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The Grand Prix of the 22nd International Children Music Contest was won by vocalist from Uzbekistan Yasmína Husniddinova. In the photo: Jury Chairperson Eteri Beriashvili and Yasmína Husniddinova.

## ‘Our festival is striding triumphantly across the globe!’

The *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* International Festival of Arts has become a truly family holiday as well as a celebration of traditional values. “No matter how hard someone might try to drown out or downplay the significance of the festival, nothing works out — it is striding triumphantly across the globe,” this was stated by the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, at the solemn opening ceremony of this remarkable cultural forum in Vitebsk. This year Vitebsk has hosted the 33rd song contest in a row. The Head of State stressed that the festival had become a true epoch, while the philosophy of this holiday was rooted in its motto: *Through Art to Peace and Mutual Understanding*.



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# ‘Our festival is striding triumphantly across the globe!’

This year Vitebsk has hosted the 33rd song contest in a row. The Head of State stressed that the festival had become a true epoch, while the philosophy of this holiday was rooted in its motto: *Through Art to Peace and Mutual Understanding*. “Here, on the picturesque bank of the Dvina River 1,050 years ago, the first stone was laid into the city that is today rightfully called our cultural capital. There is something special in this corner of Belarus that has throughout centuries inspired the creation of masterpieces of fine art, unique architectural objects, great literary and musical works, as well as festivals, competitions, and many other creative projects,” the President emphasised. “For centuries, a unique atmosphere has been created here — the atmosphere of creative search, the dialogue of civilisations. For centuries, trade routes have intersected here, linking the East and the West, the North and the South. This city has been gratefully absorbing new ideas and trends, and developing thanks to that.”

As Aleksandr Lukashenko noted, that is why the history of the festival began specifically in that place — in the city of world-famous people whose professional path started in the local workshops. Vitebsk has become the creative homeland of real

geniuses. “The Slavic soul is boundless in its openness to the world. Therefore, our festival has long gone beyond the geographical boundaries of the Slavic brotherhood,” the Belarusian leader pointed out.

The current forum edition has brought together like-minded people from four dozen countries — from Russia to India and from China to Colombia.

*“Today, for the first time, we welcome the culture ministers and creative teams from the member states of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO), which is now our organisation, too. This is a landmark event in the life of Belarus. We have joined the community of countries to which the future belongs — the future of human development based on the principles of equality, respect and creativity. At least, such a spirit prevails in the SCO today,” the President underscored.*

“Today this festival unites people of different generations, religions and cultures — true connoisseurs of art who share a variety of preferences — from the avant-garde to the classics. Most importantly, it has become a truly family holiday, a celebration of traditional values.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko expressed gratitude to the forum organisers, performers, masters of art, and all those who come to Belarus every year to spend the best days of the festival summer in our country.

On the festive stage of the Summer Amphitheatre in Vitebsk, the Belarusian



Congratulations to all those awarded by the President at the opening of the festival



The winner of the 33rd Vitebsk-2024 International Pop Song Contest, Carolina Balan, from Moldova.



Music bands from African countries got everyone in the hall up on their feet with groovy dances.

leader presented the main prize of the festival — the special award of the President of Belarus *Through Art to Peace and Mutual Understanding* — to People’s Artist of Russia Grigory Leps. The President bestowed the Union State awards in liter-

ature and art for 2023-2024 upon people who had made a significant contribution to strengthening friendship between the peoples of Belarus and Russia. The Head of State also presented the Grand Prix to the winner of the 22nd International Children Music Contest, Yasmina Husniddinova, a talented young singer from Uzbekistan.

## DAY OF SCO NATIONAL CULTURES HELD AT SLAVIANSKI BAZAAR IN VITEBSK FESTIVAL

Special attention is focused on this important novelty in the festival schedule. This day is really significant and special for the history of the Vitebsk forum. Belarus has recently become the tenth full member of the SCO family and is already fully demonstrating the importance it attaches to this co-operation. This was also noted by members of the official delegations of the SCO members who arrived in Vitebsk. First of all, SCO Secretary General Zhang Ming thanked Belarus for the warm welcome.

“This is the first event held in the country after its official accession to the SCO family. We are convinced that regular interaction between Belarus and the SCO members will play an important role in strengthening our co-operation while laying the foundation for further development of interaction,” Zhang Ming stressed.

Strengthening cultural liaisons is one of the priorities, with Belarus’ Culture Minister Anatoly Markevich urging the participants of the meeting to engage in a dialogue of cultures.

“We already have an initiative proposal from Belarus to hold an international youth forum *Through Traditions — into the Future*. Therefore, today we will also discuss this topic with our colleagues and see how we have progressed in those roadmaps that already exist in each country. We have long established close co-operation with the Russian Culture Ministry, meeting annually at joint boards and synchronising our positions. A roadmap — consisting of 57 points — has been developed. We are implementing them step by step, including through young people. There are many projects enabling our youngsters to unite, to be in the same teams: whether it is a symphony orchestra, or a Memory Train. We are laying the groundwork. If young people follow us with the same understanding as we do, then everything is great: we have a succession of generations. We do not allow formalism in any case. We also develop a common position on topical issues and respond clearly to all challenges,” Anatoly Markevich underlined.

The meeting of the SCO culture ministers was also attended by Azerbaijani Culture Minister Adil Karimli. Baku and Minsk have long-standing friendly ties, but now — after Belarus has joined the SCO — these ties will develop even more actively.

“Azerbaijan strives to deepen co-operation with all the countries of the SCO family across various fields, including culture, education and science. Our goal is to strengthen relationships and use their potential to support sustainable development. In November, Azerbaijan will be hosting the COP29 World Conference, at which a meeting of the SCO culture ministers is also planned. We hope this meeting will become an important platform for discussing the negative impact of climate change on cultural heritage,” Azerbaijan’s Culture Minister added.

## MEETINGS WITH FIRST LADIES OF ZIMBABWE AND NIGERIA



Auxillia Mnangagwa

“Belarus is ready to provide Zimbabwe with all-round support,” the President of Belarus stated that during his meeting with the First Lady of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Auxillia Mnangagwa. Welcoming the guest, the Head of State noted the fact that the Zimbabwean delegation arrived in Belarus during the days of the 33rd *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* International Festival of Arts — the largest forum of Slavic culture — and brought with them a piece of Zimbabwean culture.

Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised that the visit of Zimbabwean President Emmerson Mnangagwa was expected in Belarus, “We will provide the President with every possible assistance in the implementation of the mission, ideas and plans that we have identified for the future.”

The Head of State highlighted that Auxillia Mnangagwa had taken on a very important task for Zimbabwe, overseeing healthcare and child nutrition. “Be sure that we will do everything necessary to improve the situation in Zimbabwe with medical care for the population and nutrition for children,” the President assured.

The President of Belarus warmly welcomed the First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Oluremi Tinubu, and expressed confidence that her visit would have a beneficial effect on co-operation between Belarus and Nigeria, “I would really like to hope that, after your visit, your President and ministers will come to Belarus so that we can begin to liaise more closely. We are very interested in your country, and I think we will be useful to you. We know your needs and your capabilities very well.”



Oluremi Tinubu

Aleksandr Lukashenko asked to convey his best wishes and an invitation to visit Belarus at any convenient time to President of Nigeria Bola Tinubu.

The Head of State outlined a number of promising areas of co-operation, “We are ready to provide you with assistance and support in the development of industry, as well as agriculture and the processing industry, especially in food production. We are also ready to create joint ventures for the production of various types of equipment.”

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

# President has announced elimination of tension on border with Ukraine

## President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko has visited the 56th anti-aircraft missile regiment in Luninets District, Brest Region



At first, the Head of State visited the regiment's command post, where he was briefed on the performance of air defence duty missions. After that, the President moved to the regiment's headquarters. Aleksandr Lukashenko, flanked by the defence minister, toured the premises and studied the infrastructure and the regiment's vehicle park.

**Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke in detail about the situation at the southern border, which had been one of the hottest topics lately, at a rally in the run-up to Independence Day on July 2nd. "In no way should we allow any escalation or aggravation. I want the Ukrainian leadership to hear me. The concentration of troops, albeit insignificant, is very dangerous during combat operations. We have analysed the situation. We understand perfectly well that we need no aggravation and we have always said it. Ukrainians understand that we will retaliate," the Head of State noted.**

Aleksandr Lukashenko warned Ukrainians against provoking conflict, emphasising dangerous consequences. The President stated that Belarus increased security measures at the border, including deploying special operations forces and putting Belarus' and Russia's air forces and air defence systems on high alert. The Belarusian leader also mentioned that the *Polonez* and *Iskander* missile systems were ready for action. "No red lines. There will be a strike with all types of weapons on predetermined targets," the Belarusian leader made it clear. At the same time, the Head of State assured the public that there would be no clashes at the border with Ukraine and urged everyone to carry on with their daily tasks. "I would like to tell you not to worry. I guarantee that we will not allow any clashes at the border with Ukraine. This will not happen," Aleksandr Lukashenko said at the rally in early July.

**President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko held a meeting to discuss the country's military security in the southern operational district.**

Taking part in the meeting were State Secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Volfovich, KGB Chairman Ivan Tertel, Minister of Internal Affairs Ivan Kubrakov, Defence Minister Viktor Khrenin, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces Pavel Muraveiko, Chairman of the State Border Committee Konstantin Molostov, Commander of the Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces Vadim Denisenko, Commander of the Air Force and Air Defence Andrei Lukyanovich.

"The State Security Committee and the military intelligence have reported to me that after we had taken action, the Ukrainians withdrew their armed forces and additional troops from our border (there were thousands of people there) and overall from the Belarus-Ukraine border area. In other words, the troops that were meant to bolster their military presence have left the border," the Head of State stressed. "That is indeed the case. I have checked with the personnel and this regiment [the 56th anti-aircraft missile regiment in Luninets District]. Both the defence minister and the personnel have confirmed that now we have no tensions with the Ukrainians, and I hope there won't be any," added Aleksandr Lukashenko.

The Head of State emphasised that Belarus did not want that increase in tension, and it definitely does not need it now. "Ukraine is even less interested in this. They have plenty of other problems," the President remarked. The Belarusian leader recalled that a serious escalation at the southern border had been detected a cou-

ple of weeks ago, causing great concern among the population and prompting the Head of State to take responsive measures. Aleksandr Lukashenko addressed that issue following his official speech at the meeting in the run-up to Independence Day.

**"I tried to the best of my ability to assuage people's concerns, to assure people that there would be no war and that we would prevent any further escalation on our border. After all, it is our duty, the duty of people in uniform, to make sure that the situation is calm so our people can keep working and harvesting. By the way, the harvest this year is quite good. In other words, people were very anxious. Therefore, the decision was made to deploy several military units to the border, including our special operations forces. Our border guards were mobilised and border security was beefed up. Despite their heavy workload, the country should be protected. Border guards are the only ones who patrol the edges of our country, so it was crucial to reinforce border security with the border troops," highlighted the President.**

Speaking about the increased mobilisation of the special operations forces, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted the tense situation at the southern border, "They are having a tough time at the southern border. The 'sling arms' command is given every other day."

"Thus, we got mobilised, and our troops were also put on alert," the Head of State remarked. The resulting de-escalation suggests that the Head of State's promise that the military would ensure peace and security has been fulfilled. "I promised the people that we would handle this situation," the Belarusian leader added.

Belarus had to respond to the recent escalation at the border with Ukraine by beefing up border security and reinforcing border guards with army units. Following this, Ukraine withdrew its troops from the border area and the tensions subsided. The

Head of State emphasised the importance of avoiding unnecessary actions in such situations.

**"I have full confidence in our intelligence, and I want people to know that the situation at the Belarus-Ukraine border has been stabilised. Their troops have been withdrawn. Therefore, our troops need to be pulled back from the border, too. It will send them a signal, as we have agreed, that we do not intend to engage in a fight or increase military presence here, except for special operations forces," the Belarusian leader said.**



Aleksandr Lukashenko gave instructions to Commander of the Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces Vadim Denisenko to ensure the wellbeing of the troops, "Take care of your guys. Make sure they remain at the designated areas on a rotational basis. Make things more comfortable for them given such a heat wave. We need several people at these designated facilities on a rotational basis. The rest should be taken to their permanent deployment sites."

The President ordered the Defence Ministry to assess the situation comprehensively, "If the withdrawal of troops from certain areas is feasible, go ahead. There should not be any unnecessary moves."

In addition, Aleksandr Lukashenko cautioned everyone against overlooking possible threats from the West. "Having previously alerted you to this, we have observed the need to remain vigilant towards the West. There

is a build-up going on in that direction. Therefore, the personnel stationed in the northwestern district should be ready for any eventuality. There are attempts to provoke us in order to drag us into this conflict, this war," the Belarusian leader emphasised.

Aleksandr Lukashenko aims to confer with Russian President Vladimir Putin on further steps regarding Ukraine. "They [people in Ukraine] look askance at us, they vilify us. They stop short of calling us enemies. We are not enemies for Ukrainians. I have reiterated this multiple times. They are our kin. They are like us,

like Russians, we need to come to terms quickly. It is absolutely possible. However, for this it is necessary to embark on talks. If there is no dialogue, no conversation, there will be escalation and loss of lives," the Belarusian leader underlined.

Commenting on the intense heat wave that gripped the region, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted, "What is it like to fight in forty-degree heat... It is scary to even step outside, let alone engage in combat fully geared, with a bulletproof vest. This is an unbearable torture for the military. Not to mention people dying."

**"Therefore, the recent de-escalation in the Belarus-Ukraine border area can serve as an example of how it is possible to come to an agreement through dialogue. This indicates that there are enough sensible people in Ukraine, especially among the military. We have arrived at an agreement. I think this is a good example for the Ukrainians. The Russians are ready to sit down at the negotiating table and strike a deal. Negotiate and come to terms.**

So far, the Ukrainians pushed by NATO — as evident from the recent NATO summit — have been fighting till the last Ukrainian is left standing. It is a shame. Indeed, it is imperative to embark on talks. I think we will soon discuss these problems with Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin at a meeting where we will thrash out our plans going forward," Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out.

**Based on materials of sb.by**



# How has Belarus changed since the election of Aleksandr Lukashenko as President 30 years ago?



On July 10th, 1994, Aleksandr Lukashenko won the second round of the presidential election with the support of 80.34 percent of voters. Since then, Belarus has created a high-level economy and strengthened its defence capabilities. Belarus has established itself as a social welfare state, expanded participation in global integration structures, developed sports and culture. We preserve the historical truth and uphold traditional values. Thanks to the President's wise policy, a solid foundation has been laid for further building sovereign, independent and prosperous Belarus.

**On the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the institution of presidency in Belarus, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has named the most significant achievements in the social and labour sphere**

- First**, the real disposable income of the population has grown more than 9 times in three decades compared to 1995.
- Secondly**, the rate of low-income population has decreased dramatically. The share of population with disposable incomes below subsistence line per capita (low income level) on average has plummeted by 10.7 times — from 38.4 percent in 1995 to 3.6 percent in 2023.
- Third**, the unemployment level has reduced. The State Employment Service has helped to find jobs for nearly 5.3 million people over 30 years. The number of registered unemployed citizens decreased from 101.2 thousand in 1994 to 3.3 thousand in 2023. The unemployment rate, calculated in accordance with the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) methodology, is now one of the lowest since its observation in 2012. The rate stood at 3.3 percent in Q1 2024. For comparison: in 2016, this figure was 5.8 percent.
- Fourth**, a sharp decrease in workplace injuries has been recorded. The number of work-related accidents has dropped by more than 8 times over 30 years — from 16 thousand injured in 1994 to 1.9 thousand in 2023.

The 30th anniversary of the institution of presidency marks a milestone event in the history of sovereign Belarus. The people's choice of 1994 became a pivotal and historic one as people entrusted their hopes, aspirations and expectations to a man who promised to usher a new era associated with the development and prosperity for a young sovereign nation. Now, three decades later, it is evident that the choice made by the Belarusian people was indeed justified. Aleksandr Lukashenko has become a symbol of responsibility and stability in the country's political realm, elevating Belarus' presence on the global stage and garnering wide support from both inside and outside the country.

High levels of unemployment, stagnant plants and factories, empty shops, meagre salaries — these are the gloomy realities of the early 1990s of the last century. Workers warmed themselves around bonfires in the silent workshops of industrial giants, and poverty-stricken people begged for bread on the streets. The decline in GDP was twice as large as after the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War. That was not merely a period of depression but rather a crisis point leading to an abyss.

During the years of Aleksandr Lukashenko's presidency, Belarus has become a state that serves as an example to many countries worldwide. What lies at the core of this success?

## Strategic plan

You cannot spread slogans on bread. In the early years of independence, the newfangled word 'privatisation' was actively discussed at many stagnant enterprises. However, Belarus would not break and sell for a song what had been created for decades — the first President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, made that promise to the people.

By the early noughties, the country, which had recently teetered on the edge of the abyss, emerged as a leader among the CIS in terms of economic growth. Despite the challenges, a clear course was strictly followed. *The Main Directions of Socio-Economic Development* for 1996-2000 were developed. As noted by Doctor of Economics Valery Bainev, the Belarusian economy saw significant growth from 1995 to 2020, with GDP per capita measured by purchasing power parity (PPP) increasing more than fivefold — from \$3,863 to \$20,186. The exports of products grew sevenfold over five five-year periods — from \$5.3 to \$37 billion. By 2023, the average salary reached \$634, which is 70 times more than in 1994. By the way, such estimates are based on data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had to recognise the real success achieved by Belarus.

## Agricultural progress

A strong industry is a weighty argument. However, in order to attain food security, the country needs highly developed agriculture. Young people nowadays may not fully grasp the significance of this statement — after all they simply do not understand the repercussions of a state unable to produce its own goods. In the mid-1990s, not only were there no delicacies on store shelves, but there was also no milk sometimes while baby food was worth its weight in gold. The collective farms in the country were destroyed, and selling off the land seemed the easiest and most obvious solution. This advice was frequently given to the President. However, the question remained — what is next, who will take care of the peasants? Aleksandr Lukashenko consistently raised this concern. Thanks to his firm and principled position, considerable changes have taken place in the countryside.

Strong regions contribute to a strong state, providing a place to live, a job and a salary — that is the major strategy. No matter what goals are set, they are always focused



Aleksandr Kulevsky



## DIFFERENT PATHS — DIFFERENT RESULTS

In the summer of 1994, Belarus and Ukraine were electing their presidents. In our country, the favourite in the first round by a wide margin was Aleksandr Lukashenko, who also won the second round with more than 80 percent of the vote. Meanwhile, the presidential elections in Ukraine ended in the defeat of Leonid Kravchuk — one of the three leaders who signed the 1991 deal [the Belavezha Accords] on the collapse of the USSR. However, after the elections, the two countries took completely different paths. Kiev relied on nationalism, while Minsk prioritised consolidation. As a result, under the leadership of Aleksandr Lukashenko, Belarus has been developing based on the interests of the people, its traditions and its own history. In contrast, Ukraine is embroiled in war, while the country has been plundered and is virtually disintegrated with the involvement of the collective West.

on people who should be able to live and work on their land. The Head of State has reiterated this point multiple times. Over the past three decades, the agricultural sector has evolved to ensure multibillion-dollar profitability, enabling us to not only sustain ourselves but also export to other countries. The President's diplomatic visits to friendly countries have yielded results — exports to the African region are ramping up, new markets are opening up.

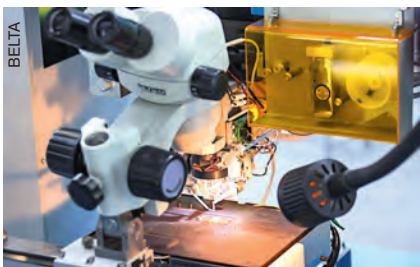
## Ongoing development

Thanks to nationwide support, a system with a strong leader at the helm has definitively reinforced itself in the country. This system is clear, simple, essential, and most importantly, effective. After all, such a power structure leaves no room for any destructive external forces to undermine the state. Thus, all attempts at 'colour revolutions' have failed in Belarus. The institution of presidency, as well as the very concept of president, holds significant value for Belarusians. Aleksandr Lukashenko has demonstrated resilience and stood strong against the challenges thrown at him, having safeguarded the country's independence. Throughout the past 30 years, our country has not participated in any armed conflict — quite the opposite, Belarus is known for its peaceful policy and efforts to build bridges between states.

We build housing, educate children, develop the social sphere, and make discoveries in science. We have constructed our own nuclear power plant and the Belarusian National Biotechnology Corporation (BNBC), upgraded oil refineries and launched the production of passenger vehicles. Just some 30 years ago, our factories were on the verge of closure, and now equipment under the brand *Made in Belarus* is known all over the world. Every tenth tractor on the planet is a *Belarus* tractor produced by Minsk Tractor Works. BELAZ vehicles, manufactured by Belarusian Automobile Plant, travel along mountain roads on the other side of the world, while Gomselmash-made combine harvesters come in handy in African plains. Even space is within our reach now. Could anyone have even dreamt of all this three decades ago?

The President has always known what needs to be done. Therefore, Belarus today is a country with a high level of economy, which has gained authority on the international stage. Thirty years in the scale of history is a fairly short time. However, even during this time, Belarus has achieved a lot. If someone has nothing to compare to, they can ask their parents or those who remember the 1990s well. Meanwhile, the country continues to develop confidently on the path to bolstering its sovereignty and independence.

**Based on materials of printed publications of the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House**



**Belarus has showcased technological innovations from 24 enterprises at the 14th INNOPROM-2024 International Industrial Trade Fair, which over the years has acquired the status of a prominent global platform for industrial integration**

# Partnership on the way to technological sovereignty

By Maksim Korotkin

## Business meeting programme

Another *INNOPROM* edition was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia, on July 8th-11th. A year ago, Belarus had a status of a partner country at *INNOPROM*. This status is transitional and the UAE has received it in 2024. Nevertheless, the exposition of our country this year was one of the most impressive, occupying 500 square metres, and featuring more than 20 manufacturers and several hundred innovative products. Such forums have traditionally been crucial platforms for communication.

Within the framework of the forum, a large-scale programme of business meetings and negotiations was provided to interact both with partners in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Union State, as well as with a number of friendly countries, including Cuba and the UAE.

The Belarusian exposition was not inferior to the booth of this year's partner country — the United Arab Emirates — in terms of the range of novelty products and exhibition samples presented, and was particularly in demand among professional visitors, residents of foreign companies and the business community. Chairman of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BelCCI) Mikhail Myatlikov provided insights into the Belarusian products unveiled at the exhibition, "The core of the Belarusian exposition consists of products created on the basis of industrial co-operation of the Union State enterprises. StankoGomel JSC [machine tool manufacturing company based in Gomel] has presented a Union State machine, fully equipped with Belarusian and Russian components. We have new refrigerators, which are a complete analogue of European, Korean, Japanese models. Their localisation is nearly 100 percent."

Overall, the Belarusian side has prepared specifically for the forum a variety of unique exhibits in the field of machine building, polymer production, machine tool manufacturing and metallurgy, household



appliances and electronics, as well as scientific developments and technology.

## Expanding markets

One of the major innovations featured at *INNOPROM-2024* is the MAZ-X hybrid tractor truck by Minsk Automobile Plant. This revolutionary concept has already been dubbed 'the truck of the future'. The latest development of the Belarusian enterprise marks a real breakthrough in the truck market. According to Belarus' Minister of Industry, Aleksandr Yefimov, "The vehicle's concept envisages a low-floor cabin, a unique feature that ensures a fairly high level of comfort inside, which is an important aspect in the modern world. In addition, it is a hybrid, a highly efficient tractor truck capable of travelling long distances, more than 3,000 kilometres, with one filling. We expect that once in series production, this vehicle will be sold at the market price, with the same specifications and technical level. Our plan is to complete all tests and enter mass production by 2027."

Belarusian machine building enjoyed popularity at *INNOPROM-2024*. The head of Belarus' Ministry of Industry held talks with the Cuban delegation on the sidelines of the forum regarding the establishment of a joint venture for the assembly of agricultural machinery. The first contract for



the machine kit supply from Belarus was signed during the recent visit of the Prime Minister of Cuba to Minsk. The current talks are focused on enhancing the initial co-operative production and launching new projects. "The main driving force of our relations will be the project on the assembly production of Belarusian tractors and later, agricultural machines, trailed and mounted agricultural implements, which will enable the Cuban side to completely cover the entire line of necessary equipment. This initial project will be followed by agreements on co-operative projects involving cargo, passenger, road repair and utility equipment. Progress has been made on certain supplies to Cuba and planning joint projects in the household appliances sector," noted Aleksandr Yefimov.

Naturally, the contacts of the Belarusian side were not limited to Cuba alone. The *Made in Belarus* exposition was set to welcome foreign guests and representatives of leading companies from the CIS and beyond. "The rich exposition and business programmes serve as a comprehensive solution in the implementation of measures to promote domestic brands and increase the export potential of the country," commented Natalya Kurash, Director of the Belinterexpo Exhibition Unitary Enterprise of the BelCCI.

## FOUNDATION FOR CO-OPERATION

*INNOPROM* has become in recent years the key platform for presenting advanced technologies that bring technological independence closer. Therefore, the statements of Belarus' Prime Minister **Roman Golovchenko** during his speech at the plenary session of the 14th *INNOPROM-2024* International Industrial Trade Fair were obviously directed toward the public, who recognised the significance of developing economic and technological state competencies. "This is a natural consequence of the fact that in conditions of global instability and economic wars, an increasing number of countries are becoming clearly aware of the importance of mutually respectful partnership in ensuring technological sovereignty," Roman Golovchenko emphasised. "The Republic of Belarus has taken a clear course towards building an innovative national economy. We focus on the implementation of comprehensive projects involving the organisation of production with high economic potential, the creation and development of new scientific and engineering schools in the field of high technology."

In 2023, the share of innovative products in Belarus reached 22 percent, and the share of new or significantly improved products in the total volume of innovation made 56 percent. The share of research-intensive and high-tech products in the total volume of Belarusian exports amounted to almost 40 percent, as the Prime Minister stated.

Belarus has achieved considerable success in technological partnership with its main partner, the Russian Federation, within the framework of the Union State integration. Over 60 programmes are currently underway to establish new

centres of competence and high-tech industries. "This includes the *Union Machine* project for the production of goods with 100 percent localisation in the Union State. Following the implementation of the *Avtoelectronics* project, more than 300 results of scientific and technical activities have been obtained, and over 40 technologies have been developed.

Within the framework of the *Tekhnologiya-SG* programme, there have been created more than 60 experimental and prototype samples of space products, as well as hardware and software complexes. The completion of the *Skif-Nedra* programme made it possible to reduce geological exploration costs by at least 20 percent. Belarusian scientists, in liaison with Rosatom, are developing a project in the field of nuclear medicine on targeted radiopharmaceuticals," Roman Golovchenko listed interim results of the work.

The Prime Minister also announced new Belarus-Russia allied projects. Thus, in 2025, it is planned to complete the production of shafts and gears of the 5th-7th precision class, as well as hydraulic axial piston pumps with adjustable performance. In 2026, the production of components for agricultural machinery, previously imported from the European Union, will be launched. In 2027, Belarus will set up the production of a light multi-purpose Belarusian-Russian aircraft. "The implementation of these and other projects will strengthen the Union State's import independence," the head of Belarus' Government concluded.



# Away from ‘European values’

## Why immigrants from Germany choose to settle in the Belarusian countryside

**Eight houses in four villages of the Bocheikovsky rural council in Beshenkovichi District have been purchased by German citizens in less than two years. Several German families have taken root in Gorodok District. In total, according to official data from the Citizenship and Migration Office of the Department of Internal Affairs of the Vitebsk Regional Executive Committee, Vitebsk Region has become a second home for 14 German nationals. Those who have received real estate and are preparing to relocate are not yet registered — therefore, the number of newcomers will increase over time. What are Europeans looking for in Belarus and why have abandoned country houses in small settlements become an attractive acquisition for them?**



Aurilio Lettrari

By Yelena Begunova

### ‘First robins’

“First of all, our European newcomers admire the beauty of Belarusian nature, ecology, peace and tranquility. They are outraged by high prices in Germany, especially electricity bills, talk about artificially imposed ‘European values’ that are alien to normal people. They ask us not to take offense at the entire German people because of their government. After all, most Germans do not support the current policy in the country,” revealed Galina Shchuko, Chairperson of the Bocheikovsky Village Executive Committee.

...Together with the chairperson, we headed to the village of Zaruchevye, where the young Lettrari family had settled. It was around ten kilometres from Bocheikovo village along a narrow winding road of occasional gravel and old asphalt. There were a lot of houses left by their owners — these regions cannot be called popular. Meanwhile, a married couple, Nino and Chiki, moved to a village on the banks of the Ulla River two years ago, where only seven pensioners reside.

“They are not at home now,” the local government head informed. “They have gone to Chiki’s homeland in Japan for the summer, together with their sons. Nino’s father, Aurilio Lettrari, is taking care of the property. He is an active person and enjoys cycling all over the area.” Alas, we did not manage to get him at home but we noticed that the vegetable beds were weeded, dog Luppy was fed. There were locks on the doors of both houses, which the young people bought for three thousand dollars. The Europeans that settled in Zaruchevye became the ‘first robins’ for the village council. “They are romantics, travellers, creative people... They have

bought two houses, living in one house while planning to set up a farmstead in the other. They have already obtained the permission. Their son Nobu has completed his first year of school. The school bus picks him up and brings him back after classes. The boy is already fluent in Russian, so he is the main translator in the family. Moku was born in Belarus last summer. We do not have any questions for the family: they are diligent, attend all school activities, the children are looked after,” Galina Shchuko shared the details.

**Interestingly, the German grandfather of the kids came to visit the newly minted ‘Belarusians’ last winter and... also decided to stay here.**

However, elder Lettrari picked for himself a country house in the village of Kleshchino, where three of his compatriots already owned property at that time.

### Help in every way

Kleshchino is a fairly lively village with almost four dozen inhabitants, which is also located on the banks of the Ulla River. The village government head joked that now the Lettrari family can visit each other by water. For now, though, a minibus and a bicycle are more convenient for them.

We saw an old house with a high porch, a sagging veranda, lilac bushes, and a huge spreading ash tree under the window... The house had been empty for twenty years. “Our German is not at home now,” local resident Tatiana Papko, whose grandmother once lived in that country house, reported. “Together with Ludwig and Natalya Klimovich, they went to the Beshenkovichi market to buy building materials.”

It turned out that Ludwig Frank Willy was another newcomer, who also bought



Ludwig Frank Willy

a house in the Belarusian village and arrived there to do it up a little. Neighbour Natalya, a social worker who helped ten elderly citizens in the district, was a volunteer assistant and consultant to German immigrants. “We have four of them now,” village elder Sergei Shchuko joined the conversation. “Here is Alexander’s house — he came here from Germany about four years ago and then brought his relative Bach (we call him like that). Do you see a beautiful house and a bathhouse at the beginning of the village? This is his property. He has put everything in order, installed video surveillance. He works at the factory manufacturing Audi cars. He has promised to move in our village permanently after retirement. As for Alexander, they say he is a professor, he teaches. He came here with his wife and daughters. They are nice people, hardworking, respectful, smiling — no matter how many times a day you meet them on the street, they greet you every time.”

The conversation was interrupted by the sound of a white crossover with German number plates rushing down a village street. As two charismatic men got out of the vehicle, they let their companion go ahead and thanked her for help. “They are still not so good at Russian,” Natalya remarked with a smile. “We mostly communicate with the help of an online translator, but they are making progress in learning the language. Moreover, we have known each other for a long time.”

The villager shared how she helped the ‘pioneer’ Alexander to buy a house and then looked after Ludwig as a favour. “Alexander has relatives living in Moscow. He took Ludwig Frank with him on a trip from Germany, but he was not allowed to cross the border into Russia... As a result, the neighbour brought his friend to Kleshchino and asked to take care of him while he was away. I can definitely spare a bowl of soup for a dear guest!”

### Serious intentions

Ludwig did not waste time during his visit and also found a house for himself. Now he is happy — in his yard he has his own well sweep with clean water, a spacious vegetable garden and even the firewood left over from the previous owners. It is no big deal that the house requires extensive renovation and Ludwig has to stay at Alexander’s estate.

“The main thing is that the places here are very beautiful, the people are hospitable, it is very pleasant,” Ludwig Frank Willy and Aurilio Lettrari assured with one voice.

The conversation took place in the apple orchard. The Germans carefully inspected the trees noting the impact of spring frosts on the trees, and planned to protect the harvest next year. “Belarus has very tasty and environmentally friendly products,” pointed out Aurilio. “My family loves them. When I have renovated the house, I will definitely find a local wife. I hope she will teach me to cook pancakes and borscht.”

According to Ludwig, the Belarusian way of life is closer to them than the German one,

**“I met Aurilio here, in Kleshchino. It turned out that we have a lot in common — we both come from the German Democratic Republic [East Germany]. This is very important. We have different views and values from birth, not the ones that are popular in Germany today, where everything is aimed at destroying the spirit of Schiller. This country is becoming alien. We do not want our children and grandchildren to choose their gender and live in families with a ‘parent number one’ and ‘parent number two’.”**

Both newcomers are former officers — they know a lot about discipline and even saluted having heard which publication was taking an interview. That was a sign of respect for the leadership of Belarus. With a construction background and good work experience in the industry, the Germans approach the renovation of old houses professionally. They have ordered the delivery of lumber and a range of working tools from the district market as their own tools were not allowed at the border. They are facing some challenges with card payments on the territory of Belarus, with cash receipt being strictly limited due to restrictions set by German banks.

... Picking up an axe, Ludwig optimistically reflected on the situation, “No big deal. The embargo time will come to an end — common sense will surely prevail! — and we will bring here our families, invest in a water supply system, arrange a road. This will be our contribution to the improvement of the village, where we were so hospitably and cordially received. At least now we know that there is a place on earth where you can live in peace and grow old in spiritual comfort.”

A swift axe swipe — and a large birch log easily splits in half. There is no doubt about the seriousness of foreigners’ intentions to link their fate with the Belarusian land.

# Rupture testing

Where in the post-Soviet space the West seeks to create a new hot spot

**The current development of global geopolitics has led to one key condition: it is difficult to develop independently — it is necessary to join alliances, protect your common market and focus on improving the welfare of the population**

By **Aleksei Avdonin**, analyst at Belarusian Institute for Strategic Research (BISR)

## Amended scenario

The problems of countries and their nations are often rooted not in the absence of an economic basis but in the presence of political elites focused on the interests of foreign banks and corporations.

*The West is extremely apprehensive about the revival of integration ideas in the post-Soviet space, when a unification of states and fraternal peoples takes place.*

The current situation with Armenia and its bold statements about withdrawing from the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) reveal exactly this approach — it wants to do good for the United States, the EU, and the UK to its own detriment.

Back in 2004, Ukraine, having failed to figure out the intricacies of deceptive manipulative technologies of the West, yielded to its blandishments. We can witness now the result of such carelessness, which is expressed in total control of the population by the Anglo-Saxon world, open Nazism, abuse and destruction of the Ukrainian people.

The Armenian case is the implementation of a similar scenario, only with amendments for the South Caucasus. The essence is simple and consists in making this region another hot spot with a permanent armed conflict, and breaking the CSTO and the EAEU from the inside.

## They have become frequent visitors

The failures of the current White House administration on the Ukrainian project, the inability to achieve a blitzkrieg, the decline in investor confidence in the initiators of this scam — all this makes Joe Biden and the elites associated with him rush. Armenia was chosen as a discontented and offended country that occasionally gets angry at Belarus and insults it, or threatens to leave the CSTO 'tomorrow'.

*According to the classical conflict resolution studies, all these manifestations are standard conflictogens — actions that do not lead to the resolution of disagreements, but, vice versa, contribute to the aggravation of conflict. Those who apply such messages are well-versed in the techniques of artificial conflict formation.*

Yerevan is currently inundated with hordes of high-ranking American, British and European officials.

Thus, only in the last half a month, the



country was visited by US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs James O'Brien (June 10th-12th), Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard Verma (June 14th). On June 16th, Armenia's Security Council Secretary Armen Grigoryan discussed the Armenian-American security co-operation with Assistant to the US President for National Security Affairs Jake Sullivan. On June 17th, Armenia's Defence Minister Suren Papikyan visited France to discuss the purchase of weapons and military equipment, where Paris promised to arrange deliveries of air defence systems.

## FOR REFERENCE

From March 2012 to September 2013, **Armen Grigoryan** worked as a civil society officer at the representative office of Counterpart International in Armenia. From April 2015 to May 2018, he held the position of a project co-ordinator of electoral programmes in the public organisation Transparency International Anti-Corruption Centre. In May 2018, by decree of Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan, Grigoryan was appointed Armenia's Security Council Secretary.

Earlier, on May 21st, a CIA delegation headed by the agency's deputy director, David Cohen, paid a visit to Yerevan.

Interestingly, the staff of the US Central Intelligence Agency arrived at a time when active protests were taking place in Armenia demanding Pashinyan's resignation. It is possible that the American intelligence services could have advised Pashinyan and Grigoryan on stabilising the situation in the country.

It is noteworthy that on the eve of the visit of the CIA representatives to Yerevan, Grigoryan was interviewed on the local pro-Western resource CivilNet, where he criticised his country's dependence on Russia in the security sphere. In particular, he spoke about the severance

of ties with the Russian Federation in the defence sector and recalled that over the past four years, imports of Russian weapons have decreased from 96 to 10 percent. Now Yerevan is focused on the purchase of weapons from the EU.

## Norms of political correctness

Richard Verma's arrival in Armenia was not accidental, either. It was he who, under Barack Obama's presidency, ensured the rapprochement between the United States and India. Now Armenia is interested in weapons from India to compensate for the loss of supplies of weapons and military equipment from Russia. In addition, Nikol Pashinyan and his corporate entourage hope to join in the Indian-Iranian logistics megaproject related to the use of Iran's Chabahar port as it seeks access to India and other Asian nations.

In addition, Nikol Pashinyan's elites and his entourage hope to grab hold of European 'helicopter money'. Thus, Yerevan has recently approved the signing of a financial agreement between Armenia and the European Commission titled *Instrument for the Implementation of Reforms and The Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA)*.

The desire for fast money has crossed out many norms of political and diplomatic correctness in Yerevan's relations with post-Soviet countries. Thus, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan met with a representative of the Belarusian fugitive opposition in mid-June in Vilnius, Lithuania. Is it possible to act like that if the country is an independent political player? Obviously no. Such decisions are clearly the result of the work of external forces focused on disrupting good relations between countries within the integration associations (CSTO, CIS, EAEU).

## Staying strong in the face of manipulations

Sure enough, politicians face increased pressure from the so-called power players when pursuing their independent line.

**The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,**

*"Statements followed — France will help Armenia with air defence systems, in the military field and in the economy. In other words, they will take Yerevan on their shoulders and carry it. No one will carry anyone. You see what is happening in France. Therefore, the politicians in Yerevan should wake up and, popularly speaking, should not lose what they have."*

**During the elections of deputies to the House of Representatives of the National Assembly and local councils, on February 25th, 2024**

Georgia's case is a telling example in this regard. Due to Tbilisi's adoption of the law on foreign agents, the European Union is exploring the possibility of suspending high-level bilateral visits and signing bilateral agreements. This is included in the package of immediate measures.

At a press conference in Luxembourg following the meeting of EU foreign affairs ministers on June 24th, Head of EU diplomacy Josep Borrell insisted that if Georgia's government did not change the course of action, the country would not progress on the European Union path.

According to him, against the adoption of the law on transparency of foreign influence by the Georgian authorities, Brussels will strengthen support for civil society and media in Georgia. In other words, the European Union is determined to stage another 'velvet revolution' in Tbilisi. However, there is certain confidence that the Georgian people are already tired of being exposed to political technology experiments and will simply destroy any 'newly-minted Saakashvili' at the first stages of their appearance in national politics.

*Thus, the West keeps playing its game — in an attempt to weaken Belarus and Russia, it hits the weakest link in the CSTO and the EAEU. Washington and London are interested in igniting the South Caucasus and creating 'the war of all against all'.*

Armenia has obviously been chosen as a kind of Ukraine 2.0 in this region. Nevertheless, the Armenian people, like the Georgian people, have an alternative — not to succumb to and stay strong in the face of those manipulations and deception, and finally realise that the West does not care about the happiness of other nations and puts its own interests above all. In contrast, it is important for us, Belarusians, to preserve peace and stability between brotherly peoples, allies and partners.

**The United States never thinks about the interests or aspirations of other nations, and is solely guided by its own super earnings. A minor part of such increased profits can be allocated to the maintenance of a puppet government — in simple terms, traitors.**



# NATO summit held amid alarming events and trends

The NATO anniversary summit in Washington has taken place against the background of events and trends that should cause alarm to the alliance — as stated in the BBC publication

Things did not turn out quite as many of its leaders had hoped and expected. The rise of far-right and far-left groups in Europe risks undermining Western cohesion.

Moreover, all this is happening in parallel with the threat of an impending presidential race in the US between Joe Biden — ‘a man whom many consider too old to hold this position’ — and former US president Donald Trump — ‘who sometimes seems to be closer to Putin than to NATO’.

Meanwhile, Hollywood star and Democratic Party sponsor George Clooney wrote an article for *The New York Times*, calling on incumbent American leader Joe Biden to quit his election campaign. “It’s devastating to say, but Joe Biden I met at a fundraising event three weeks ago was not the Biden of 2010. He wasn’t even

the Joe Biden of 2020. He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate,” Mr. Clooney notes. He then writes that Biden may be tired and has a cold, but ‘our party leaders need to stop telling us that 51 million people didn’t see what we just saw’. According to him, the interview Biden gave a few days after the debate only reinforced this image. “We are not going to win in November with this president,” the actor concludes.

Reuters news agency wrote that 81-year-old American leader Joe Biden, who for 13 days faced questions about his fitness to serve as president after the high-profile failure of the debate in late June, hopes that the summit in Washington will help him make a kind of comeback. “For all the manoeuvring over Ukraine,

the focus at the summit will be on Biden, who at 81 is the only NATO leader older than the alliance itself,” Bloomberg wrote in an article on the eve of the event.

The NATO summit was held in Washington from July 9th-11th to mark the 75th anniversary of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949.

The US presidential election will be held on November 5th, 2024. According to Politico, based on interviews with 20 officials associated with the alliance, the US’ NATO allies fear that Joe Biden will not be able to win the upcoming election. The US election may portend a sharp change in Washington’s support for Ukraine and NATO. Donald Trump questioned the amount of aid provided to Ukraine, as well as the US support for its allies in general.

# Anti-metastatic drug created in Russia

The drug for the prevention of metastasis in oncological diseases has been developed by specialists of the Siberian State Medical University (SibSMU) as part of a research team

According to the authors, the compound developed on the basis of nucleic acids is able to prevent the appearance of metastases after the removal of the primary tumour, with results published in the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*.

Cancer occurs due to genetic changes in cells, leading to their uncontrolled division and spread throughout the body. Most of them are destroyed by the immune system, but some may not die, entering a state of ‘rest’ for a long time. It depends on the immunity of each individual, the SibSMU scientists said.

Coming out of a state of ‘rest’, cancer cells turn into tumour stem cells, which leads to the formation of secondary foci of pathology — metastases, which, according to researchers, are the main cause of death from cancer.

The university noted that almost all modern anti-tumour drugs are aimed at treating only the primary tumour and are not able to fight cancer cells that have already spread throughout the body, which are clones of the primary neoplasm with increased drug resistance.

The ‘survivability’ of clones is due to the increase in the malignant properties of the tumour during its development. Therefore, chemotherapy, effective at the first stages of treatment, may not destroy all subsequent transformed tumour cells, experts stressed.



# Tidying up the top of the world

Mount Everest camp will take years to clean, says local Sherpa

Since the peak was first conquered in 1953, thousands of climbers have scaled it and many have left behind more than just their footprints.

The highest camp on the world’s tallest mountain is littered with garbage that is going to take years to clean up, according to a Sherpa who led a team that worked to clear trash and dig up dead bodies frozen for years near Mount Everest’s peak.

The Nepal government-funded team of soldiers and Sherpas removed 11 tonnes of garbage, four dead bodies and a skeleton from Everest during this year’s climbing season.

Ang Babu Sherpa, who led the team

of Sherpas, said there could be as much as 40-50 tonnes of garbage still at South Col, the last camp before climbers make their attempt on the summit.

In recent years, a government requirement that climbers bring back their garbage or lose their deposits, along with increased awareness among climbers about the environment, has significantly reduced the amount of garbage left behind. However, that was not the case in earlier decades.

“Most of the garbage is from older expeditions,” Ang Babu said.

Digging out the garbage is also a big task, since it is frozen inside ice and breaking the blocks is not easy.

# Australia probes killing of 65 kangaroos

Australian authorities said they are investigating the illegal killing of at least 65 kangaroos found shot or apparently rammed by a vehicle

A local wildlife shelter alerted Victorian wildlife officials after finding the eastern grey kangaroos in rural paddocks about 120km (75 miles) north of Melbourne, officials said.

“At least three of the kangaroos were found alive but were subsequently euthanised due to the severity of their injuries,” said the state’s Conservation Regulator. “Two kangaroo joeys were recovered and are being cared for at a wildlife shelter.”

The marsupials had suffered fatal gunshot wounds and ‘traumatic injuries consistent with being rammed by a vehicle’, the regulator said.

Used shotgun cartridges were found in the area.

Though kangaroos are protected in Australia, the most common species are not endangered. This means they can be shot and killed in most jurisdictions, but government permission is needed.

Kangaroos, whose numbers fluctuate between 30 million and 60 million nationally, are frequently culled to keep the population in check.

The animals have a ‘boom and bust’ population cycle — when fodder is plentiful on the back of a good wet season, their numbers can balloon by tens of millions.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



# Work for a robot

Are humanoid machines a threat to the labour market or a publicity gimmick?

The generator of semi-fantastic ideas concurrently holding the office of an entrepreneur, engineer and billionaire, Elon Musk, has recently stunned everyone with his statement claiming that at least a thousand humanoid robots could be working at his Tesla corporation in 2025 that are expected to replace ordinary workers. According to Musk, further robotisation will develop exponentially around the world. How is this situation unfolding in Belarus?



**The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,**

*“We have already created dairy complexes where only robots work instead of milkmaids. We have an unmanned tractor already. These technologies powered by IT sector have penetrated all the industries. But it is impossible to replace a human being, particularly in close contact with nature. Whatever a machine may be, it cannot replicate human feelings and qualities.”*  
**At a meeting with youth activists, on October 24th, 2023**

By Aleksandr Nesterov

## Threat with a human face

Just a couple of years ago, someone could laugh at docile robotic dogs and clumsy delivery robots. Now it is already no laughing matter for many people as smart machines have begun to displace Homo sapiens from production. Here is just one of the many examples: last year, Amazon, a global e-commerce giant, started testing humanoid robots in its warehouses — allegedly, they have already learnt how to grasp, lift and handle items in a similar fashion to a human. At the same time, the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) announced that their future humanoid robot Pibot would be able to take control of a real aircraft just like a human pilot, no cockpit redesign would be required.

Boston Dynamics, Agility, Fig and other well-known humanoid manufacturing companies have gained numerous followers.

*Now the widely known innovator, Elon Musk, revealed last April that humanoid robots would be able to perform tasks at Tesla by the end of the year, whereas in 2025, they may be put on the market. It is up for grabs — the price of an AI-driven employee will be up to \$25,000 (but this is not certain).*

“We do not see AI replacing humans but humans who use AI potentially replacing people who do not,” Lisa Heneghan, Global Chief Digital Officer at KPMG, one of the world’s largest audit, tax and advisory companies providing AI-powered services to enterprises, outlined one of the current trends at the *Viva Technology* international exhibition in Paris in May 2024.

## Machines are not omnipotent

Robotisation is a natural process that fits into the modern framework of scientific and technological progress. According to the International Federation of Robotics (IFR), the number of industrial robots in operation on a global scale reached 3.5 million units by the end of 2022. Experts consider that the main factors for the deployment of robotic complexes encompass not only the introduction of the *Industry 4.0* concept (see the infographic) but also — attention! — the shortage of skilled labour in the manufacturing industry. That is, progress so far is not against people but to help them. Thus, Canadian startup Sanctuary AI has struck a deal with the spare parts manufacturer Magna International envisaging that Phoenix humanoid robots developed by Sanctuary AI will work at factories for the pro-

duction of components and parts for Volkswagen, Audi, Škoda, Ferrari, Build Your Dreams (BYD) vehicles. After all, the much-hyped Optimus robots by Elon Musk & Co do not claim to be a complete replacement for a person, either. It is believed that they can be involved in logistics, warehousing, retail and manufacturing, and only under human guidance, despite the potential unlimited possibilities of reprogramming in the future.

## Without unnecessary hype

The introduction of industrial robots is one of the major tasks for the next 15 years for Belarus. This follows from the draft concept of the *National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Belarus until 2040*, which was submitted for public discussion earlier this year.

It is assumed that in the period 2031-2040, qualitative economic growth will be achieved, in particular, ‘through the robotisation of business processes and services, the introduction of intelligent systems and the formation of a digital products market’. The priority tasks for this decade include the development of intelligent industrial production through the introduction of high technologies, such as industrial robots and additive manufacturing equipment, digital and cloud technologies, smart equipment and products, as well as intelligent production process and

product quality control.

We can already witness fresh sprouts of Belarusian robotics. Thus, the Chairperson of the Bellegprom [Belarusian light industry concern], Tatiana Lugina, unveiled in June that the concern’s enterprises were installing robotic complexes for sewing bed linen, while several complexes for the automatic towel production had already been launched,

*“The task has been set to introduce automated sewing for the feasible product range as much as possible in the coming years. The freed seamstresses will be involved in more complex areas where robots and automated machines have not yet arrived.”*

A robot manufacturing enterprise may appear in the Great Stone Belarusian-Chinese Industrial Park as one of the Chinese companies is ready to invest in opening a subsidiary in Belarus. The BELAZ welding workshop boasts more than two dozen robotic technological complexes — robotisation of welding frame cross members for dump trucks has already reached 90 percent of the total welding volume of such components. In a word, the process of production robotisation is well underway, without any shocking and loud statements or hyped sensations. In fact, it does not matter whether to use a humanoid robot or an ordinary one. The main thing is that the work is done well.

## Belarus: what to expect before 2040

- 1 Development of the Smart industry, which involves the digitalisation of industrial production based on the Industry 4.0 and Internet+ concepts. Transition to digital design of parts and technical processes.
- 2 Widespread use of the Internet of Things
- 3 Implementation of machine vision technologies and processing of large amounts of data, 3D printing, intelligent control systems for unmanned vehicles.
- 4 Launching the production of unmanned vehicles and equipment within the Industry 4.0 concept in mechanical engineering. Introduction of robotic conveyor assembly and automated production lines in large-scale machine-building production.
- 5 Manufacture of industrial robot components — highly efficient small-sized vision systems, sensors and sensor systems, etc.
- 6 Production of smart household electrical appliances and equipment within the Smart Home concept.
- 7 Implementation of technology for design and production of autonomous agricultural machines, unmanned electric buses, and mobile machine vision.
- 8 The expected results are 1.8-fold productivity growth in industry in 2026-2040, and an increased share of medium- and high-tech activities to 60 percent in 2040.

## Industrial revolutions: from mechanisation to robots

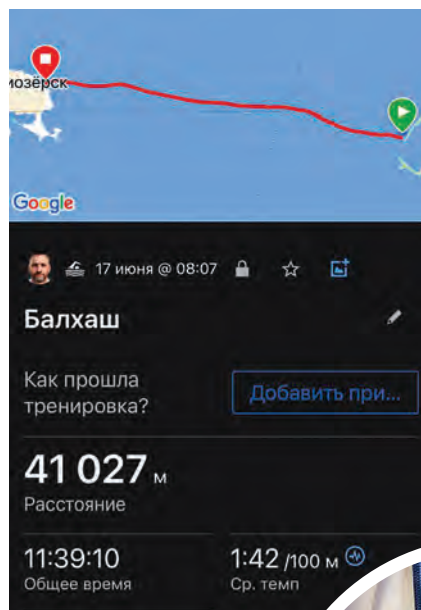
Industry 1.0 (1790s — mid-19th century)	Industry 2.0 (mid-19th — early 20th centuries)	Industry 3.0 (since the 1960s)	Industry 4.0 (present days and prospects)
mechanisation of manual labour and the agrarian revolution. Symbols: spinning and weaving machines, steam and water engines, agricultural machines.	spread of electricity. Symbols: internal combustion engine, Ilyich's light bulb, telegraph, telephone, conveyors in mass production.	emergence of electronic computing machines. Symbols: machine tools with software, personal computers, mobile phones.	mass introduction of information technologies, large-scale automation of business processes, spread of artificial intelligence. Symbols: self-driving cars, the Internet of Things, 3D printing.

Source: Draft Concept of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of the Republic of Belarus for the period up to 2040 (NSSD-2040).

# Aren't man-eating catfish scary?

## Belarusians have swum across Lake Balhash and set a world record

**A grandiose sports event has taken place in Kazakhstan — a marathon swimming race across Lake Balhash, which is the world's second largest saline lake after the Caspian Sea. The task for the team was to swim 38 kilometres. And they did it! Moreover, they hit an all-time high having set a record of 11 hours, 39 minutes and 10 seconds.**



By Inna Gorbatenko

### Twenty minutes faster

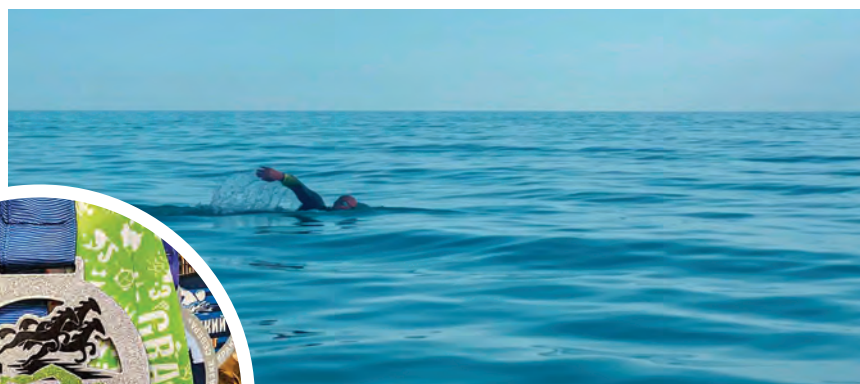
There are three winners in the team — Belarusians Aleksandr Makovich and Dmitry Yegorov, and Russian Pavel Pankovsky. The guys started preparing for one of the longest ultramarathon swimming races in the post-Soviet space a year ahead of the event, with dozens of gruelling workouts a week, both in the swimming pool and in the open water. Yet, standing at the starting line, a slight excitement was still there. Dmitry Yegorov recalled his emotions,

*“We started from the Almaty side and finished in Priozersk [Leningrad Region, Russia]. It was a swimming relay race and we replaced each other every 30 minutes. We were focused on setting a record. We wanted not only to beat the best result but also to have a good margin of time at the finish line in order to set a high bar and challenge our fellow swimmers, to increase the motivation of the team that will swim this marathon next year.”*

The guys managed to do it — they improved the previous record by almost 20 minutes! The athletes have a solid background. Thus, Dmitry Yegorov swam across the Bosphorus Strait, the Strait of Gibraltar, Lake Baikal, the Neva River in length (77 kilometres!). The Belarusian swimmer also has a twenty-kilometre swim to the island of Valaam [in Lake Ladoga, Karelia, Russia] and an



Dmitry Yegorov, Aleksandr Makovich, Pavel Pankovsky



escape from the Castle of If to the shores of Marseille under his belt. The latter is an official competition in freestyle swimming in the open sea among amateurs. “It is considered one of the most difficult, spectacular and romantic routes. After all, it repeats the daring escape of Edmond Dantès, the hero of the novel *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas,” Dmitry clarified.

The oldest member of the victorious trio, Aleksandr Makovich, is 46 years old. It is already the third season that he has taken part in the marathon swimming race. According to Aleksandr, when health requires attention, sport is a kind of salvation. The winning team swam in this composition for the first time. They got acquainted with each other during a 24-hour swim in St. Petersburg in April and decided to join forces on the way to a record. The men live in different cities, so they trained separately. “The main danger of separate training is the false hope for your teammates. That is, you may think, ‘If I do not prepare well enough, the team will pull it off’, but during the swim you find out that the others also thought exactly like that, and the overall result may be not so great,” explained Dmitry Yegorov. “That is why we regularly compared our positions in the group chat, reporting on training sessions in order to get in the best shape for the competition.”

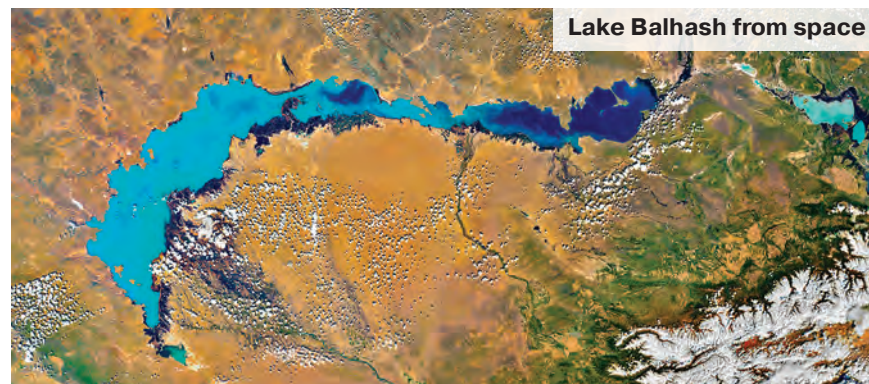
ing catfish, whose length reaches 2-4 metres,” Dmitry revealed a shocking idea. “It might be just a tale invented by the locals to discourage children from going swimming alone. However, it seems that there are several historically documented facts of these fish attacking people.”

### Honey, nuts and lots of protein

The swimmers were accompanied by a boat with a support team that monitored the athletes' general state and food intake. So what was on the menu? According to Dmitry Yegorov, there were no dietary restrictions, “The main thing is that the food should be high in calories. Carbohydrates help you not get tired. We had thought out our diet thoroughly in advance. So, we took three types of food. Of course, it was sports nutrition, including all kinds of protein bars, energy gels and isotonic drinks. They give an instant surge of energy and strength. We also took sweet stuff — tea, honey, chocolate, nuts... These are fast carbohydrates, which boost your strength literally in 5-10 minutes. Obviously we could not do without slow carbs — porridge and pasta.”

When asked if there was a moment when it seemed that there was no more stamina to move on, Aleksandr Markovich answered, “There were difficult moments, but I was not going to drop out of the race because I am used to keep going regardless. Withdrawing would mean letting down my teammates, and none of us could afford that. The support of the boat crew helped a lot.”

*The key task is to evenly distribute force throughout the distance. When swimming for a long time, it is possible to enter a kind of trance. Some swimmers even manage to doze off while their arms continue to make swimming movements reflexively. They say that being in such a meditative state for a long time can bring about cool insights into work and new goals.*



Lake Balhash from space

### Waves up to three metres

The team swam in difficult conditions. The thing is that strong steppe winds blow continuously near the Balhash. Due to the small weather window, there was no time for a slow start or rest. Fortunately, the weather favoured our team and the wind was not so strong. However, sometimes it generated metre-high waves. By the way, only four teams participated in the swim. Three teams dropped out of the race.

Lake Balhash is unique. Its western part contains fresh water, while the eastern part is described as brackish and salty. In order to better imagine the gigantic size of the lake, here are some figures — the Balhash is over 600 kilometres long, and its width ranges from 9 to 74 kilometres in different places. The area exceeds 18,000 square kilometres. For comparison: the area of the Naroch, Belarus' largest lake, is around 80 square kilometres. “We swam in fresh water. They say that in this part of the lake there are man-eat-

The athletes monitored the time, distance and speed via satellite communication. Aleksandr recalled that the realisation that they had won the marathon came a few kilometres before the finish line. “We were set to establish the record, that is why we took the victory quite calmly. It was our family members who were the most delighted. I phoned them the first thing after I went ashore. They were very excited,” he shared the details.

In conclusion, Dmitry Yegorov gave advice to those who want to break the team's record, “Do not underestimate the power of waves on the big lake. They can come in the same height as at sea, and it is useless to try to fight them. The best technique for dealing with waves is to relax and succumb to the way they turn you over, while keeping your hand hard underwater as you paddle.”

Photos are provided by the heroes of the article



## SPAIN'S RECORDS AT EURO 2024

- The current men's UEFA European Championship title is the fourth for Spain (1964, 2008, 2012 and 2024).
- During the championship, the Spaniards won seven victories, beating Italy, Croatia, Albania, Georgia, Germany, France and England.
- The Spanish national team has become the only Euro 2024 team that won all the matches of the group stage.
- Luis de la Fuente's team scored 15 goals during the tournament, which has become a record in the history of the European Championships.
- 17-year-old Spain's forward Lamine Yamal has become the best young player of Euro 2024 and the youngest winner of the European Championship in history.
- Spanish national team midfielder Rodri was recognised as the best player of Euro 2024.

# Everyone plays football, but it is Spain that wins

The UEFA European Football Championship has named the main hero

By Sergei Kanashits

The Dinamo Stadium was buzzing with excitement. It turned out to be a hot Sunday evening in Minsk in Spanish-English tones — thousands of fans gathered at the major arena of the country to watch on a huge screen the final showdown of the Old World's championship, in which the national teams of Spain and England locked horns.

The competitions of the best European teams have left a double impression. Sometimes the actions of the main football maestros brought sadness and melancholy, yet at times they made you want to dance

with delight — such a bright, dynamic and unpredictable game was demonstrated by the teams. However, all of those emotions invariably passed through an internal filter since, one way or another, one had to compare the football festival in Germany with the events on the Belarusian fields. And let us be honest — Belarusian football players, unlike grain growers, are far from being top-quality strikers.

Along with that, the elite division of European national football teams has not changed throughout the years in the least. It is true that the Georgians made a lot of noise, the Swiss and Austrians tried to surprise, the Turks did their best to come

closer to the medals, the Slovaks and Slovenes looked good at times. However, all their efforts did not pay off, and ultimately, at the crucial moment, the winners were those who had always won before. Despite the boring and insipid performance by the French team, they still managed to get to the semifinals. The Dutch have one of the weakest generations in the last 20 years, and they are still in the top 4. The British team is a separate topic for conversation — the game of this star squad at the European Championship was bland like their morning porridge, and incomprehensible



like an eccentric English humour. Yet they made it to the finals with pain and misery, and were very close to tormenting the Spaniards with their anti-football. But the Spanish team endured and came out victorious, having proved once again that their football is the most correct today: spectacular, fun, daring and active — the one that makes you want to live. The Spaniards, having won 2:1 in a tense and nerve-racking match, have become four-time European champions and set a new tournament goal record on the way to the title. Spain scored as many as 15 goals beating the achievement that previously belonged to the French led by legendary and unique Michel Platini — back in 1984, they scored 14 goals.



This is how Lamine Yamal went down in history

By Vladimir Dmitriev

“I am very happy to have made it to the final. Now, the most important thing is to win the title. We were in a difficult moment, and you would not expect a goal so soon. I wanted to put it in where it went in, and I am very happy. I try not to think about my age too much, just enjoy the game and help the team. And if it works out like this, I am happy and content with the victory. I want to win. I will celebrate my birthday here in Germany with my team,” the young *Barcelona* midfielder, who was recognised as the best player of the semifinal match of Euro 2024 Spain – France, said at the post-match press conference.

Lamine Yamal set a unique achievement in the match against the French, having become the youngest football player ever to score in the history of the European Championships — 16 years and 362 days. The record previously

belonged to Brazilian striker Pelé, who scored at the men's FIFA World Cup at the age of 17 years and 239 days.

However, one more achievement was set in the semifinals. Spaniard Jesús Navas stepped on the field at the age of 38 years and 231 days and thus became the oldest outfield football player in the history of the Euro semifinals. It is hard to believe it, but he actually played for *Sevilla* and won the Spanish Super Cup in the year Yamal was born.

That is not all, though. Yamal's goal has made viral photos featuring none other than Lionel Messi who was helping to bathe baby Lamine and was holding him wrapped in a towel. This is not a fake or a photo montage at all. As it turned out, in 2007, *Barcelona* players posed with children and their families for a calendar as part of the annual charity event of the local newspaper *Diario Sport* and UNICEF. Photographer Joan Montfort was in charge of the photo

## Fathers and children. Version-2024

It is unbelievable but true — Lamine Yamal and Lionel Messi took a historic photo almost 17 years ago

**After the first semifinal of the UEFA European Football Championship, where the Spanish national team was stronger than the French, it seems that only the lazy did not write that the match outcome was predetermined by the stunning goal by Lamine Yamal. The 16-year-old Spain starlet (Yamal turned 17 on July 13th) scored a sensational goal in the 21st minute of the match from outside the box to secure the 2:1 victory over Les Bleus, which instantly made him the most popular Euro player.**

shoots, and it just so happened that Messi was paired with Yamal's family. “So UNICEF did a raffle in the neighbourhood of Roca Fonda in Mataró where Lamine's family lived. They signed up for the raffle to have their picture taken at the Camp Nou with a *Barça* player. And they won the raffle,” Montfort recalled. It was not an easy task, mainly because 20-year-old Messi was not sure how to interact with baby Yamal, who was in a plastic bathtub during the photo shoot.

“Messi is a pretty introverted guy, he is shy. He was coming out of the locker room and suddenly he finds himself in another locker room with a plastic bathtub full of water and a baby in it. It was complicated. He did not even know how to hold him at first.”

On the day when Messi's goal helped Argentina reach the Copa América final and Yamal's goal led Spain to victory in the semifinals of the European Championship, old photos got a new life.



Lionel Messi and Lamine Yamal, 2007





## Photo of the week

Dachshund Ray — a cherished pet of Dmitry and Natalya Ivanov from Orsha — is a first-class skater dog

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.

**July 18th, 1909** is the date of birth of Andrei Gromyko (1909-1989) — one of the most prominent politicians of Byelorussian origin. Holding the high state post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR for 28 years, he became known all over the world. His foreign colleagues nicknamed him 'Mr. No' due to his principled stance and unyielding position on important issues involving national interests, fair arguments and strict adherence to the directives from the headquarters. His phrase 'Ten years of negotiations are better than one day of war' perfectly illustrates Gromyko's peaceful disposition and personality.



**July 20th, 1994** marks the inauguration of the President of the Republic of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko. The first President of Belarus took office 10 days after his election. On July 10th, 1994, the second round of presidential elections took place, following which deputy of the Supreme Council Aleksandr Lukashenko won 80.34 percent of the votes. The President of Belarus was 39 years old at that time.

**On July 20th, 1999**, the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus put into circulation commemorative coins of the *Architectural*

*Monuments of Belarus* series with the image of the Borisoglebskaya Church in Grodno — a silver coin with a value of Br20 and a copper nickel one with a value of Br1. The circulation of coins was 2,000 pieces each.



**July 20th** is International Chess Day. It is celebrated on the day when the International Chess Federation (FIDE) was founded in Paris in 1924. Chess is one of the most ancient, intellectual and cultural games that combines sport, scientific thinking and elements of art.



**July 20th** marks International Cake Day. This sweet holiday was established at the initiative of the Milan Club within the Kingdom of Love charitable organisation — a community of musicians, chefs and other enthusiastic creative people. It promotes not only sweet treats but also ideas of friendship and peace between people, countries and nations. Its motto is I CAKE YOU.



**July 21st** is known as Zazhinki — an ancient Slavic holiday of farmers devoted to the beginning of the harvest season. The harvest represented the culmination of the strenuous agricultural work done by peasants. The beginning and end of the harvest time in Belarus were traditionally celebrated by the rural community and in every family. The first reaped wheat ears were put not into a sheaf but in the field along with bread and cheese. The first sheaf was adorned with flowers and placed in the house under sacred images. In the evening, each family had a festive dinner that also included food brought from the field. In modern Belarus, there is no exact date for Zazhinki and it is celebrated on the day the harvesting campaign starts.



**July 21st** is Metallurgist's Day in the Republic of Belarus. This professional holiday dates back to Soviet times and continues to hold its significance today. Metallurgist's Day honours all those who have connected their lives with the fire element, who make steel from underground ore that is crucial for our country. At present, Belarus occupies one of the leading places among the CIS countries in terms of output of metallurgical products.



**On July 22nd**, people around the world celebrate World Brain Day. The brain is the major organ of the human central nervous system. The most advanced electronic machines created by man are essentially an attempt to mimic human intelligence, which is predominantly concentrated in the brain. However, none of these machines can compare to the complexity and perfection of the human brain. It is the brain and its multifaceted functions that continue to remain a mystery.

**July 23rd** is World Whale and Dolphin Day. This holiday was declared in 1986, when the moratorium on commercial whaling came into effect after 200 years of merciless extermination of whales.

**July 25th** marks the Fire Service Day in the Republic of Belarus. On July 25th, 1853, the Minsk Provincial



Government and the Minsk City Duma [representative assembly], having considered the issue *On Creation of a Fire Department in Minsk*, approved the cost estimate for the maintenance of a fire station consisting of 51 people. It is from that moment that the history of the professional fire service of Belarus began. In 1853, fire brigades were set up in Vitebsk, Mogilev and other cities.