



Minsk has hosted the 10th International Exhibition of Arms and Military Machinery — *MILEX 2021*

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The premiere of the national opera *The Savage Hunt of King Stakh* is preparing at the Bolshoi Theatre

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INTERNATIONAL

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Alekssey Stolyarov

Olga Radkevich and her daughter Ksenia holiday at the Aptekarsky Sad (Pharmacy Garden) tourist complex located in the Narochansky National Park

In harmony with nature

The Naroch area — as if made by nature itself — is destined for health promotion. Its air is scented with pinewood, the landscapes seem to have been created by talented painters, the forests are rich in mushrooms and berries, while numerous lakes boast clean beaches. Certainly, the pearl of local places is Naroch Lake. Its fascinating beauty has long been a place of attraction for travellers who can also choose anything their hearts would wish for their holiday: sanatoriums, farmsteads, tourist complexes or camp sites. → 10



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Remember to live

Events on the occasion of the National Remembrance Day of Victims of the Great Patriotic War were held throughout Belarus — culminating at the legendary Brest Fortress. On the night of June 22nd, a requiem rally was held here. At dawn, the reconstruction of the beginning of Hitler's aggression and steadfast defence of the Hero Fortress was a living reminder of the terrible June morning of 1941. In the evening, the President arrived at the fortress. He laid a wreath at the Eternal Flame of the Brest Hero Fortress and addressed those present and also spoke directly to all loyal Belarusians.

By Yevgeny Kononovich,
Dmitry Umpirovich

Failed blitzkrieg

Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that, for all Belarusians, June 22nd, 1941 is a day of remembrance and mourning, a date that divided the life of people into before and after, "After May 9th, 1945, Germans called that June day fatal for their nation. 80 years ago, Hitler's killers intended to sail through Belarus with a victory march. They wanted to walk through our land as easily and quickly as they did through Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Norway, France, Greece and Poland. By early July, friends and enemies of the USSR were wondering how long the country would last — two weeks, three, maybe a month? Berlin strategists were planning a fascist parade on Red Square in Moscow. But here, near the walls of the Belarusian Brest citadel, the Nazi blitzkrieg went off the tracks literally in the first hours of the war."

The President proposed to honour the memory of the heroes with a minute of silence and later noticed that it is a mistake to think that the war and the Great Victory are the events of the past years. He said,

"The collective West is still dreaming of 'Drang nach Osten', world domination and capturing the rich resources east of Belarus."

Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that, over the past year, we have been subjected to the most advanced hybrid warfare technologies. He added, "Belarusians have started asking: is war looming? Come on, Belarusians. We've been at war for a long time. It's just that the war has taken on different forms... Take a look at any colour revolution, which has been organised in recent decades: they have done everything to explode society from the inside. And then they

to provoke them or not, whether to wait until they break through and tear us apart or not. We are a sovereign, independent state, and will continue to be so."

At the same time, the President emphasised,

"Look: isn't it symbolic? Tonight [June 22nd] they have imposed economic sanctions against our people and businesses. On June 22nd, at night. Indeed, they did not learn anything from their past."

Belarusian contribution to common Victory

During the Great Patriotic War, more than 1.3m Belarusians and natives of Belarus fought on fronts, while 217 Belarusian generals and admirals commanded military formations.

"You must do more than just repent. You must kneel before the Belarusian people for another 100 years thanking us for a chance to be born after that war. You must do everything to heal the war wounds in our hearts and souls. You must not strangle

This holy army even today helps us preserve our Belarus. Today we glorify the feat of our people, honour veterans and mourn the dead, bow our heads to the heroes and innocent victims of war. Remember: this memory is sacred and immutable, and as long as we have it, we will live — live with dignity, not on our knees. This is how it is, how it should be and how it will always be!"

The memory is immortal

In the Vitebsk Region, commemorative rallies were held in the Beshenkovichi, Braslav, Gorodok and Postavy districts, as well as in the Oktyabrsky residential district of Vitebsk. The *Flame of Memory* campaign — lighting a lamp from the Eternal Flame and its transfer along a human chain — was held.

The Gomel Region hosted a youth action: *No One is Forgotten. Nothing is Forgotten*. A requiem rally was held on Trud Square, near the Eternal Flame.

Commemorative rallies with a minute of silence were organised in all districts of the Grodno Region at enterprises, parks, children's health camps, and village councils.

In the Mogilev Region, an event at the Buinichi Field Memorial Complex became a centrepiece, as well as a requiem rally at the mass grave of Soviet prisoners of war killed by the Nazis in Bobruisk fortress.

In the Minsk Region, a regional event at Khatyn Memorial Complex brought together about five hundred people. The capital also enjoyed a rich programme: the ceremony of laying flowers and wreaths at the Victory Monument with participation of the State Border Committee, commemorative events at the mass graves of Soviet soldiers, in the Trostenets and Masyukovshchina memorial complexes and at the Military Cemetery.



[the West] will come to 'save' us.

Scenarios have been written, roles have been assigned. We just turned out to be stronger and wiser. I dare say, even stronger than our predecessors in 1941, because we determine our own destiny. We are here to decide whether

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, those who were not expected to participate in this collective conspiracy were Germany — those whose ancestors destroyed not only every third Belarusian, but also millions of unborn children during the Great Patriotic War,

us. You, the Germans, the Poles, the so-called European Union, must carry us in your arms — because we saved you from the brown plague. You would have been slaves along with the Soviet people should they had prevailed."

The Head of State added, *"Once again I would like to say to those who still do not get it yet. Understand this once and for all: we will not give away our native land and sovereignty to anyone."*

Today, contrary to all international civilised norms and rules, a blatantly dirty information war is being waged against Belarus, and attempts to bring down the country's economy continue. However, we remember the lessons of the past, live in our land which we love and are ready to defend it by all possible means.

Aleksandr Lukashenko is firmly convinced,

"The truth is behind us. We are the descendants of the great generation that gave us life, freedom and independence.

About 15,000 people enjoyed the reconstruction of the Brest Fortress defence — held on June 22nd at dawn, at the Kobrin citadel fortification.



Tatiana Medvedeva of Mogilev, who heads the Yanka Kupala Branch Library No. 9, shared her impression of Aleksandr Lukashenko's speech delivered at the Brest Hero Fortress:

The Head of State drew a very important parallel: the sanctions were announced on the night of June 22nd. When we compare the time periods and facts, it is vividly seen that all this is not without reason. I am simply outraged by the fact that Germany — taking into account what happened eighty years ago — is putting forward its tough measures of influence in relation to Belarus. Although recently Germany was looking for our dead citizens, those who were tortured in the camps. The country has no moral right to do so. After all, the sanctions will affect not the President, but the Belarusian people. To

say that this is ugly is too kind. This is vile and immoral. But what is it: hypocrisy, short historical memory? I think neither one nor the other. After all, the people themselves, the people of Germany really feel guilty for what was done during the war. They remember history. I know that in some cities on the 22nd they even spent minutes in silence and supported us. However, the same cannot be said about the authorities that play political games. There is a real genocide of the nation. For what? To make us kneel down once again. But as the experience of 1941-1945 shows, this will not work.

It is symbolic that the President delivered such a sincere speech in Brest Fortress. For all of us, this is a sacred place that has taken a hit. I remember well (I was 10 years old then) Soviet postcards depicting Brest Fortress. Mom told me a lot about this place. I always really wanted to go there. The dream came true at 35. When you stand on the bridge and see this gate, goosebumps run through your skin. But at the same time, this passage confirms once again: we are strong people and we will not give ourselves up!



Peace to the country and each family

By Dmitry Kryat,
Dmitry Umpirovich

In Zhirovichi — which the Head of State has visited — the talk centred round peace, kindness and eternal human values. Aleksandr Lukashenko addressed the hierarchs of the Belarusian Orthodox Church, “We must do everything to preserve our main asset — inter-faith peace in Belarus.”

Before meeting with the clergy, the Head of State inspected the site of the Holy Dormition Stavropegic Monastery in Zhirovichi and lit a candle at the Holy Assumption Cathedral’s Icon of the Mother of God — one of the most revered Christian shrines. He also took part in a prayer service and left a basket of white roses at the grave of Metropolitan Filaret, who headed the Belarusian Orthodox Church for more than two decades...

Eternal values

The President’s call for peace is understandable and not accidental. We have seen a lot of attempts to drive wedges of discord into Belarusian society, and only the diligent preservation of unity helped us avoid a catastrophe. At his meeting with the Orthodox Church clergy, the

Head of State spoke about this directly,

“Unfortunately, we are going through turbulent times. I will not go into details. Let me just remind you that against the background of this pandemic, as it was called, they tried to rock the boat and, as you can see today, to break us. The possibility of disappearing as a state and a nation was looming.”

The stages of this insidious and inhuman process constructed by someone’s evil mind are now completely obvious. “First, the blitzkrieg that failed, then making overtures to people (flowers and other things). Unfortunately, churches were also part of it. There was an attempt to get almost all Catholic churches involved, and many succumbed to these calls. There was certain indecision in the Orthodox Church, however the Metropolitan and the Orthodox Church have managed it by now. It was worth it,” the President said.

Aggression has already been openly launched against us, and it has not yet been completed. The fronts are deployed in all directions — first of all, mental, the core which cements the unity of the people. The church has become one of the main targets of the architects of chaos.

Faith is one of the lines that very bad people tend to make dividing. Nationality is another purposefully imposed front. It is our ancestral tradition to be able to be friends with everyone who lives nearby. However, the fanatical plan is obvious and Aleksandr Lukashenko developed the topic, “They pit Poles against Belarusians, Belarusians against Russians, Jews, Tartars, etc... I don’t even believe it but



if interethnic discord suddenly breaks out, if inter-religious discord breaks out, we will not keep the country.”

The President warned, “This will never happen, I am telling you. But we must be prepared for anything. We cannot let our shrines and our

faith be ruined in our peaceful and calm country where major religious denominations coexist peacefully.”

The pearl of the Belarusian land and soul

Another important topic of the meeting was the development of the monastery in Zhirovichi and the town itself. Local places are a recognised shrine not only for Belarusian

Zhirovichi by the end of the year.

During his meeting with the clergy, the Head of State revealed even more details,

“We have agreed that — within three years — we will not simply bring this holy land, as the Metropolitan says, the prayerful land, into a proper state. We must make a pearl out of Zhirovichi.”

Metropolitan of Minsk and Zaslavl Veniamian, Patriarchal Exarch of All Belarus discussed not only landscaping with the President but also the possible construction of a new residence on the site of the monastery where priests will be taught. So far, the issue is being worked on.

That was a warm and bright day in every sense — with good weather, a great atmosphere of communication between the President and the clergy. Let us summarise the main conclusions from what we saw and heard. We, all Belarusians, are together — united in both spiritual and earthly things. We are not inclined to fence ourselves off from each other mentally and, moreover, to fight for limits in people’s judgments. That’s why we are strong. We are proud of that. We have the key: peace. We have saved it and we’ll preserve it in the future.

Points of growth

During his working visit to the Grodno Region, the President visited the Svisloch District which has the status of a territory with less social and economic development. Previously, the Government had developed an improvement plan for such areas, including provisions for the construction and modernisation of enterprises, as well as formation of the social infrastructure. Following the example of the Svisloch District, the development of these territories and the Grodno Region as a whole was discussed.

By Yevgeny Kononovich

Aleksandr Lukashenko familiarised himself with operations at the Bortniki dairy farm and the Khanchitsy-Neman enterprise, also touring a transport and logistics hub which belongs to the Kronospan OSB woodworking company. It is currently developing successfully and could produce semi-finished furniture products with the creation of a new factory site. Aleksandr Lukashenko assured that he would help in solving the issue, also promising to support the other investment projects of the business.

While visiting the Svisloch District, the President was informed of the socio-economic development of the region and asked what the gross regional product would be at the end of the year after the recent sanctions, “We have been prepar-

ing for it, we knew what might happen. We must show those rascals across the border that their sanctions are their impotence. And we will do it.”

In this regard, Aleksandr Lukashenko mentioned of the need to diversify exports, “There is no need for us to suffer in having nowhere to sell our products. Therefore, there will be no economic collapse, there is no need to frighten us with the possibilities as we will survive. We have other parties with which to collaborate.”

At a meeting on the prospects of the Grodno Region’s development, the President noted that, since Soviet times, this region has been considered one of the best in the USSR. In the recent history of sovereign Belarus, the trend has only continued. Over the past five years, the gross regional product here rose faster than in the

country as a whole: 5 percent compared to 3.5 percent. The situation is similar in terms of productivity and merchandise exports. Regarding the Svisloch District, the Government gave it the status of a territory with less social and economic development. The Zelva District is in the same category.

“However, I would have put it differently. These are promising districts in need of a comprehensive strategy aimed at advanced development,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said. “We need to build such facilities where our people will earn decent salaries, at least three times higher than the average salary in the Republic. The main thing is to process our resources (forest, soil and so on) and make products with a high added value.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko also said that the Government

and the governors are tasked with determining the points of growth both in the districts and regions as a whole, “It means that every governor should prepare and present a big investment project to the Belarusian people within five years... The chairmen of the district executive committees should decide what mark they want to leave here. This should be a position you can be proud of.”

After the meeting, the Head of State A talked to the local residents. The President noted that everyone should feel that they are involved in the future of the country, “Take care of your own piece of land and in no case succumb to anyone. We will not allow any civil war. They [the West] have unleashed a hybrid war against us behind closed doors. They would never dare to show up here, believe me.”

Investments in Belarus

President of Belarus meets with Managing Director of Emaar Properties, Mohamed Alabbar

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that — despite the challenging year of 2020 — Belarus and the UAE have significantly enhanced their trade turnover.

In turn, Mohamed Alabbar said that the Belarusian economy is operating steadily despite the pandemic and this is a good sign for investors. “I will keep working and investing in Belarus,” he stressed.

The Arab business is running a large-scale *Northern Waterfront* project in Minsk estimated at 4bn Euros. The complex will include residential buildings with all the necessary engineering and transport infrastructure, as well as social infrastructure and public facilities. The first to be built will be the International Exhibition Centre, the Institute of Artificial Intelligence and the Minsk World Trade Centre.

Mohamed Alabbar is one of the most significant and successful businessmen in the UAE. He is actually a developer of the concept of modern Dubai and his net worth is estimated at \$4.6bn.

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BELAZ has demonstrated how seriously the company plans to develop green technologies. It has launched a testing site for diesel trolley trucks which are a promising direction in the evolution of quarry equipment that takes into account global trends in the use of alternative energy sources. However, the greatest stir was caused by the first prototype of an electric dump truck, which confidently drove through the obstacles of the landfill — thereby obviously hinting that quarry electric transport is not the technology of the future but the project of tomorrow.

By Ilya Kryzhevich

Ready for the test

The landfill at the production site in Zhodino — with a contact trolley line of over 400 metres, 33 supports and a traction substation with a capacity of 1.8MW — was created specifically for testing diesel trolley trucks. In the coming months, complex tests will be carried out here to confirm the projected performance indicators of the trolley modification of the dump truck.

The new site was officially launched by the Industry Minister — Piotr Parkhomchik, the Chairman of the Government of the Sakhalin Region — Aleksei Belik, the General Director of BELAZ JSC — Sergei Nikiforovich, and a representative of a potential customer of an experimental batch of diesel trolleys trucks, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East Mining Company, Oleg Misevra.

“BELAZ has always been engaged in innovation activities. We are now involved in the implementation of one of the unique projects in the field of green technologies. Our friends from Sakhalin are the customers of these technologies. For designers to see this new range first-hand, it was necessary to create a testing site where all the necessary follow-on revisions could be conducted,” said Mr. Parkhomchik in his welcoming speech.

Our flagship in the series of 220 tonne vehicles — the BELAZ-75306 dump



Electric traction in power

The flagship of the Belarusian automobile industry has opened a new testing site and presented a prototype of the latest dump truck

truck — was taken as the basis for new diesel trolley trucks. The BELAZ-7530E diesel trolley truck is equipped with a new control system, a traction electric drive, and also has a number of features compared to the usual version. The vehicle has an additional power cabinet with elements of the protection system and diagnostics with liquid cooling (a joint development of BELAZ JSC and Mogilev-based STRIM JSC). The trolley mode controls have also been installed, in addition to the adaptive software. The use of a diesel trolley truck contributes to reducing emissions of harmful substances into the environment and improving the environmental situation in quarries and adjacent regions.

Apart from the environmental factor, the use of such equipment also brings objective benefits: fuel costs are reduced when driving under the contact network — up to 80 percent, productivity increases, and the maintenance interval increases up to 20. With the rising cost of oil and diesel fuel, the relevance of using diesel trolley trucks will increase.

In his talk to journalists, Sergei Nikiforovich drew attention to the principle of

operation of a diesel trolley truck, “It’s an innovative solution for quarry equipment.

A diesel trolley truck operates under the following principle: in heavy areas — where much fuel is consumed — emissions of pollutants increase, the dump truck is powered through a power line and thus it is moving. The engine is idling at this time, which means minimal emissions and minimal fuel consumption. This significantly reduces the cost of maintaining the internal combustion engine, reduces fuel consumption, and improves the environmental situation at a mining site.”

According to Mr. Nikiforovich, the East Mining Company — a partner of BELAZ JSC — was among the first who expressed a desire to jointly implement this project. “It has accordingly been realised on our testing site. We have an agreement to further implement this project on an industrial scale in Sakhalin. This will be the first project of its kind in Russia, and we plan to scale it in other markets in the future,” he explained.

Electric exclusive novelty

The demonstration of a prototype of the first Belarusian electric dump truck was the exclusive of the day. Mr. Nikiforovich commented, “We’ve prepared a small surprise — presenting a mining

dump truck that can work without an internal combustion engine and is equipped with accumulator batteries. We see our further development in a hybrid version of the diesel trolley truck, without a diesel engine and with a battery. In heavy critical areas, the car will move powered by a power line. In an open-pit bench and in the stock dump, it will operate on battery traction.”

A new promising development — the BELAZ-7558E electric dump truck weighing 76 tonnes — has a load capacity of 90 tonnes and the maximum speed of 64 km/h. The total capacity of its 15 lithium-ion batteries totals 675 kW/h. BELAZ is one of the first plants to produce an electric dump truck of this class which has virtually no rivals as yet. The car provides a reduction in operating costs which is due to the absence of internal combustion engines and associated systems. Its maintenance costs are reduced while productivity is higher. The cost of transporting a tonne of cargo is much lower than by traditional diesel transport. According to preliminary estimates of experts, the savings when using a battery-powered car compared to a serial BELAZ dump truck of the same load capacity can amount to about \$1m over ten years of operation. In addition, the environmental situation in places where electric dump trucks are used is also improving.

EU sanctions not to go unanswered



The EU sanctions against Belarusian companies and citizens will not remain unanswered, Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko told the media

this for us. This discredits the whole policy of the European Union. To declare that the mission is ‘for the sake of the Belarusian people’ is at least cynical and unscrupulous.”

The PM paid special attention to the reasons taken to justify the sanctions imposed by the EU against our country. “They have such wild formulations that indicate that people who make such decisions have a very bad idea of what is actually happening in our country, while those who give them such advice and recommendations represent it even worse. For example, the economic sanctions against MAZ JSC are imposed because the President called it one of the country’s machine building flagships, against BELAZ JSC — be-

cause the Head of State called it a national treasure and brand of Belarus,” he commented.

Roman Golovchenko also recalled the phrase — thought to be said by Peter the Great — that it is necessary to let the boyars speak according to the unwritten, so that everyone’s stupidity is visible. “However, here, the stupidity is visible in the written. Moreover, it’s definitely obvious. We have already assessed this. We keep on living, working. We have enough reserves and resources to live under these conditions. We have been ready for this for a long time and this does not cause any panic.”

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Export approach

Container shipping is growing by up to 20 percent every year

By Ilya Krasovsky

In addition, our country is steadily increasing the volume of container traffic to China: a steady growth of up to 20 percent is registered annually — even despite the pandemic. The Belintertrans state enterprise — an official freight forwarder and logistics operator of the Belarusian Railway — oversees container transportation. The Belarusian Railway infrastructure company transports cargo worldwide by container trains, platforms, refrigerated trailers, covered wagons, tank cars and car carriers. In four months of 2021 alone, Belintertrans sent 20 container trains with food and wood processing products to China.

Cargo of special importance

Last year, Belintertrans forwarded 6.9m tonnes of cargo: to China, Russia, through the North-South transport corridor between the Baltic States and India via Iran, as well as transit to Europe.

“We deliver cargo both by direct rail and by multimodal transport,” Nikolai Gubsky, the Deputy General Director and Head of the Container Transportation Centre at Belintertrans, says. “Moreover, we can



A crane operator's work is delicate: a spider-manipulator should accurately get into the small fittings, the corner fasteners of a container

In late May, the President delivered a speech at the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting to call for more active integration of the EAEU with the Chinese *One Belt, One Road* initiative. “You know that China has always shown and will continue demonstrating interest in our Union. Meanwhile, we are also greatly interested in this huge market. I must say that — unlike other unions and countries — China is open to us. We feel this, even though we are much further away than, say, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. It is opening and therefore, we need to engage more intensively with China, especially in the field of trade,” he said.

provide our customers with our own container ships for the first and last mile. We load an empty container directly at the sender's warehouse, form a train and send the cargo to European ports or China. We also have unique special equipment: side-lifters. There are only two of them in the country. A container can be loaded on them even outside the prepared platform with a ramp.”

The main points of departure and destination for container trains in Europe are Hamburg, Duisburg, Nuremberg,

Lodz, Malaszewicze, Tilburg and Poznan.

In China, 11 provinces accept Belarusian exports. Direct rail services to China began in 2018 and the *One Belt, One Road* initiative has enabled the countries along the Silk Road to adjust their economic policies towards broader, higher-level and deeper regional co-operation, and to jointly form a structure for open, tolerant, balanced and profitable regional economic liaisons.

It takes 12-15 days for a train to reach China (40-60



Kolyadichi freight station is one of the major cargo hubs in the country, with a hundred people employed

days by sea). Moreover, after the incident on the Suez Canal, sea freight rates have increased dramatically: they are now approximately equal to the cost of transportation by rail.

Consumer goods, as well as digital and household appliances, complex electronics — i.e. technical equipment for the Great Stone Industrial Park — are sent back from China to our country.

A full time job

The largest cargo hub — Kolyadichi freight station — is

conveniently located in the centre of the country, near Minsk. The capacity of its terminal is about 2,800 containers. One hundred people work here. Over the past year, more than 57,000 containers were loaded and shipped at the Kolyadichi terminal.

Recently, another container train with milk powder went to China from the Kolyadichi freight station. It was formed in just a week. 41 containers were loaded with over 1,000 tonnes of milk powder from Slutsk and Mogilev. All containers were thoroughly sanitised since they transport food products.

The train was formed simultaneously on two container platforms. One loading was handled by a container loader: a



large overhead crane. The work of the crane operator is precise, with a spider-manipulator, it must accurately get into small fittings and the corner fasteners of the container. At the same time, his colleague — a driver of a special loader rich-stacker — worked no less professionally on the second site. Then the shunting locomotive drove the loaded train to the electric locomotive. After a two-week journey, Belarusian milk powder will arrive in Chongqing, a megalopolis in the south-west of China.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Republic of Belarus first elected to the FAO Council



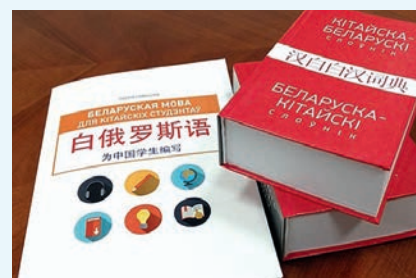
Within the framework of the 42nd Session of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Conference, held in Rome, the Republic of Belarus was elected a member of the FAO Council for the first time.

“Being nominated for this post by the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, our country will perform membership functions in the Council from June 2021 to June 2024,” explained the Belarusian Embassy in the Italian Republic.

The Council brings together 49 of FAO's 194 member states, representing, on a rotational basis, all regions of the world. It is the highest executive body of FAO between its conferences and, in accordance with its decisions, directs the day-to-day work of the organisation.

First Chinese-Belarusian dictionary presented in Minsk

The presentation of the *Chinese-Belarusian. Belarusian-Chinese Dictionary* was held in Minsk at the Yakub Kolas Central Scientific Library of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.



This is the first reference publication in the history of linguistic and cultural relations between the Belarusian and Chinese nations. The volume of each of the dictionaries is about 9,000 lexical units, covering the main areas of human life and activities. The register of dictionaries includes neutral vocabulary, terms, as well as stylistically coloured vocabulary (colloquial, dialectal, obsolete words used in fiction). A distinctive feature of the dictionary is the table ‘Pinyin Syllables and Their Belarusian Transcription’.

Ambassador of Belarus awarded Mongolia's highest award to foreigners

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Mongolia, Stanislav Chepurnoy, was awarded the Order of the Polar Star — Mongolia's highest state award given to foreign citizens.

The Belarusian diplomat received the order for ‘great contribution to the development of bilateral relations



between Mongolia and the Republic of Belarus’. The award was presented to him by the Deputy Head of the Mongolian President Administration, the First Chairperson of the Mongolian part of the Joint Belarus-Mongolia Commission on Trade and Economic Co-operation, Baigalma Gochoosure.

Stanislav Chepurnoy completes his diplomatic mission in Mongolia.

An open-air metro may appear in Minsk

“Minsk is currently considering the development of unusual city trams, but their alternative — an open-air metro. We will be working on this,” noted Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister, Anatoly Sivak, during a joint meeting of the House of Representatives and the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly.

The deputy said that the development of electric transport worries many people today, “For example, those living in Novopolotsk — one of the four cities in Belarus, which has similar electric tram transport.”



Anatoly Sivak added, “The open-air metro will be implemented along the circular line, according to the general plan, but will only be overland. The same principle can be implemented in Novopolotsk.”

Guard for defence and security

A world premiere and the newest Belarusian developments as part of the 10th International Exhibition of Arms and Military Machinery — **MILEX 2021**



Despite all the obstacles, such as closed borders and disrupted logistics, Minsk has hosted the 10th International Exhibition of Arms and Military Machinery — **MILEX 2021**. As the CSTO Secretary General, Stanislav Zas, said, it's also a kind of victory which brought additional points to the show that has gained worldwide recognition for two decades.

By Svetlana Isaenok

An exposition was on show at the Minsk-Arena site — featuring armoured vehicles, rocket, artillery and small arms, small and medium-range air defence systems, high-tech equipment and systems, aviation, rocket-and-space complexes and control systems and many more. At the invitation of the State Authority for Military Industry, 31 official delegations from 22 countries

visited **MILEX 2021**. Notably, almost half the total number of Belarusian exhibits were new.

Large-scale plans — which the State Authority for Military Industry hoped for the exhibition — proved true. About 30 negotiations with the heads of official delegations from 18 states took place, in addition to around 300 meetings and talks between the heads of organisations that are part of the Authority's system.

During the exhibition, an international scientific conference on military-technical co-operation in the field of defence and security was held. It was attended by heads and specialists of national ministries and departments, scientific and educational institutions and domestic and foreign enterprises and companies engaged in the development and mastering of promising military and dual-use technologies.

- More than 30 delegations from 22 countries took part in the exhibition
- State Authority for Military Industry exhibited 334 samples of arms, military and special machinery

DIRECT SPEECH

Roman Golovchenko, Prime Minister:

Today, 'MILEX' is already a well-recognised brand that embodies the intelligence, quality and innovation of the Belarusian defence complex. Belarus is pursuing a peaceful foreign policy. At all levels, we have always called for detente on the continent, for the creation of a new comprehensive system of European security, and we have always sought and confirm our desire to strengthen good, mutually beneficial relations with all countries and peoples. There is a difficult situation in the world right now and new attempts at aggression — so far economic — force us to focus on the problem of strengthening our defence capability.

Stanislav Zas, CSTO Secretary General:

In the context of modern challenges and threats related to the manifestation of international terrorism, extremism, cybercrime, drug trafficking and the need to ensure military security, the Collective Security Council of the CSTO members pays great attention to the development of defence complexes, as well as to the development, production and equipping of collective forces with modern models of arms and special machinery. For further improvement, we have made proposals to hold an exhibition of arms and military machinery in the CSTO format and are grateful for the support from the member states of our organisation. I'm convinced that the implementation of this proposal will provide additional opportunities for establishing closer integration ties.

Aleksandr Volfovich, State Secretary of the Security Council of Belarus:

Many want to buy Belarusian products. Today, the military-industrial complex focuses on rocket-making, development of small arms, creation of ammunition and other components. I'd like to note that an army that does not develop and is not equipped with new models is doomed to failure. At the same time, more than 30 percent of the weapons and machinery in the Armed Forces of Belarus are Belarusian-made. We are developing and improving them. Production of unmanned strike aircraft is approaching its final stage and it will soon have to pass tests. Afterwards, it will be used by the Belarusian army. Our country is developing small unmanned aerial vehicles, as a heavy drone is a means of combat of an offensive nature. Belarus pursues a defence policy aimed at protecting its sovereignty and supporting peace domestically.

NEW PRODUCTS

V-2 armoured personnel carrier

For the first time, a new development by the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant has been shown to the public: the BTR V-2 armoured personnel carrier. The 22-tonne combat vehicle can confidently respond when weapons of mass destruction are used, swim at a speed of up to 10 km/h and accelerate up to 110 km/h on land. It is equipped with a powerful 550HP engine, automatic transmission, a forced differential lock and a diesel generator set that provides its additional autonomy. The crew consists of three people, while eight motorised riflemen could be placed in the troop compartment in the rear. There is a ramp in the hull at the back for convenient boarding and disembarking of soldiers. The design of the armoured body provides reliable protection from bullets and shrapnel, explosive devices.



► 'Hunter' unmanned helicopter

The vehicle is equipped with an on-board information and control system, a filter ventilation system, a fire extinguishing system, a smoke removal system, a video review system and an electric self-winding winch.

and two launchers for eight unguided missiles. The helicopter has a gyro-

operate. When these objects appear, the system recognises their signals and automatically suppresses control channels and data transmission, as well as navigation. As a result of the impact, UAVs either fall, make an emergency landing or fly 'home'.

In addition, an important advantage of the system is the possibility of

'Hunter' unmanned helicopter

At **MILEX 2021**, a world premiere of the 'Hunter' combat reconnaissance and strike unmanned helicopter — equipped with a remote-controlled turret with a Kalashnikov machine gun of a tank modification (PKMT) with an electric trigger, an uninterrupted ammunition supply system for 550 rounds

ro-stabilised optoelectronic system with an infrared camera. It weighs 700kg and has a weight with a carrying load of 200kg, the fuel reserve is 180 litres, the rotor diameter — 7m, and the flight time is up to 5 hours.

'Groza-Z1'

KB Radar JSC presented its own new development: a mobile system for protecting objects from unmanned aerial vehicles — 'Groza-Z1'. It automatically controls the frequencies at which the most common UAVs

setting disinforming navigation interference to create a no-fly zone for UAVs. The detection range of the drones is up to 2km. The range of suppression of control channels and data transmission is at least 500m, the range of suppression of navigation is at least 2km, the range of setting disinforming navigation interference is up to 10km.

The system can be installed on any car chassis, which makes it possible to increase its mobility and ensure fast delivery to the required location.



▲ BTR V-2 armoured personnel carrier

► 'Groza-Z1'



Buying shoes for 'Kusta'...



The living tradition of 'Vozhdeniya Kusta' (ritual crossing the gardens on Trinity Day) is an ethnic feature of the inhabitants of Pinsk Polesie area. The ceremony has the status of an element of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Belarus and is held on the second day of Trinity in the Luninets District's Lobcha.

By Yelena Terentyeva

This rural round dance consists of only girls and women. In the centre of the procession — surrounded by her friends — there is a young girl, all entwined with branches of maple and birch and with a huge wreath of young greenery on her head. This is 'Kust', or 'Kusta'.

The meaning of the tradition today, of course, is in many ways far from its initial purpose. A beautiful ceremony, smart women in festive attire, songs and dances in the village street: everyone is having fun and is happy. Accompanied by the 'maiden army', 'Kusta' enters the villagers' gardens, bowing low to the owners, while other participants of the procession sing songs wishing good health, rich harvest and offspring on the farm. The melodies of the main ritual songs are drawn-out, praying for support and participation in the fate of the young 'Kusta'. Moreover, the main character is silent and does not sing or dance, but quietly stands on the sidelines. Why is that?

Today it is just a young girl that is chosen for the role of 'Kusta', sometimes by lot. Previously, it was, as a rule, an orphan, a teenage girl who was about to acquire the status of 'marriageable'. The girl will need satin ribbons, woven linen, boots and stockings... The women asked the kind owners to give all this for 'Kusta'.

For good wishes and glorious songs, the owners presented the 'maiden army' with money and food. In some cases, participants of the ritual were asked to visit a field and a vegetable garden. Having finished the rounds, 'the maiden army' went to the outskirts, where they took off the greens from 'Kusta' and burned this 'outfit' in the fire'. Women could take a piece of it home to use as a talisman from an evil eye to a barn or from mice to barns with grain. Of course, they arranged a joint 'vyachera' (supper) in the clearing, not forgetting that the main thing that was collected was for 'Kusta'.

Over hundreds of years of its existence, the rite has been supplemented and modified. With close ties to the Trinity, it became associated with the veneration of ancestors, while an orphan — according to popular beliefs — is closest to the sacred world. The silence and covering from head to foot by branches of the main figure of the rite also testified to her connection with 'that world'. Dressing up 'Kusta', the branches are attached to her clothes with the tops down, which means: a girl, having married, becomes a broken branch of a family tree. In addition,

in the old descriptions of the rite it is said that 'Kust' could not have been from another village, because in the distant past the ceremony was carried out only within one community.

Earlier in Polesie, the ritual crossing through the gardens ended the spring cycle of folk rituals and greeted summer. Similar rituals with greenery and glorification of trees and herbs are found among many Slavic peoples. Most often, branches of birch, maple, linden, scented herbs of calamus were used, and all this decoration was called 'May'.

"If the custom of decorating a courtyard with greenery is common for the Slavic peoples, then bypassing houses with a ritual figure — a woman dressed in greenery — is peculiar only for western Polesie; the area of the ritual coincides with slight deviations with the historical Pinsk area, and this is the territory of the Pinsk Principality," noted an ethnologist and folklorist, Doctor of Philology Olga Sharaya, in her research.

The first ethnographic sketches about this ritual in Pinsk Polesie date back to the beginning of the 19th century. Then, for some time, interest in it decreased; at one time it was even believed that it had died out. Only at the end of the 20th century did the rite return again thanks to the interest of researchers in the national folk culture.



BELTA





Delta spreading globally

Delta coronavirus variant, first identified in India, is becoming the dominant variant of the disease worldwide, the WHO's chief scientist said

That's because of its 'significantly increased transmissibility', Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, the WHO's chief scientist, said during a news conference at the agency's Geneva headquarters. Studies suggest Delta is around 60 percent more transmissible than Alpha, the variant first identified in the UK that was more contagious than the original strain that emerged from Wuhan, China, in late 2019. The situation globally 'is so dynamic because of the variants that are circulating', she added.

The variant has spread to more than 80 countries and it continues to mutate as it spreads across the globe, the WHO

said. More transmissible than the Alpha variant, it is sparking concerns of further loss of lives and lockdowns. The WHO labelled it a 'variant of concern' (VOC) on May 11th.

So far, the WHO has identified four VOC: Alpha (B.1.1.7), Beta (B.1.351), Gamma (P.1) and Delta.

The Delta variant has multiple mutations. Scientists don't know the exact function of these mutations at this point in time but they are associated with allowing the virus to bind to the cells of humans and helping the virus to escape some immune responses, said Deepti Gurdasani, a clinical epi-

demiologist at Queen Mary University of London.

Meanwhile, Russian virologists say that the Delta variant, first found in India, is now the most prevalent version in Moscow. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin said that 89.3 percent of all new coronavirus cases there involve the highly contagious Delta variant.

Moreover, the Belarusian capital of Minsk has also detected its first case of the Delta variant of COVID-19, the press service of the Healthcare Ministry said. However, the circulation of the same variant was not detected in other regions of the country.

Is the US at risk of default?

Treasury Secretary of the United States Janet Yellen warns of 'absolutely catastrophic' hit to economic recovery this summer if US can't pay its bills on time

Testifying before a Senate Appropriations subcommittee, Janet Yellen said in response to questions that it is important Congress not delay in dealing with the debt limit, which has been suspended for the past two years.

That suspension is due to expire on July 31st, when the limit will go back into effect at the level of debt at that time. The debt subject to the limit currently stands at \$28.3 trillion. It has risen sharply over the past year as Congress has approved trillions of Dollars in support packages to combat a recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Failure to make those debt payments would result in the federal government defaulting on its debt obligations, something that has never occurred in US history. Ja-



net Yellen said defaulting on the national debt should be regarded as 'unthinkable' because it would have 'absolutely catastrophic consequences' that could precipitate a financial crisis.

Janet Yellen said it is hard to make an accurate forecast because of the large amount of uncertainty.



Famine knocking at the door

After declining for several decades, world hunger has been on the rise since 2016, driven by conflict and climate change

Famine is already present in four countries but millions more people are at risk, the World Food Programme (WFP) warned, underscoring the need for urgent funding and humanitarian access to reach those in need.

Recent analysis by the UN agency reveals 41 million people in 43 countries are teetering on the very edge of famine, up from 27 million two years ago.

"I am heartbroken at what we're facing in 2021. We now have four countries where famine-like conditions are present," WFP Chief David Beasley told its Executive Board, according to a press release.

He described the situation as 'just

tragic', as 'these are real people with real names'.

WFP said 584,000 people are already experiencing famine-like conditions in Ethiopia, Madagascar, South Sudan and Yemen. Nigeria and Burkina Faso are also of particular concern as they have pockets where famine-like conditions are present.

"In Somalia in 2011, 260,000 people died of hunger — and by the time the famine was actually declared — half of that number had already died," Mr. Beasley recalled. "We can't debate the numbers to death when people need our help now."

Hunger has risen due to conflict, climate change and economic shocks.

Floods in Crimea

Up to 1,800 people have been evacuated in Crimea amid floods caused by torrential rains, the local emergencies department announced in a statement adding that about 200 people were placed in temporary housing areas

Authorities in Crimea ordered the evacuation of parts of the city of Yalta after heavy rain caused major flooding on the Black Sea peninsula. The region has declared a state of emergency and sought help from the military to contain the damage caused by the floods. In Yalta, a popular tourist destination on the peninsula's southern coast, authorities ordered an evacuation as they scrambled to contain rising water levels. They said one person had died after being swept away by the current.

In a video address to residents, Yanina Pavlenko, the Head of the Yalta City Administration, announced a state of

emergency and said entry points to the city would be closed. She said people in flooded areas were being evacuated from their homes but asked those who were not in immediate danger to stay put. She later told journalists that she had appealed to the Russian Black Sea Fleet for support in evacuating residents.

"We are first evacuating the people from flooded areas in the city centre and those located near rivers," added Ms. Pavlenko. Images circulating on social media showed water rushing through Yalta's streets, sweeping aside cars and reaching up to the second story of buildings.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Return of the king



The Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus is preparing for the premiere of the national opera: *The Savage Hunt of King Stakh* based on Vladimir Korotkevich's story

By Valentina Kozlovich



Anna Motornaya

The Bolshoi Theatre will celebrate the end of the 88th theatrical season like a king: to the clash of swords, the clatter of hooves and the foggy haze of the Stakh's entourage. On July 11th and 12th, Vladimir Soltan's opera masterpiece — which has become a national musical classic — will return to its native stage. This time, the eminent director Anna Motornaya, who, it would seem, has just left her previous brilliant premiere — the opera *Faust* by Charles Gounod — undertook to find traces of the fantastic Belarusian vendetta. However, now Anna is betting not so much on a mystical plot as on a historical reconstruction: the play will boast both recognisable elements of the era and carefully recreated folk rituals.

In full length

The best voices, the most complex arias and the plot to match the modern blockbusters... We remember the plot: the folklore collector Beloretsky (in this role, on one of the premiere evenings, the People's Artiste of Belarus, Vladimir Gromov, will be starring) got lost in the forest and ended up in the estate

of Nadezhda Yanovskaya — the last of the representatives of the once rich and noble family. The young girl is exhausted by the horror of the invasion of the terrible cavalry led by King Stakh. As family legend says, Stakh was killed while hunting by his friend Yanovsky senior and now takes revenge on all members of the family. However, something tells Beloretsky that a very real person stands behind this whole story with the revived dead and the night horsemen...

The famous detective story, invented by Vladimir Korotkevich back in the 1950s, will acquire new meaning in the play, but the main idea of the story — love will save the world and all of us — will certainly remain. Director Anna Motornaya tells us, "However, first of all, we will talk about the unique atmosphere of Belarus, its traditions and people through the reconstruction of rituals and legends. Features of a gothic novel, mystical, historical and romantic drama — all this is present in Korotkevich's novel, in the libretto by Svetlana Klimkovich and, of course, in the music of Vladimir Soltan. Conductor Andrei Ivanov, by the way, works with the original score. There is the minimum of cuts, because we have a great desire to give the composer the opportunity to speak."

Anna Motornaya is not going to compete with the success of the first production. Moreover, *The Savage Hunt of King Stakh* of 1989 was a resounding success. The performer of the role of Beloretsky, Honoured Artiste of Belarus, Viktor Skorobogatov, recalls that the premiere and further screenings of the play were held to full houses, during which even the horse police (!) were on duty at the theatre.



A rehearsal of *The Savage Hunt of King Stakh* opera. Soloist Marta Danusevich in action.

"It's really a very good opera and the longest-running performance in the entire history of the existence of the opera genre in Belarus: 22 seasons on stage! Once we even performed it in the Troitsky Suburbs. It was autumn, good weather, a lot of people gathered. I really enjoyed that experiment," he said.

Horses, people

Andrei Merenkov, a student of the famous set designer Boris Gerlovan and painter Mai Dantsig, is responsible for the decoration and the scenery, which can be looked at for hours. The emphasis is placed on symbols that every viewer will surely understand. Andrei Merenkov is also working with the Bolshoi Theatre for the first time.

"We decided to preserve lightness in the stage design, even transparency, for the production of *The Savage Hunt*... Moreover, we will be working with all the machinery of the stage — from plungers to trap doors — so there will be many surprises," promised Mr. Merenkov.

And a few more spoilers: the motives of Slutsk sashes will be also used in the 'clothes' of the stage. However, the highlight of the upcoming performance will be... a real horse. The idea really exists, confirms the Bolshoi Theatre. The performer of the role of Ales Vorona, baritone Stanislav Trifonov, is no stranger to 'horse' company on stage. The Honoured Artiste of



Vladimir Gromov

Belarus recalls an amusing incident, "It was on tour in England. Our impresario was Yelena Kent — a very eccentric lady. So she decided (for the sake of reliability, I suppose) to use a live horse in *Carmen*. Moreover, this horse was a real superstar, starring in the *Gladiator* film, which was happily depicted on all the posters, despite the fact that the names of the performers were written on the side and in small print... And now I ride this horse, greet the audience and feel incredible revival in the hall. But the British are rather dry, stiff enough, you won't get emotions from them. But then they cheered up, perked up and clapped. 'Well, I shook them up today' I think and smile even wider, waving my hat. However, when I reach the desired point

and understand that it was not I who excelled, but my horse: in the middle of the stage there is a huge pile of horse excrement. Both the choir and the artists are all in shock. After all, now is the climax, the bloody scene, the death of the main character... I somehow pull myself together, finish my aria and leave the stage. Then Jose comes out and sees this 'pile'... somehow the play was finished around it. Of course, we failed to convince the audience that the production was tragic, and the whole hall laughed until the end."

How the horse from *The Savage Hunt*... will be preparing for the fateful performance, the Bolshoi Theatre has not yet said, but they are eagerly inviting people to the impressive premiere: tickets are on sale.

CULTURE

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Blue pearl of Belarus



Aleksandra Gorbasha

Naroch — located 150 kilometres from Minsk — is called the pearl on the map of blue-eyed Belarus, with local places gaining spa fame even a hundred years ago



Not only Belarusians but also foreign tourists rush to relax at Naroch health resorts



Herb aromas at the Aptekarsky Sad tourist complex are truly mesmerising

By Sofia Arsenyeva

Taking ease and detoxing

Even before the fateful year of 1941, berths for yachts and summer houses appeared on the endless banks of Lake Naroch, as people went here to have a rest just as at the sea, and not only Belarusians. The Poles enjoyed these places so much that they even laid a narrow-gauge railway to one of the nearest villages. In Soviet times, a fully-fledged resort village (by the way, the only one in Belarus) with walk ways and pump rooms with mineral water grew up on the lake.

Comprehensive health resorts for workers' recreation, pioneer camps and numerous tourist centres are a legacy that has been preserved to this day. However, nowadays, alongside treatment procedures, they also offer fashionable wellness, detox and spa programmes. Vouchers for the popular sanatoriums Sosny or Naroch are offered in early spring. The same applies to the main children's health resort in Belarus — the Zubrenok Centre — which every schoolchild dreams of getting into.

Don't like sanatoriums? You are welcome to the agro-estates and tent camps. The purest pine air and clear lake water work wonders in themselves!

Laying a line down to the bottom

According to the legend, the lakes (and there are about forty of them in the National Park) appeared from the fragments of a broken mirror. Naroch is almost 80 square kilometres of water. You can't even see the banks! The transparency and cleanliness are amazing: in summer it's possible to see what's happening at a depth of five to seven me-



A bakery at the Nanosy ethno-cultural complex

tres. At the same time, the water itself is rich in oxygen and saturated with minerals. It's best to choose well-equipped beaches for swimming, away from reeds and bird nests (as birds can carry infections). Locals, in addition to Naroch, advise people to splash in Belaye Lake, in Rudakovo and Myadelskoye.

Anyway, paradise is here at every turn for fishermen: you can catch whitefish and perch, pike and vendace out of the local waters. In some water areas spearfishing is allowed, so in good weather it is definitely worth laying down a line on the bottom of Naroch Lake.

Taking a look at the forest pharmacy

Between lakes Myastro and Naroch there is a fragrant paradise: the Aptekarsky Sad (Pharmacy Garden) tourist complex,

where calendula, lavender and mint bloom on unusual plantations. Rich botanical collections contain samples of hundreds of plants from all over the world. The site resembles a fabulous labyrinth, where you can always get acquainted with herbalists who will definitely share their secrets of growing, collecting and drying forest resources.

How the plants — hot in the sun — turn heads

and lure people in for a cup of medicinal tea! Visitors are invited to the phyto-lounge to try drinks of every taste and colour. A shop is also here, where scented souvenirs are collected at the request of guests: herbal teas, steaming, preparations for beauty treatments and herbal posies for a bath.

Being in time for evening tea

The pride of the owners of the Nanosy ethno-cultural complex is a collection of samovars — rubbed to a shine. Large and small, copper, silver and gold: there are more than five hundred rarities. The oldest is almost 230 years old, so it's a true pleasure to have tea on the shore.

Meanwhile, 'Narochansky' bread is one of the main gastronomic brands in Belarus and the fragrant round loaf cannot be confused with any other kind. The secret is in a special recipe, which was

developed thirty-five years ago at Minsk Bread-Baking Plant No. 2. The entire production process of 'Narochansky' bread takes sixteen hours. Due to this, it boasts an unusual sweet and sour taste and aroma. Is there a secret ingredient? Of course, potatoes!

Taking a steam bath on the shore

Where there is a lake or a river, there must be a bathhouse. This is our Slavic rule. The most unusual one on Naroch Lake is situated in the Nanosy ethno-cultural complex. A dozen huts — built in the century before last — are located right on a sand spit, which is surrounded by water. Each hut has a stove and a good steam room. The furniture is wooden, the linen is homespun, and under the window, as it should be, a rooster calls in the morning: 'Cock-a-doodle-doo!' In summer, it is possible to go horseback riding and quad biking around the agro-tourism complex.



The Nanosy ethno-cultural complex

Returning to the top

Basketball players of our women's team take fourth place at the European Championship



By Tatiana Litvinova

Basketball players of the Belarusian national women's team stopped one step away from the podium of the European Championship. For the fourth time in history, our team reached the semi-finals of this tournament, but, alas, they could not claim any medals, losing to the French in the match to reach the final with a score of 61:73, and then losing to the Belgians in the match for the bronze medal — 69:77.

“Of course, we wanted to please our fans with medals. Unfortunately, in the match with the Belgian team, we didn't manage to show the defence that would allow us to achieve success,” said the head coach of our national team, Natalia Trofimova, summing up the performance at the tournament. “Despite this, I'm proud of how the squad played at this EuroBasket. Our game and the final result at this European Championship enabled the Belarusian national team to regain the reputation of



one of the top teams of the continent. Ahead of us is the qualification for the World Championship. Hopefully, in autumn 2022, we will continue to delight fans with our game in Australia.”

Former basketball player of our national team, Olga Podobed, also believes that the

performance at the European Championship can be considered successful. Though the girls return without medals, they earned the right to compete in the World Championship qualification, which was received only by the six best teams of the continental forum.

“I wouldn't like to talk about the reasons for the defeats,” says Olga Podobed. “If we took medals, it would be great. But don't forget that our team played almost the entire tournament with eight players. At this level, of course, it's difficult, maybe something was missing somewhere.”

Olga Podobed notes that she would like young players to play in the national squad, who — although they were included in the national team — appeared at the venue only occasionally in separate games. “We have young talented basketball players. Of course, they won't appear in the core tomorrow, and perhaps not even in a year or two. I think in five years we'll have a different team. Our squad was one of the 'oldest' at the European Championship. But nothing lasts forever, sooner or later the basketball players of the current squad will also come through...”

Meanwhile, the winner of the current European Championship is the Serbian team, which is also quite experienced. Olga Podobed doesn't hide the fact that she was supporting this team. In the finals, they showed a great game while the duel with the French — who, perhaps, thought that they could win this match as easily as in previous matches of the European Championship — ended with a score of 63:54.



By Tatiana Pastushenko

One of them — *On the Way to Tokyo* — is on show at the Belarusian State University of Physical Culture featuring about 50 unique exhibits from the Republican Museum of Physical Culture and Sports. These introduce visitors to athletes and sports that have glorified our country on the world arena. Among them are the torch car-

ried by Maria Itkina in the 1980 Olympic torch relay, the diploma of a 1960 Olympic champion — Oleg Karavaev and the game jersey of basketball player, Tatiana Beloshapko who captured gold at 1980 Games in Moscow, among others.

The many interesting exhibits also include the Martini Cup of our four-time Olympic fencing champion, Yelena Belova. The sportswoman — who

Watch and feel proud

Unique exhibits and vibrant photos: exhibitions dedicated to our Olympians have opened in Minsk

On June 23rd, International Olympic Day was celebrated all over the world, while two exhibitions dedicated to the achievements of our athletes at these main four-yearly competitions have been launched in Minsk

attended the opening of the exhibition — was kept for a long time by pupils of secondary school No. 47 who came to learn more about the Olympic movement in our country. Ms. Belova later said, “The promotion of sports is topical in all times. Meetings with Olympic champions give much to children: they inspire emotions, a good feeling and, of course, a desire to train and achieve great heights. Expositions of this kind are also a great incentive to go in for sports and simply be smart and healthy.”

Svobody Square is no less

attractive as it hosts the *Belarus' NOC: 30 Years. The Stories of Our Victories!* photo exhibition featuring pictures of Olympic champions and medallists — including the first performance by our sovereign team in Lillehammer, the triumphs of Belarusians at the Pyeongchang Games and many more.

There is less than a month to go before the start of the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo and the history of our sporting victories will very soon be replenished with new pages. Meanwhile, last weekend, Mozyr welcomed those who will soon join the

fight for awards in Tokyo: the *Vytoki (Origins)* cultural and sports festival — held in the Gomel Region — was attended by the coaches and athletes of our national team in kayaking and canoeing. As is traditional, the first days of the festival were dedicated to the historical and cultural heritage of the Mozyr District, while Saturday was the culmination of the festival: a large sports ground — *Vytoki. A Step to Olympus* — was opened and a singing competition was held. The festival closed with a gala concert with the Belarusian artists.

ARENA

• Belarusian trampoline athletes win four medals at the World Cup in Portugal

Vladislav Goncharov claimed gold in the men's individual event. Rio Olympic champion scored 62,505 points. Meanwhile, another Belarusian Oleg Ryabtsev took second place with 61,380 points. Vladislav Goncharov and Oleg Ryabtsev also earned a gold medal at the tournament in synchronised trampolining, boasting 50,450 points from the judges.

In the women's competitions, the Be-



larusian squad also didn't leave without medals, with Polina Shedko finishing third with 54,140 points.

• Olympic places distributed among boxers

Belarusian boxer Vladislav Smyaglikov won the right to compete at the Tokyo Olympics.

The final quotas for the Tokyo Olympics have recently been allocated, according to the Boxing Task Force ranking: one ticket to the Games in each weight category for each continent.

Vladislav Smyaglikov got the right to participate in the Olympics, performing in the weight category of 91kg.

Thus, four Belarusian athletes will

perform at the main events of the four-year period in Tokyo. At the qualifying tournament in Paris, Dmitry Asanov (63kg), Aleksandr Radionov (69kg) and Vitaly Bondarenko (75kg) earned the right to take part in the Olympic Games.

286 boxers (186 men and 100 women) will compete for 13 sets of medals at the Tokyo Games (8 for men and 5 for women).

• Japan to strengthen entry control for Olympic teams

The Japanese government intends



to strengthen control over the entry into the country of Olympic teams from six states, where large-scale spread of the Delta coronavirus variant has been recorded. Such measures will affect the national squads of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Afghanistan. Athletes from these countries will need to take tests every day for a week before flying to Japan. In addition, during this period, as well as for three days after arriving in Japanese territory, they will be prohibited from contacting anyone other than their coaches and members of their teams. The increased requirements for national teams from six countries are expected to take effect on July 1st.

Photo of the week



A blooming flax field of Korelichy-Len JSC, Grodno Region. In the photo: Kristina Grigorieva.

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On July 1st, 1926, the Museum of Belarusian Polesie was founded in Pinsk. The most interesting exhibits of the museum include a unique collection of ceramic tiles and a sarcophagus of the 12th century, a collection of weapons, as well as documents and books (handwritten letters of the 14-17th centuries, the Statute of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, printed in Vilno in 1694), and prints from the 17th century etc. In the hall of the Great Patriotic War, you can learn about the creation of one of the first partisan detachments in Belarus under the leadership of V.Z. Korzh.

On July 1st, 1941, on the outskirts of the Berezina River and the city of Bobruisk, the Il-2 attack aircraft — the biggest aircraft of WWII — had their combat trial.



July 2nd is World Sports Journalists Day, celebrated on the initiative of the International Sports Press Association since 1995. In many countries, the best sports media representatives are rewarded on this day.



On July 3rd, 1941, the government of Belarus moved from Mogilev to the urban village of Liozno. The defence of Mogilev by units of the Red Army and civil guardsmen began. This battle lasted 23 days and nights, until July 26th. In the battles for Mogilev, about 30 000 soldiers and civil guardsmen were killed, most of them are considered missing.

On July 3rd, 1961, on the day of the 17th anniversary of the liberation of Minsk, the Eternal Flame was lit at the Victory Monument. This honour was given to the Hero of the Soviet Union, Colonel-General of tank forces, A.S. Burdeiny — an Honorary Citizen of Minsk. The high obelisk monument, installed at the centre of Victory Square in Minsk in 1954, is one of the symbols of the Belarusian capital.



July 3rd is Independence Day of the Republic of Belarus. This is the main holiday of the Belarusian state, declared by the Decree of President Aleksandr Lukashenko in 1997 in honour of the liberation of the capital of Belarus, Minsk, from the

Nazi invaders on July 3rd, 1944. Minsk was liberated during the Minsk offensive operation on June 29th — July 4th, 1944, by the troops of the 3rd, 2nd and right wings of the 1st Belorussian fronts with the assistance of the 1st Baltic Front.

July 3rd — International Day of the Dnieper River — is an ecological holiday dedicated to one of the most calm and stately flat rivers, which ranks third in Europe in terms of the length and area of the basin (after the Volga and Danube rivers). It is with the Dnieper that the history of the development of the Slavic peoples is connected: from source to mouth, this river flows through the territory of three Slavic states at once: Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. On the territory of Belarus, the length of the Dnieper is 595km.



July 4th is Day of Water Transport Workers in the Republic of Belarus. The professional holiday of workers of the sea and river fleet is celebrated annually on the first Sunday of July in a number of post-Soviet countries. Sea and river transport is a huge complex economy and one of the key sectors of the economy of many states.



On July 6th, 1851, Belarusian poet Yanka Luchina was born (present name Ivan Neslukhovsky) in Minsk. He wrote in Belarusian, Russian and Polish. Luchina's poetry laid the foundation for Belarusian philosophical lyrics. He is the author of the *Hunting Watercolours* poem, the *From the Bloody Days* brochure and the *Poetry* collection. He also collected Belarusian folklore and used folk poetic techniques in his works. A significant part of the lyric works is considered missing. He died in 1897.



On July 7th, 1796, Yan Chechot was born (village of Malyushichi, Korelichy District, Grodno Region) — a Belarusian and Polish poet and folklorist. He prepared the archives of the Radziwill princes and was also one of the organisers and leaders of the secret student societies of Philomathes and Philarets. He collected and studied Belarusian folklore and was an author of ballads based on Belarusian folklore. Moreover, he published a dictionary of the Belarusian language and six folklore collections *Village Songs*, which contain about 1,000 Belarusian folk songs, proverbs and sayings. He wrote poetry and critical articles in Polish, and died in 1847.