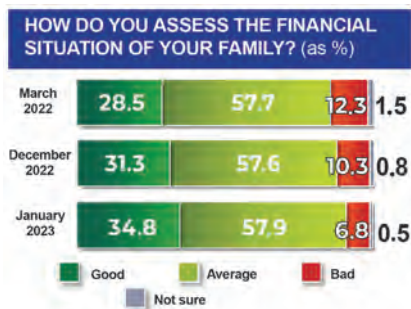
The trade turnover between Belarus and the Kaluga Region exceeded \$650 million at the end of 2022. Moreover, Belarus increased exports to this Russian region by almost 70 percent. Our country exported oil products, metal structures, furniture, dairy products, cement, concrete and artificial stone products. Propylene and ethylene polymers, animal feed products, household appliances, cars and other goods were transported from the Kaluga Region to Belarus.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

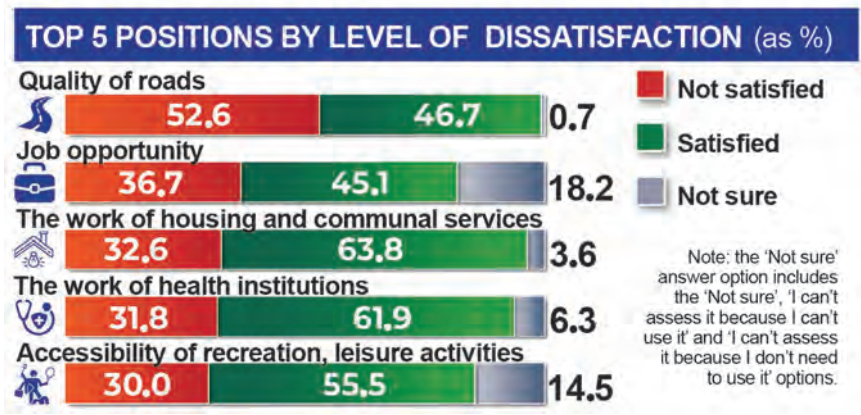
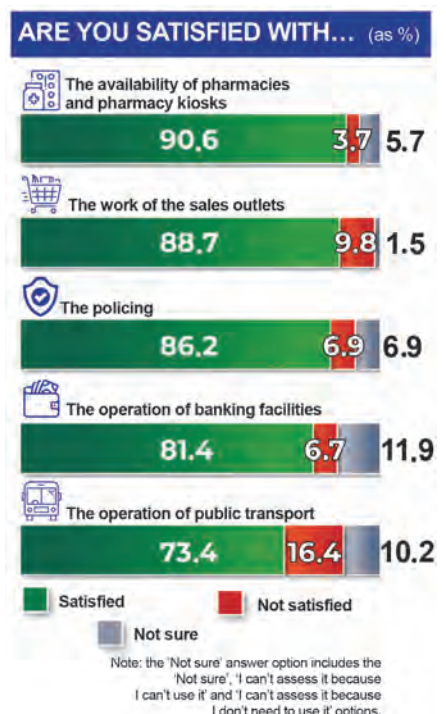
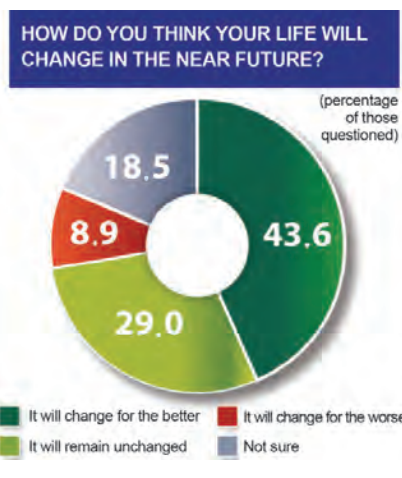


With confidence and optimism

According to the results of the telephone interview survey 'Public opinion on issues of wide concern', conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in February, about 80 percent of Belarusians are satisfied with their lives and feel safe in our country

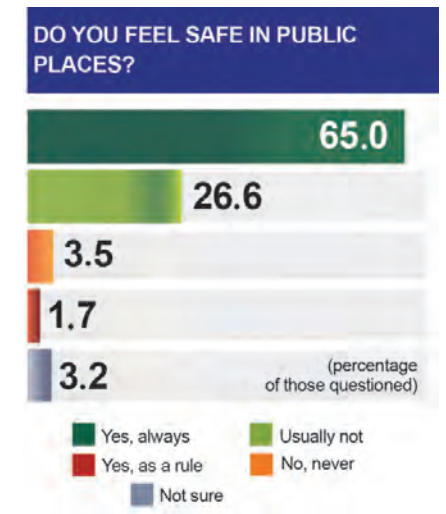


The results of surveys carried out in 2022 show that the majority of the country's residents generally give positive assessments of their material well-being.



What did the Belarusians want to improve in their place of residence? Here, too, everything is quite predictable, if we focus on data from previous surveys by the Institute of Sociology. Citizens are least satisfied with the quality of roads, employment opportunities, the work of housing and communal services and health care facilities, as well as opportunities for recreation and leisure activities.

What are Belarusians expecting for in the near future? 43.6 percent of the population expects changes for the better, another 29.0 percent of respondents believe that life 'will remain unchanged', 8.9 percent fear negative changes. At the same time, 18.5 percent of citizens were not sure. Residents of the country are mostly satisfied with living conditions in their settlements. Traditionally, the highest degree of satisfaction is observed in such positions as the availability of pharmacies and pharmacy kiosks, the work of the sales outlets, the policing, the operation of banking facilities and public transport.



Life satisfaction is the most significant indicator that makes it possible to identify the social well-being of the population. According to monitoring surveys conducted by the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, this indicator has always been quite high for Belarusians.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic period of 2020-2021, in the context of the economic challenges of 2022, the social optimism of citizens was recorded above average values, which indicates a high potential in resisting difficulties, an optimistic outlook on life characteristic of most Belarusians.

Belarusians are satisfied with their lives largely because they maintain a stable course towards a socially oriented state. In addition, we once again heard about this in the recent Address of the President. This significantly increases the confidence of citizens in the future. The trend that we are seeing is the result of huge work carried out by the state on a daily basis so that the population can declare their satisfaction with life. Such public opinion is formed by a number of factors — pricing policy, work on the improvement of settlements, significant attention to family issues, youth policy, solving problems in the regions, and much more.

Respondents were also asked to answer the question: how do you think your life will change in the near future?

According to these data, the expectations of Belarusians regarding their near future are quite optimistic. The dominant majority — more than 43 percent of the population — believe that their lives will change for the better. This indicator reflects the high level of adaptation to the current foreign policy situation around our country, the economic challenges of the past and current year, as well as the demand for positive in society. The relatively low proportion of pessimists indicates a significant predominance of optimistic attitudes among citizens.

In addition, this distribution of figures may also be a reflection of the Belarusians' confidence that they can always count on the help of the state, which traditionally adheres to a socially oriented course in matters of employment, health-care, social support, benefits, and so on.

Almost a third, 29 percent, say they see no change. This is also a good indicator. Such average estimates speak of the stability of the situation of citizens, act as a positive indicator of the situation in society.

The awareness of peace and prosperity as key values is especially relevant for Belarusians in the context of declaring 2023 as the Year of Peace and Creation in our country. A positive assessment by the population of the situation in the field of ensuring personal security by the state is the most important indicator that objectively reflects the situation in society, the state of national security as a whole.

This, of course, is the result of the colossal work carried out both by the state and, in particular, by law enforcement agencies, the media, and public organisations. At the moment, the problem of personal security is not among the most urgent problems of concern to the population.

Citizens associate the matter of security with high support for the political course pursued by the President. However, the Head of State once again indicated that Belarusians need not worry about security in our country in his recent Address. The messages of the President are understandable to citizens, resonate with society and are expressed in high ratings of personal security. At the same time, it should be remembered that security is not only the protection of the vital interests of an individual, but also of society and the state as

Thus, according to citizens, the socio-economic situation within the country has not undergone significant changes over the past year. A positive worldview prevails in the social sentiments of Belarusians, which is expressed by high satisfaction with life and noticeable optimism in relation to their future.

a whole from internal and external threats. Most Belarusians feel safe on the streets and in public places.

This suggests that the country has achieved an unprecedented level of national security, which gives people the feeling of safety in everyday life.

By Nikolai Sukhotsky, Deputy Director for Science and Innovations at the Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Candidate of Sciences in Sociology

At the end of January, Belarusians followed Aleksandr Lukashenko's state visit to Zimbabwe. Attention was drawn not only to magnificent views, but also to promising areas of co-operation between the two countries. Then they talked a lot about the economy, defence and security, including food. The issue of health care, including maternal and infant mortality, has also been developed. Belarus has very good results in this regard: we have one of the lowest child mortality rates in the world. Wife of the President of Zimbabwe Auxillia Mnangagwa visited leading clinics, where she was shown the possibilities of Belarusian medicine and the unique technologies that are being introduced here. By the way, the visit was held in accordance with the agreements reached between the leaders of Belarus and Zimbabwe.

Minsk-Harare: healthy partnership priorities

The First Lady of Zimbabwe was shown the possibilities of Belarusian medicine — from unique technologies to helping mothers and children



President Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"His wife [the President of Zimbabwe] is engaged in a fund that helps children. We will build a programme for this fund, start with some kind of humanitarian aid, transfer the most necessary things there and show Zimbabwe how children should be treated. But the most important thing is to feed the kids. We have baby food, dairy and meat mixtures. Let's get busy, let a whole group of specialists come, we begin to teach them how to treat children."

During a meeting with Belarusian scientists on February 9th, 2023



By **Khristina Glushko**

Acquaintance with the healthcare system began with National Clinical Medical Centre of the Presidential Property Management Department. The guest was shown the departments where cancer screening, women's health, diagnostics, education and rehabilitation are carried out.

The hospital chief Irina Abelskaya emphasised, "I know how much attention you pay to medicine in your country: the protection of motherhood and childhood, assistance to families and adolescents. This is very important for us, because our healthcare system also pays great attention to these areas."

During your stay in Belarus, we will try to show you some interesting multi-purpose medical institutions. I hope that our co-operation will help to strengthen the overall results in the provision of quality medical care."

The First Lady of Zimbabwe was told that the diagnosis and treatment of patients with female pathology is carried out according to European standards. It is possible to make the necessary re-

search in one day — this includes, for example, MRI, biopsy and ultrasound. In addition, the clinic conducts screening, which helps to detect a breast tumour 10 years earlier than it begins to manifest itself clinically.

"Wow, 10 years!" Auxillia Mnangagwa was impressed. She agreed with the opinion of the doctor of the centre that early detection of diseases not only affects the success of therapy, but also saves money. By the way, treatment of the first and third stages of cancer differs in cost by 30 times.

The next item on the list of visits is the National Research Centre Mother and Child. The First Lady was shown a

unique building where they help babies with record low body weight. They introduced new technologies for nursing newborns and early rehabilitation of premature babies with serious illnesses.

"The purpose of my visit to Belarus is to study the medical services offered by Belarusian centres and organisations, as well as to find opportunities for co-operation between our countries. As you know, Zimbabwe is a developing country: we do not yet have access to such medical equipment or services, but there are a lot of problems in the field of public health.

We have already seen a lot and are impressed: the equipment and services here are at the highest level. This is my first visit and I really like it here. I can only say the most sincere and warm words about people, culture and cuisine. And even the snow makes me happy," said Oxilia Mnangagwa during a press conference.

The First Lady stressed that she noticed opportunities for business co-operation during the visit, "We would be interested in seeing representatives of Zimbabwean business communities come to Belarus and establish the necessary contacts. At the same time, we will be glad if the Belarusian business explores our investment opportunities."

FIGURES AND FACTS

- Belarus occupies the 25th position in the ranking of the most comfortable countries for motherhood and is included in the top 50 countries in the world in terms of pregnancy management and organisation of childbirth.
- A multi-level system of maternal and child health care has been successfully operating in the country for more than 20 years. Belarus is ahead of all CIS countries and many developed countries of the world, including Great Britain, Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, and the USA in terms of infant mortality (2.6 per 1,000 live births).
- Survival of children with extremely low birth weight in the first year of life is more than 80 percent.
- Belarus ranks 4th in the world in terms of infant mortality under five years of age.
- Paediatric oncohematology is one of the leaders in its field in the world. The survival rate of children with malignant neoplasms is in line with the indicators in the EU and the USA. At the same time, the 20-year survival rate is about 75 percent, regardless of the stage and type of malignant neoplasm. New technologies, including cell therapy used in oncohematology, have saved the lives of more than 90 percent of patients with acute lymphocytic leukaemia and myeloid leukaemia, nephroblastoma.

Healthcare Minister, Dmitry Pinevich,

"In the course of our intensive communication, the delegation expressed a desire to see the oncology service, so we will have a big excursion to the largest oncology centres. There is an interest in developing business co-operation in the field of pharmaceuticals and equipment production. When we show our centres, we also demonstrate what Belarusian-made equipment they are equipped with. All these instructions were given by the Head of State."

HOWEVER

Belarusian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Aleinik also met with the First Lady of Zimbabwe.

The Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs warmly welcomed the guest on behalf of the Head of State, the government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Your visit is historic, as you are in Belarus for the first time. And also historic in the light of the co-operation agreements reached by our Presidents. Today's interaction can be called a breakthrough in many areas of our bilateral relations. We look forward to and are ready to work towards achieving the goals set by our Heads of State."

Sergei Aleinik stressed that Belarus and Zimbabwe have entered a new period of relations, strengthening political interaction and economic ties, "We are also developing humanitarian co-operation, as you will see during your visit."

The key topics during the visit of the First Lady of Zimbabwe will be health, medical science, maternal and child health.

Technological renaissance



By Tatiana Shchedrenok

Zigzag of industrial development

Specialised industrial exhibitions already became a tradition. They have been held in the country for more than ten years. In the old days, exhibition stands were full of European brands. This year, Western companies did not come to Minsk. But the forum only benefited from this to some extent. There was no vacuum. Moreover, an unusual revival reigned in the exhibition pavilions.

It's nice that Belarusian producers are located in the central places, once occupied by the far abroad. The exhibitions of the partner countries — Russia, China, Israel, the Republic of Korea and others — supplemented the national industrial flavour. There are about 150 participants in total.



Aleksandr Kulevsky

It is noteworthy that most of the exhibitors are manufacturing companies. Therefore, long before the official opening, professional discussions and dialogues began between colleagues. Themes for deeper co-operation were groped and developed.

There has been a lot of talk lately about technological sovereignty. But this is not something ephemeral. Visual exhibitions are just the case when this very sovereignty can be visualised. Belarusian machine tools and CNC machining centres, tools for metal processing of various profiles, automation systems for machine tool building, advanced technologies... Beautiful, interesting, promising and innovative.

Here it is, the zigzag of industrial development! Our

machine-tool factories did not appear yesterday. Many have more than half a century of history. Moreover, our StankoGomel was founded in the distant 1885! Enterprises worked, designed, developed to the best of their ability before the sanctions. Only they were upstaged by transnational equipment suppliers. Thanks to Western politicians: they restored justice and freed domestic producers from the dominance of their companies. It turned out that we have a lot of promising developments. Only until last year they did not find implementation. They were considered economically inexpedient in the conditions of the 'open market'. Perhaps, thank God that it closed on the other side. However, new opportunities have opened up. It's time for a technological renaissance.

Based on years of experience

So, we had, have and are developing the basis for technological sovereignty. But there is still a lot of room for action ahead. Imported electronics is the weak point of our machine tool industry. The same CNC systems were exported mainly from Germany and Japan in the past. Deputy Industry Minister Aleksandr Yefimov noted that industrialists face a fundamental task — to switch to a domestic component base. So, over time, we need to master the production of our own electronics. This is possible in co-operation with our strategic partners — Russia and China. The process is in the active stage. Our machine tool builders are actively co-operating with Russian companies — manufacturers of

With the end of the dictatorship of Western transnationals, a new stage of development has begun for Belarusian manufacturers

Last week, Football Manege hosted a technology game. Exhibitors of international specialised industrial exhibitions dedicated to metal processing were among the participants: equipment, tools, technologies, welding, cutting and electronics... This time enterprises of Belarus and partner countries competed not among themselves, but in absentia with Western manufacturers. There is no doubt that they would gladly present their new products and commercial offers to the Belarusian market, but the sanctions did not allow this. However, this industrial forum came out only more interesting. It is obvious even to a visitor who is not deeply immersed in industrial world: technological independence is not a dream, but a reality. Moreover, industrial sovereignty has already been largely achieved. Now it has to be strengthened and expanded.

CNC systems. There are also domestic developments. True, so far on a foreign component base. But the creation of Belarusian control units does not seem unbelievable.

In this regard, the stand of the Integral holding was of particular interest. CNC systems are not produced here yet, but we have mastered the line of on-board computers for agricultural machinery — harvesters, seeders and other equipment. Including with functionality for precision

Sciences. Director of the Physical-Technical Institute Vitaly Zalesky clarified that this is a centre of skill sets in the field of metal processing. It not only develops new technologies, but also introduces them into production. The scientist noted that the interest in co-operation with research organisations from the industry has increased significantly. Science, hand in hand with industry, solves the most complex production problems and is a driver of technological development.

look at them. But in their hearts they kept Belarusian brands 'in reserve', hoping for an international détente, parallel imports and some ornate supply routes. A series of escalations and restrictions put an end to co-operation with European manufacturers. As a result, the quotes of our machine tool builders went up. Their investment attractiveness has also increased. A number of projects in the field of machine tool building have been included in the list of import-substituting projects and will be financed



farming. Previously, Western companies supplied these products to our machine builders. Now — Belarusian brands. Our devices even give odds to foreign analogues for a number of properties.

The exit of our machine tool industry to the promising technological level of the next generation is just as real. After all, what is important is that Belarus has not only a production base for this, but also a scientific and technological base. As First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus Sergei Chizhik noted, science is closely involved in the processes of import substitution. Recently, Akademtekhograd was created on the basis of the Physical-Technical Institute of the National Academy of

Stimulating demand

Marketing services of machine tool enterprises naturally state that the demand for products is growing. Both from domestic consumers, and Russian. Furthermore, the demand is solvent. And if relatively recently many enterprises did not know how to use their production capacities, now they are actively increasing them.

In the past, modest sales volumes have been one of the industry's main constraints. The departure of Western brands from the union trading space has expanded horizons. The Russian market woke up. Until recently, Russians visited exhibition events more in order to get acquainted with Belarusian products, to take a closer

from the funds of an interstate targeted Russian loan.

However, we are far from the idea of autarky with all the striving for technological sovereignty. Only co-operation will develop along the vector of all-weather friendly states. Primarily with Russia and China. The Industry Ministry has announced a trip to China for a delegation of Belarusian machine tool builders. Issues of deepening of co-operation, the creation of joint ventures for the production of technological products are in focus. Co-operation ties with Russian partners are also growing stronger. As a result, dependence on the dictates of Western transnational corporations is melting away. And there are all prerequisites for the fact that critical imports will be completely replaced in the shortest possible time.

Gold may be easily told!

The first sodium batteries become a reality: scientists from the National Academy of Sciences have developed a unique sodium-graphene battery

Along with the current shortage of chips, batteries present one of the technology industry's biggest challenges. The demand for this type of component and the emerging shortage of lithium are forcing manufacturers to look for other ways to meet the needs of electric vehicles and mobile electronics. One of the alternatives to lithium-based batteries is sodium-based batteries — they are cheaper, safer and more affordable. However, their performance leaves much to be desired. Belarusian scientists proposed their own solution to this problem: they created a scooter on the world's first sodium-graphene battery.

By Inna Gorbatenko

At full speed

The National Academy of Sciences and the leading enterprises of the country's engineering industry are developing numerous technical and technological solutions in the field of batteries for electric vehicles. They have repeatedly proven that they can create breakthrough technologies. So, scientists of the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus were the first to develop a unique sodium-graphene battery. They were able to achieve parameters that are comparable to lithium-based

batteries today. Moreover, theoretically, this type of battery can provide power, capacity and other indicators higher than that of similar traction batteries using lithium.

The first prototype of a sodium-graphene traction battery for electric vehicles was presented at the Intellectual Belarus exhibition. "We promised the President to create our domestic lithium-free battery, and we did it. This is a very important and necessary innovation for the country. We have reached approximately the same parameters as lithium batteries," Director General of the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus Valery Fedosyuk said back then. He promised to fine-tune the technology and show a more advanced battery at the next exhibition.

Specialists of the Laboratory of Physical and Chemical Technologies are currently working on the modification of the prototype. Scientists are turning to various materials in search of new, more

effective options, including sodium, the Head of the Laboratory Vladimir Novikov says, "Sodium-based batteries are safer than lithium-ion batteries. These are alkali metals, both are very active. The catch is in the size of the atoms of these elements. The sodium atom is three times heavier than the lithium atom. That is, if we simply replace lithium with sodium, then with the same design we will get a battery with a capacity three times lower. We figured out how to change the design and composition of electrode materials in order to level out this difference."

Scientists have realised that everyone is now engaged in lithium-based batteries, the competition in this sector is tough. It is possible to achieve significant results and declare oneself at the international level only by taking up something new.

The cumulative experience in the field of electrochemistry and graphene-like materials, made it possible to create the first prototype of a sodium-based battery in a very short time, Vladimir Novikov says, "We have developed a new way to synthesise graphene. Simple, cost-effective and environmentally friendly. Similar carbon materials are used in many types of energy storage devices. We tried to make a fragment of a supercapacitor for BELAZ electric forklifts, and we succeeded."

However, the market for supercapacitors is small, and advances in conventional batteries have been so rapid that scientists have moved on to developing sodium-based batteries. There was equipment for studying electrochemical processes, graphene production technology and competencies too. Experts have figured out how to increase the electrical capacity of sodium-based batteries and

achieve values close to lithium ones.

It turns out that there is only 7 percent lithium in a lithium-based battery, the rest is excipients. Increasing the percentage of lithium entails a lot of problems, Vladimir Novikov explains without getting into technical details, "A short circuit occurs and the battery fails. Until now, this problem, which hinders progress in the field of electric vehicles, has not been fully resolved in the world. We have selected additives to the electrolyte in such a way that no short circuit occurs. That is, due to a more concentrated electrode, we partially compensate for the difference in the atomic masses of sodium and lithium, bring the characteristics of a sodium-based battery closer to a lithium one."

Now the energy capacity of a sodium-based battery is 150 Wh/kg, its lithium counterpart is 200 Wh/kg. Work to improve this indicator is ongoing.

Sodium prospects

Given the high cost of lithium and the scarcity of its deposits (it is mined in eight countries: Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Zimbabwe, China, Portugal, the USA and Chile), the new sodium-based battery will provide a higher economic benefit. This, in turn, opens up great prospects for the domestic auto industry. Also, all the raw materials used to create

The new sodium-based battery will provide a higher economic benefit. This, in turn, opens up great prospects for the domestic auto industry

this drive are domestic, which is important while maintaining industrial sovereignty. In addition to sodium, the ammonia and graphene present in the battery are also produced in Belarus. The latter is obtained from inexpensive Russian graphite.

Another advantage is that sodium-based batteries

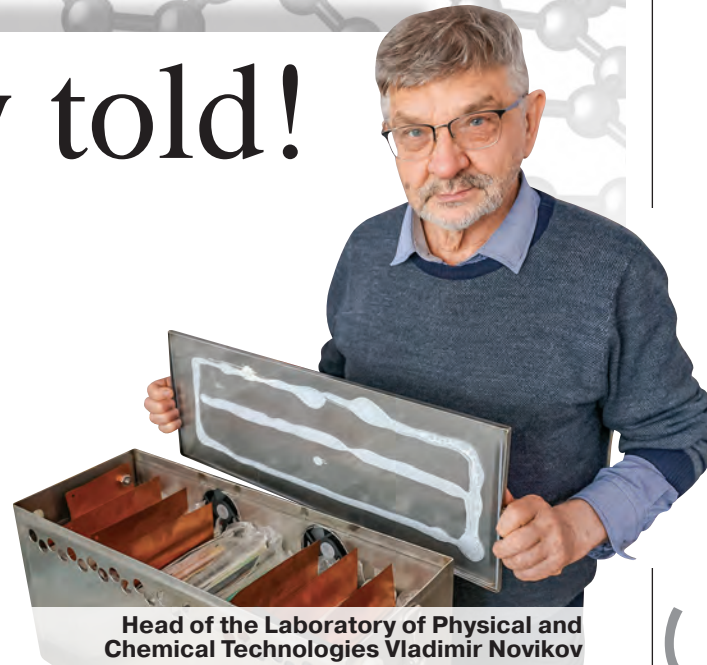
do not need cobalt, which is required in lithium-ion batteries. Much of the cobalt used today to make lithium-ion batteries comes from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where rebellions, unorganised mining and child labour create uncertainty and ethical qualms about the cobalt trade.

The launch of small-scale production of sodium-based batteries is ahead. It is going to be organised in the premises of the Institute. Having worked on a small series of technologies and having studied the possibilities of new batteries for car keys, they will release a line for scooters. Then they will begin to create more powerful samples — for motorcycles. So, step by step, the turn of electric vehicles, electric buses and other environmentally friendly vehicles will come. This means

that electric cars can become significantly cheaper, as well as radically increase the range of autonomous travel.

"First of all, sodium-based batteries can be used as stationary energy storage devices. By gradually improving performance, we will be able to convert the transport sector to new batteries, for example, electric cars in factories. Then the city passenger equipment and sight-seeing transport, which travels along a given short route. As we move along the characteristics in the direction of their improvement, we have every chance to enter electric vehicles," Vladimir Novikov believes.

Belarusian scientists are already exploring the possibility of establishing partnerships with a number of enterprises of the Industry Ministry. Moreover, not only Belarusian, but also Russian.



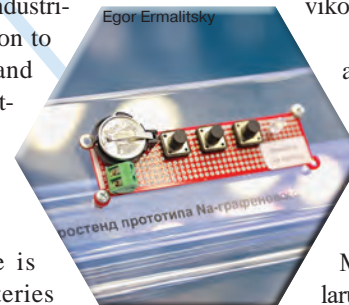
Head of the Laboratory of Physical and Chemical Technologies Vladimir Novikov



Junior research assistant Igor Sidorov studies the properties of graphene



Egor Ermalitsky



Egor Ermalitsky



A site for the production of single crystals of diamond in the Laboratory of High Pressure Physical and Superhard Materials

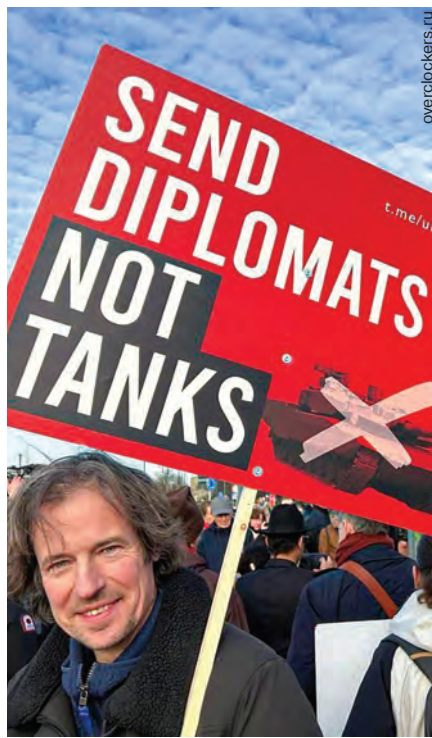


The new energy storage device has been tested on small electric vehicles



The next task is a bigger battery, already for electric vehicles

SCIENCE



Rallies for peace

Thousands of people took part in mass demonstrations across seventy German cities, protesting against the constant supply of weapons to Kiev and calling for Russia-Ukraine peace talks to take place as soon as possible

Demonstrators call on German government to back diplomatic efforts to reach peace, end to weapons supplies to Kiev.

The marches were held as part of peace marches which are held annually in the country on the eve of Easter, as reported by the DPA news agency.

The largest demonstrations took place in Berlin, Bonn, Bremen, Duisburg, Hannover, Leipzig, Munich and Stuttgart. Demonstrators demanded the speedy holding of peace talks on Ukraine, the cessation of the supply of German

weapons to Kiev and the modernisation programme of the Bundeswehr.

According to a spokesperson for Peace Co-operative Network — the organisers of the marches — over 2,000 people took part in Berlin, and around 1,200 gathered in Hannover.

Speaking in the city of Leipzig, Torsten Schleip, one of the organisers of the marches, commented, “For us, an immediate ceasefire and the start of negotiations is the best alternative to further arms exports and escalation, up to an exchange of nuclear strikes.”

On the posters carried by the demonstrators, the image of a German Leopard tank was accompanied by the caption: ‘Put the Lion on the Chain’.

Activists carried posters and banners including the words, ‘Co-operation and Friendship with Russia’, ‘Peace — Now’, ‘Diplomacy, Not Weapons’, ‘US and NATO — Get out of Ukraine’, ‘Against Senseless Sanctions, Cheap Energy – Now’, and ‘Tanks Never Bring Peace’. During the procession, the song *Katyusha* was performed in Russian and German.

UN adopts resolution calling for lifting sanctions

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) adopted a resolution condemning the ‘negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights’

Emphasising that unilateral coercive measures, legislation, and secondary sanctions were a violation of international law, norms and principles as well as the UN Charter, the text expressed ‘grave concern’ over the negative impact of sanctions on human rights, including the right to development, which is recognised as a ‘universal and inalienable right’ integral to all human rights.

It called upon all states to ‘stop adopting, maintaining, implementing, or complying with unilateral coercive measures...in particular those of a coercive nature with extraterritorial effects’.

The draft resolution was approved with 33 votes in favour, 13 against, and one abstention. Among the countries that rejected the text were, predictably, the United States and several of its NATO allies including the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Finland, Germany, alongside Ukraine.

The resolution stresses that ‘no state may use, encourage or threaten to use any type of measure, including but not limited to economic or political measures, to coerce another state in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights, and to secure from it advantages of any kind’.

The resolution drew attention to the ‘disproportionate and indiscriminate human costs of unilateral sanctions’ and their impact on basic rights, including the right to life, access to health care, right to freedom.

Strategic autonomy and ‘extra-territoriality’ of the US Dollar

Europe must develop more strategic autonomy as a way to avoid the risk of turning EU countries into ‘vassals’ in the event of a global crisis such as a US-China confrontation, French President Emmanuel Macron told media as he returned from a three-day state visit to Beijing

“Strategic autonomy must be the battle of Europe,” the French President told the business daily *Les Echos*. “We don’t want to depend on others for critical topics,” Macron said in an interview, citing issues such as energy, defence, social media and artificial intelligence.

Macron warned against what he called the ‘extraterritoriality’ of the US Dollar, which can force European companies to forgo business with third countries or risk sanctions violations.

“If the tensions between the two superpowers heat up...we won’t have the time nor the resources to finance our

strategic autonomy and we will become vassals,” Macron told *Politico*.

Macron criticised the US policy of building closer relations with Taiwan. “The question Europeans need to answer is, is it in our interest to accelerate [a crisis] on Taiwan? No,” Macron told *Politico*. “The worse thing would be to think that we Europeans must become followers on this topic and take our cue from the US agenda and a Chinese overreaction.”

His comments risk riling Washington and highlight divisions in the EU over how to approach China, as the US steps up confrontation with its closest rival.



A triple blow to the West

As the US administration waits for oil prices to fall, nine OPEC+ members announced voluntary production cuts of 1.2 million barrels a day from May until the end of the year, amounting to 1.1 percent of global supply, *The Telegraph* reports

“The blow to the West is threefold. High oil prices will keep inflation up. The move signals that Saudi Arabia is turning its back on the West and turning to China. Rising oil prices will also undermine sanctions on Russia — where oil profits are about to surge,” the article reads.

The publication bases its forecast on the backdrop of the actions of US President Joe Biden, who pledged to make Saudi Arabia an international pariah, and then traveled to Jeddah to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Plans to persuade the Prince to increase oil production and thereby reduce inflation were not very successful. And in view of the current situation, Biden can only look on powerlessly.

The threat to relations between the

United States and Saudi Arabia after the decision of OPEC + to reduce oil production was pointed out by *Newsweek* magazine. According to the authors of the material, Washington and Riyadh ‘are again on the way to a collision’. Earlier, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said that OPEC+’s unexpected decision to cut oil production was regrettable.

Every \$1 increase in the price of crude oil boosts Russian export revenues by about \$2.7bn a year, says Benjamin Hilgenstock, author of a report on Russian sanctions for the Centre for Economic Policy Research, a think tank. A \$10 increase in the oil price will therefore increase Russian oil export revenues by around \$27bn to \$145bn this year.



France has been paralysed by the ongoing protests against pension reform

For good or evil purposes?

Neural networks have already entangled our privacy. What will happen next?

Global technological innovations inevitably bring us closer to the moment when artificial intelligence (AI) will become part of everyday life for everyone without exception. According to the prediction of the famous British physicist Stephen Hawking, scientific and technological progress is so rapid that computers will 'surpass humans' at some point within the next 100 years. Do you think it's not soon? Nice one. Individual elements of AI are already ready to take control of the lives of hundreds of millions of inhabitants of our planet. At the same time, not everyone will be able to recognise where he or she makes a decision, and where it is done by artificial intelligence. And this is often fraught with unpredictable consequences.

By Aleksandr Nesterov

Invisible assistants

Artificial intelligence can mimic human behaviour to perform tasks and learn incrementally from the information it collects. And now the music streaming services offer compositions for listening, tracking the preferences of the owner of the gadget. Social networks recommend new friends, bring together potential employees and employers. Advanced cars automatically adjust various settings based on the likes and dislikes of their owners. The navigator in the car calculates the best path to your destination. Email helpfully sorts emails by subject, calculates spam, and optionally includes a one-click smart reply feature. Search engines work taking into account the data

range of applications are there! From speech recognition systems to protein secondary structure recognition, from the classification of various types of cancer to genetic engineering. By the way, now popular chat bots are also the work of neural networks.

Every year, the scope of neural networks is increasing. According to a report by Allied Analytics, the market for neural networks will be \$39 billion in 2023, nearly six times the size of 2016.

Put your trust in AI, and keep your powder dry

Any technology can both benefit and harm — it all depends on how you use it. Internet users, and not only them, faced one of the global problems. It's about fakes. The appearance of, say, programmes for replacing faces and even the season in photos and videos gives a wide scope for imagination. Generative neural networks already allow you to create videos in which

of artificial intelligence technology will increase productivity — primarily by getting rid of people whose activities can be automated as much as possible. According to experts from Goldman Sachs (USA), 18 percent of the current work in the world can be automated in the future with the help of artificial intelligence.

Lots of noisy data... For what reason?

Artificial intelligence cannot create, conceptualise, or strategically plan. It's great at optimising for a narrow goal, but it's incapable of thinking creatively. So it is still far from a complete replacement of a person. Nevertheless, in March of this year, the American entrepreneur, engineer and billionaire Elon Musk, together with more than 1,000 AI experts, demanded a moratorium on training powerful neural networks in an open letter, since an uncontrolled process in this area could pose a threat to humanity.

While celebrities in the West are attracting attention with loud statements, practitioners are pursuing other tasks. As Director of the Hi-Tech Park Vsevo-

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"Today when a door opens into a new world where artificial intelligence nearly matches the human brain, we have to remember that we shouldn't lose the key thing — the person and everything human in this person."

During the plenary session of the 8th Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia on July 1st, 2021

healthcare, we are the first among the CIS countries," he gave an example.

More than a hundred projects in the field of artificial intelligence and robotics were presented at the autumn exhibition. At the beginning of 2023, the development of AI was already discussed during the Intellectual Belarus exhibition. For many uninitiated, it was news that, for example, all healthcare services in Minsk and other cities — Automated information and analytical systems such as Clinic and Web-polyclinic, Ambulance, Unified Laboratory Information System, decision support systems for predicting one or another disease are the results of the work of domestic specialists. And 'smart' cities, healthcare, education, housing and communal services, etc. are realistic projects. As well as speech and text recognition and synthesis technologies, other developments in the field of AI.

The Head of State delegated the functions of an operator-regulator in the field of intellectual technologies to the Informatics Institute of the National Academy of Sciences at the exhibition *Intellectual Belarus*.

Neural networks can work according to a given algorithm, remember information, and also generate reactions, recognise errors and learn from them on their own.

previously collected on you — location, age, previous requests, etc. Online stores are ready to give recommendations on the choice of goods after typing the first letters of the desired name...

If all these virtual assistants with the habits of a warden are annoying, then not always, not all of them, and not as much as it might seem. The talk about the power of neural networks is much more disturbing. (By the way, there is an important difference between them and artificial intelligence. A neural network is just one of the areas of development of artificial intelligence, the purpose of which is to model the analytical mechanisms carried out by the human brain.) Among the tasks that a typical neural network solves are classification, prediction, and recognition. The main areas of their application are forecasting, decision-making, pattern recognition, optimisation and data analysis. All the things we love. But what a

people do things that they have not done and say things that they have never said.

Hence the conclusion: it is impossible to trust the AI news feed today. You can only trust reliable, well-established sources.

It is believed that neural networks are a good tool for hackers: professionals successfully overcome anti-virus protection systems and create new generations of malware.

But still, the main horror story for people who are associated with the rapid development of AI in general and neural networks in particular is the upcoming global changes in the labour market. Indeed, the further introduction

lod Yanchevsky said last autumn at the opening of the first exhibition-forum of IT Academgrad 'Artificial Intelligence in Belarus', a touch of sensationalism and partly scandal around AI is passing. It's time for real results. In turn, Director General of the Informatics Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus Sergei Kruglikov recalled that the domestic AI community occupies a leading position in the international arena: "If we take smart healthcare, intelligent image processing with high accuracy, then NAS employees are in the top 10 best manufacturers. Our brands are known and used all over the world. In terms of intellectual

There is a lot of work to be done in the near future, Sergei Kruglikov notes in this regard, "It is necessary to prepare a regulatory framework, develop standards and an action plan for the introduction of intelligent systems in the daily activities of our people."

Loving the world

To the 115th anniversary of Aleksey Glebov

It has long been noted that development proceeds in waves in some areas: a galaxy of especially gifted people appears at a certain point in the era. They pull, push forward certain areas of art, culture, literature or public life. In astronomy, the Pleiades is one of the largest star clusters that can be seen with the naked eye. But other people glow no less brightly — during their life and after, beyond its threshold. People's Artist of the BSSR, sculptor Aleksey Glebov is one of the representatives of the powerful Belarusian creative wave, which became widely discussed in the 1930s at the level of the entire USSR. Among his comrades in the profession, contemporaries and colleagues were Zair Azgur, Andrei Bembel, Sergei Selikhanov, Mikhail Kerzin and other outstanding sculptors who left their mark on the culture of the country. A truly bright constellation in which Glebov's star shines with its own unique light.



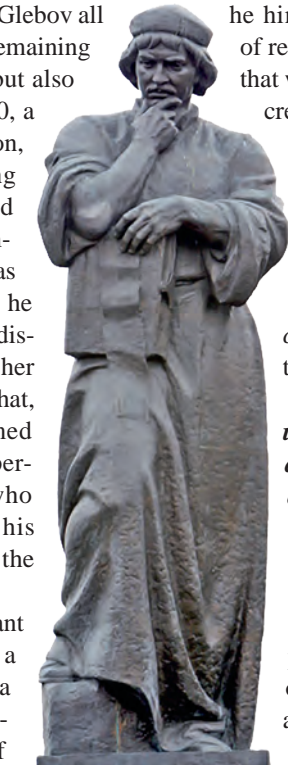
By Irina Ovsepyan

Aleksey Glebov was born in the village of Zverovichy (it was Belarusian before the revolution, today it is the Smolensk Region). He was the priest's son — his father was a modest village priest, as usual, with many children — he did not disassociate himself from his family even in those years when the persecution of religion was widespread. Aleksey Glebov loved and appreciated his father for everything that was taught to him in the family: a reverent attitude to life, humanity, love for the word and nature, a special attitude towards horses. Perhaps that is why he reached out to painting — to capture the beautiful world that he saw around him, and, despite the seriousness of his monumental sculptural works, Glebov remained a lyricist until the end of his life.

His elder brother fought for the Reds in Civil War, and when he returned, he taught in the town of Rudnya. He helped the younger Alyosha with his studies at school, and at the same time supported his desire to draw. His childhood comrades were Konstantin Kosmachev and Alexander Mozolev, future famous Belarusian artists. There was a whole company of them — Rudnya boys, obsessed with the dream of entering the Vitebsk Folk Art School, led by Marc Chagall, a place where unprecedented and glorious things were created. They fulfilled this dream.

Glebov, having entered the school in the mid-1920s, when the famous sculptor Mikhail Kerzin was the director, also took up sculpture under his influence: once, along with paintings, he demonstrated several studies in clay, and the keen enthusiast Kerzin immediately saw the potential of the student. Later, when the student committee expelled the priest's son from the school under the pretext of a dubious origin, it was Kerzin who gave him shelter, fed the student who had lost his scholarship and fought for him in the offices, seeking restoration. He took care of Glebov all his life, until the very end, remaining to him not only a teacher, but also a good friend. True, in 1930, a few months before graduation, the ill-wishers of the young talented sculptor again raised the topic of his 'wrong' family and exclusion. If there was another person in his place, he or she would have written a dissociation, renounced his or her relatives — many did just that, but not Glebov. He slammed the door and, despite the persuasions of the teacher, who again took up the task of his restoring, did not return to the school again.

He got a job as an assistant to an artist-painter, then as a props at the Vitebsk Drama Theatre, then moved to Moscow — he was in charge of the props and furniture



Francysk Skaryna (1954)



Partisans of Belarus, one of the high reliefs of the Victory Monument in Minsk (1954)



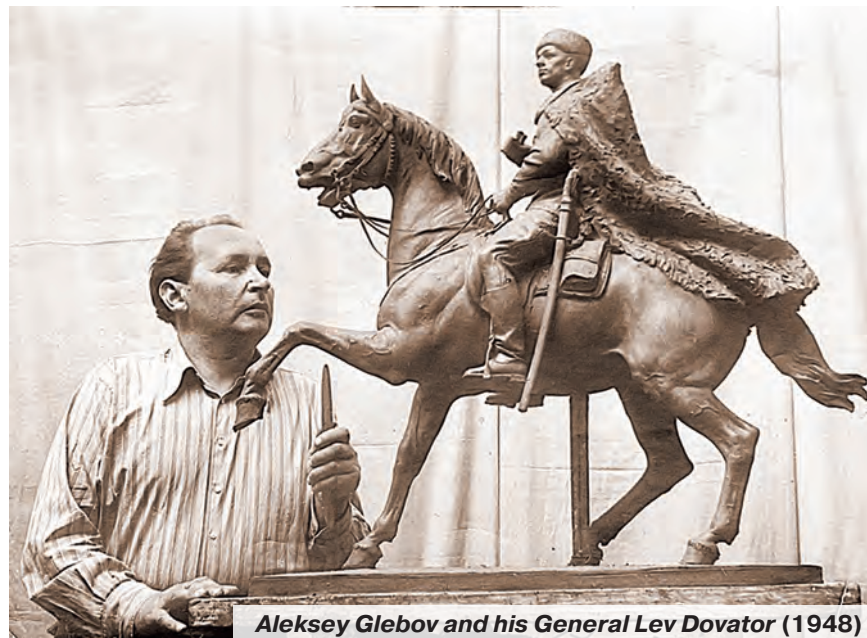
Yanka Kupala and Maxim Gorky (1947)

workshop at the Moscow Art Theatre, where in those years many enthusiastic young artists gathered at once. Creative destiny could take a turn here and give way to the skill of an artisan, if not for Kerzin, who still dreamed of a career as a sculptor for his student. In 1933, he persistently invited Glebov to Minsk to take part in the design of the Government House. It was in this team of a good dozen artists who were engaged in sculpting statues, busts and bas-reliefs that Glebov began to seriously take shape as a master, to develop his own style and author's manner. The efforts of Kerzin, who sought to return the young talent to the republic, were not in vain: the sculptor was appreciated, and he himself finally felt the taste of recognition. It was his sketch that won the competition for the creation of a monument to the liberation of Belarus from Polish oppression, for the pavilion at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition (VDNKh) he created bas-reliefs with *Kryzhachok* and *Lyavonikha* national dances.

The equestrian statue of Marshal Voroshilov also showed another undoubted talent: Aleksey Glebov had no equal in the Soviet Union in the modelling of horses!

His work was also appreciated in the first decade of Belarusian literature and art in Moscow, which took place in 1940.

He worked in Minsk



Aleksey Glebov and his General Lev Dovator (1948)

until June 22nd, 1941, when the Great Patriotic War began. He took his family — mother, wife and son — to the evacuation, and he himself went to the front. Number 1 of the machine-gun crew, he participated in the battle for Moscow, was seriously wounded. The head of the hospital, Lieutenant Colonel Giller, an educated and cultured man, created conditions for the creative work of artist, who was undergoing treatment. There he, having seen enough human suffering and sipped it himself, fashioned the *Carrying Out the Wounded* bas-relief, the figures of the donor and the nurse — alas, the location of these works is still unknown. After recovery, he was withdrawn to the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement in Moscow, where Panteleimon Ponomarenko gathered many figures of Belarusian culture — their talent in wartime was especially needed by the people. With them, the sculptor returned to the liberated Minsk in 1944 to raise his small homeland from the ruins.

All his life he was drawn to literature, he worked on the images of the writers Yanka Kupala and Maxim Gorky for years, he studied the personality of the first printer Francysk Skaryna, creating sculpture after sculpture. The second theme was the war — its heroes, fallen compatriots, received a new life in sculptures.

The brilliant cavalryman Lev Dovator is the legendary Hero of the Soviet Union, for whose head the Nazis prom-

ised crazy money (of course, on horseback!), a whole partisan epic — after all, living prototypes walked side by side, along the same streets, building a peaceful life and remembering the past, an obelisk-monument to the soldiers of the Soviet army who died in the battles for the liberation of Belarus...

Joker and the soul of society, he loved the world around him. We can say that Glebov was in a warm relationship both with life and people.

He was not destined to live long — a wound in the lung, developed asthma, incessant smoking (like many front-line soldiers), and also constantly drying

clay in the workshop, where it was necessary to maintain humidity... The generation that went through the war, was catching up with fragments and bullets in the 1960s and 1970: then, already in peacetime, one after another, many left, who had broken their health in battles and in work for wear and tear, suffered hardships, those who for five long years covered their native land with their own breasts, most often in the most literal sense. They lay down in platoons in cemeteries under modest monuments with a red star: they had completed their combat mission and could already rest... Apparently, the sculptor also felt something like that, because he kept a letter to his teacher Kerzin under his pillow — the family had to send it in case of death. And so it happened.

Aleksey Glebov managed to come up with and sculpt a model of the monument to Francysk Skaryna in Polotsk, and he received the State Prize of the BSSR for it posthumously. The grandiose sculpture was cast and installed by Glebov's students, and now this 12-metre composition adorns the hometown of the first printer. The Minsk State Art College was named after him, which became the successor to the Vitebsk Art School, which the sculptor never finished. His works live in the halls of the National Art Museum — beautiful female images, lovingly fashioned horses: he considered both of them the most perfect creatures on this earth...

The ice has broken. There was a stir and fuss in the offices of the sports federations after the recent meeting of the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee, at which the conditions for the admission of Belarusian and Russian representatives to international competitions were formed and announced. Someone reacted instantly and hurried to cancel the hard ban almost the next day, others took note of the information, but took a pause for reflection.

By Sergei Kanashits

In the beginning it was sambo and boxing. The International Federation of Amateur SAMBO (FIAS) did not succumb to pressure and took a principled and bold position a year ago: not to ban! Since then, sambo wrestlers from Belarus and Russia have successfully performed at the largest top tournaments in a neutral status. They are preparing to fight at the World and European Championships this year as well. Boxers also stood up and took the fight, having the reputation of the most daring sports federation in the Olympic family. The IBA not only crumpled up the previous recommendations of the IOC and shoved them away, but responded to all the bans to politicised sports officials with a powerful uppercut: they allowed the national teams of Russia and Belarus to participate in tournaments under their auspices without any restrictions and infringement of rights — with an anthem, a flag and with full national equipment. The IBA World Women's Boxing Championship has already been held in this format in New Delhi (our Yuliya Apanasovich returned with a bronze medal), while the men's championship will also be held in Tashkent in May.

Fencers were the first to support the emerging position of a slight thaw. They even gave a proactive injection, having outlined their principled position even before the meeting of the IOC Executive Board: 89 participants of the FIE Congress supported the return of Belarusians and Russians, 46 votes were against. Then they spoke at the International Table Tennis Federation. Here before, they tried, if possible, to level all political obstacles (back in May last year, the federation restored Russian clubs in the Champions League),

Caution, the doors are opening!

Belarusian and Russian athletes return to world sport



and now they reported with enthusiasm: taking into account the current schedule, if all conditions are met, Russian and Belarusian players will be able to take part in competition in May. Next, the representatives of taekwondo gave the go-ahead. Following an online discussion, the World Federation of this type of martial arts decided to allow Belarusians and Russians as neutral athletes to participate in international tournaments, starting with the 2023 World Championship, which will be held in Baku at the end of May. Chairman of the Belarusian Taekwondo Federation Vyacheslav Berzhets remarked on this,

“Of course, we plan that our team will go to the World Cup. Next week we will hold a coaching council, discuss the composition of the team and further stages of preparation for this tournament. In the meantime, athletes conduct decentralised training — they

train locally. As for other recommendations of the IOC, we do not have athletes in the national team who would be members of the Armed Forces, national security agencies, so this issue is not before us.”

Nevertheless, this applies to wrestlers. On Tuesday, the executive committee of the United World Wrestling (UWW) also issued its ‘approval’ regarding the admission of the national teams of Belarus and Russia. Moreover, the decision to participate in the competitions of the youth teams of both countries (U-15 and U-17) came into force immediately. But not everything is clear yet with adult athletes precisely due to their mass belonging to the societies of law enforcement agencies. The general mood and position on this issue was expressed by the President of Russian Wrestling Federation Mikhail Mamiashvili, “Not a single recommendation should humiliate civil and human dignity.

The general mood is as follows: not to stray into primitive relations, to put universal values at the forefront. For us, such humiliating demands from the IOC are unacceptable. Neither the status of the Olympic Games, nor the desire to compete in them can make an animal out of a person. That’s the mood we have.” In the meantime, the UWW plans to propose to the IOC to soften the criteria for athletes working under contract with military organisations.

But in the International Judo Federation (IJF), they have taken a very strange position of a weak-willed pendulum and live by the principle: where all others, there I too. It works for a long time already. A year ago, Russians and Belarusians were allowed on the tatami in a neutral status, but already in September they themselves annulled their decision. In January, the admission was again approved, but only formally, blocking all attempts to apply at

the stage of filing documents — they are constantly blocked and kept off and on. The Secretary General of the Belarusian Federation Ruslan Sharapov says,

“Formally, the judoists of Russia and Belarus were admitted to the World Championship in a neutral status, which starts on May 7th in Qatar. But the problem is that the selection there is based on rating, but many wrestlers lost their positions during the suspension and do not have the opportunity to improve them. We could enter the team competition, but the IOC no longer orders it. It’s like a vicious circle...”

By the way, the question of belonging to organisations of law enforcement and military structures in judo is also acute. The head coach of the national team Andrei Kazusenok, for example, has been serving in the Emergencies Ministry all his adult life, he is lieutenant colonel. It is unlikely that he will decide to bend under the changing world and go into reserve.

Many other international federations gave their go-to response on a hot topic: they ‘took note’ and ‘look for opportunities’. In weightlifting, cycling and gymnastics, they said that such issues cannot be solved without stopping to think and, in the best style of hardened bureaucrats, they advised ‘to come in for a week’. A special working group was created in rowing, in UIPM (pentathlon) they decided not to change the ‘current protective measures’ yet. The World Athletics Association is also among those who do not itch yet. “Athletes, officials and personnel from Russia and Belarus are still suspended for the foreseeable future,” World Athletics President Sebastian Coe gleefully told the public at a recent press conference. At the same time, the association restored the status of the All-Russian Federation, which gives the Russians the right to come to Belarus for domestic tournaments, and Belarusian athletes to participate in Russian competitions. This was prohibited during the ARAF doping ban. That’s a good start.

ARENA

• The Belarus President's Team became the 14-time winner of the National Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prizes of the President's Sports Club



sive series of the 16th tournament on the ice of the Minsk Olympic Arena. A week before, the Belarus President's Team also defeated the

opponent — 6:1. Hockey players from the Brest Region won the bronze medals. They beat the national team of the Gomel Region in the match for the third place with a score of 5:3.

The Belarus President's Team is a 14-time winner of these competitions, while hockey players from Gomel and Minsk Regions have one title each.

• Belarusians won two gold medals at kickboxing competitions in Romania



Local athletes, representatives of Moldova, Hungary, Ukraine, Bulgaria and Norway, as well as Belarusians Viktor Nechitailo and Maxim Cazacu took part in the Legendele Moldovei competition under the auspices

of the Romanian Kickboxing Federation. As a result, both of our fighters won awards of the highest standard.

Photo of the week



April 11th is International Day of Liberation of Prisoners of Nazi Concentration Camps. A concentration camp prisoner, 85-year-old Nadezhda Los, is an honoured teacher of Belarus, an excellent worker of public education, a stateswoman, a laureate of the *Woman of the Year-2014* nationwide contest, and chair of the elders' club at the Minsk city organisation Belarusian Women's Union

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On April 14th, 1948, Valentin Gubarev, a Belarusian artist was born. Among his works are: *Common Freshwater Mermaid, Bird Trills, Glasnost Games*

paintings, etc. The works can be found in the National Art Museum of Belarus, the Zimmerly Art Museum (USA), the Schaer und Wildbolz (Switzerland), Kunststuck (Germany), Les Tournesols (France) galleries, as well as in private collections in Russia, USA, England, Japan, Spain, Israel, Germany, France, Austria, Belgium, Poland and Turkey.

On April 14th, 1978, the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR was adopted at the extraordinary 9th session of the Supreme Council of the BSSR. The new Constitution was built in accordance with the Constitution of the USSR of 1977. The Constitution determined the political and economic system of society, the priorities of social and cultural development, and the principles of the foreign policy of the state.



April 15th is World Circus Day. The holiday was established to show the circus in its entire splendour and to pay

tribute to the contribution of circus art to culture. The circus is considered one of the oldest forms of art, since the mention of all kinds of performances of acrobats, jugglers, riders, clowns dates back to the times of the Ancient World. The modern circus includes clowning, acrobatics, tightrope walking, musical eccentricity, illusionism, pantomime, sideshow and much more.

On April 15th, 1912, the largest maritime disaster of the 20th century occurred — the passenger liner Titanic sank on its maiden voyage in the Atlantic Ocean, colliding with an iceberg. The liner was striking in its size and architectural perfection and was called 'unsinkable' by the manufacturing company. According to various sources, from 1495 to 1635 people out of 2200 people on board died in this disaster. There were only 712 survivors.



April 16th is World Voice Day. It was first held in Brazil in 1999. It acquired international status in 2002.

The purpose of the holiday is to attract the attention of medical specialists, as well as all

people on Earth, to the phenomenon of the human voice — a gift that allows people to communicate, express their emotions and feelings and delight with the beauty of sound.

On April 16th, 1934, the honorary title of Hero of the Soviet Union was established — the highest degree of distinction for personal or collective services to the state associated with the accomplishment of a heroic deed. This honorary title was awarded for accomplishing a feat or outstanding merit both during hostilities and in peacetime. The vast majority of Heroes of the Soviet Union appeared during the Great Patriotic War. Only one person was awarded this title four times — Marshal Georgy Zhukov.



three Marshals of the Soviet Union — Georgy Zhukov, Konstantin Rokossovsky and Ivan Konev, continued until May 8th, 1945, and ended with the signing of the German Instrument of Surrender, which was the end of the Great Patriotic War.

On April 16th, 1945, Berlin Strategic Offensive Operation by the Soviet Union began. It was conducted under the leadership of Georgy Zhukov, Konstantin Rokossovsky and Ivan Konev, continued until May 8th, 1945, and ended with the signing of the German Instrument of Surrender, which was the end of the Great Patriotic War.

On April 17th, 1943, Nazi punishers began a six-day punitive operation in Minsk against the underground, partisans and civilians under the code name Magic Flute. The Nazis rounded up about 52,000 people, mostly men aged 14-60 and women aged 16-45, to assembly points to be taken to hard labour in Germany.

On April 18th, 1902, fingerprinting was used to identify a criminal for the first time in the world. It is a method of identifying a person by fingerprints, based on the uniqueness of the skin pattern, that is, each person has an individual pattern of papillary lines. Today, fingerprinting allows one to provide reliable protection of digital information and confidential data, using a fingerprint instead of a password for identity verification.



April 18th is International Day For Monuments and Sites (World Heritage Day). It was established in 1983 by the decision of the General Conference of UNESCO at the proposal of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The holiday provides an opportunity to learn more about the diversity of world heritage and the forces that are being applied to protect and preserve it.

