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the 25th  
Belarusian  
Energy and  
Ecology Forum  
*Energy Expo 2021*

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INTERNATIONAL

# The Minsk Times

**Socio-political Weekly**

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Ksenia Haletskaya with the *Sanremo Junior Grand Prix*

## Our starlet in Sanremo

Young Belarusian singer Ksenia Haletskaya won the Grand Prix at the *Sanremo Junior* International Song Contest in Italy. Accompanied by a symphony orchestra, she sang one of the world's greatest hits.

Aleksandr Lukashenko congratulated the 14-year-old vocalist on her victory. "You made Belarus proud, you showed the whole world what talented and hardworking youth we have, youth who love their country," reads the congratulatory message. "I am sure that many victories, outstanding performances and loyal fans await you." Ksenia Haletskaya was a laureate of the Special Fund of the President of the Republic of Belarus for the Support of Talented Youth in 2019. The singer previously won the Grand Prix at the 17th International *Vitebsk-2019* Junior Song Contest.



# Integration initiatives by Belarus



**Single market for gas, oil and oil products. Common digital space of the EAEU. What other topics were tackled by the President of Belarus at the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council.**

By Dmitry Kryat, Yevgeny Kononovich, Polina Konoga

The online summit focused on the economic aspects of co-operation, with Aleksandr Lukashenko stressing the need to negotiate the most sensitive issues,

*“Let me remind you, this is the formation of a single gas market... In an effort to create a common market for energy resources, it is necessary to take into account the interests of all member states of our Union. Only in this way can we ensure its stability and durability.”*

The Belarusian Head of State outlined a number of areas that should be prioritised in integration. First of all, this concerns the formation of the digital space, and here, according to Aleksandr Lukashenko, there is still work to be done.

Prospects for a deeper development of transit potential are also associated with the digital space,

*“The development of the draft agreement on the unified customs transit system should be accelerated. Its adoption, along with an agreement on the use of navigation seals in the Union for tracking shipments, will contribute to an increase in the transit flow of goods.”*

As far as the development of co-operation in the field of agriculture is concerned, Minsk proposed the following,

*“We must seriously focus on the food security of our countries, protection from external price shocks caused by panic demand for certain agricultural products.”*

The President added that it is necessary to reach a final solution to the problem of unilateral bans and restrictions on the supply of goods.

Moreover, Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the need to further improve the financial infrastructure of the EAEU,

*“To increase the number of joint projects with a high integration component, it is necessary to provide access to project financing in the form of long-term loans with a preferential interest rate. To do this, it is necessary to change the way the Eurasian Development Bank operates.”*

The President of Belarus also raised the issue of expanding the use of national currencies,

*“Excessive use of one or another foreign currency in calculations deprives us of competitive financial and economic advantages, threatening the security of our countries. Therefore, the EAEU should step up efforts to promote the use of national currencies.”*

At the end of the summit, the participants approved a statement on economic co-operation between the EAEU member states within the framework of the climate agenda.

## On equal terms

Deputy Prime Minister of Belarus, Igor Petrishenko, commented on the gas issue after the summit at the request of journalists, “It was reported about two fundamental disagreements, which, unfortunately, still exist at this stage. These disagreements are not new. They were back in 2018, when we signed concept documents. This refers to the tariff setting for gas transportation through the territory of the EAEU countries.”

Igor Petrishenko explained that those countries that do not have these resources are interested in equal tariff conditions for the transportation of blue fuel, “Not that there are certain conditions for national entities, but for entities that are located outside the territory of the country that has these resources there are different ones.

*Aleksandr Lukashenko suggested to discuss this long-standing issue in person and decide finally: either we are doing it at this stage, or we are acting in other directions.”*

## Collective response

The most important issue of the narrow-format meeting was the economic pressure exerted by third countries on the EAEU states. From now on, they will oppose it together. Igor Petrishenko recalled that it was the initiative of the Belarusian leader, and at this stage it was possible to come to a consensus, “A set of six responses has been developed. And if a request is received from one of the states, the Eurasian Economic Commission will prepare proposals and inform the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, which will decide on the launch of a toolkit of these six measures...

*It is a big step that we will collectively respond with our integration education to unreasonable economic pressure.”*



**Vladimir Putin, President of Russia:**

*Economic growth has resumed in almost all EAEU states. In January-June, trade between the EAEU member states increased by almost a third (31.9 percent), and the volume of foreign trade of the Eurasian Economic Union with third countries — by a quarter. Moreover, such indicators were achieved despite the fact that some member states of the Union are subject to illegitimate sanctions from some countries.*



**Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of Kazakhstan:**

*It is important to develop the potential of cross-border transport arteries and logistics hubs. The integration of the Eurasian Economic Union with the Belt and Road initiative and the formation of a modern logistics infrastructure will significantly increase the economic impact of the Union on world commodity flows.*



**Sadyr Japarov, President of Kyrgyzstan:**

*The important issue of further integration today is the formation of common markets for gas, oil and oil products. These issues directly affect the energy security of our countries. The Kyrgyz Republic is in favour of adopting a draft international gas treaty agreed by all countries within a realistic timeframe.*



**Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of Armenia:**

*Elimination of obstacles in mutual trade in the EAEU is one of the priorities of the Union, the purpose of which is to ensure the functioning of the internal market without exceptions, restrictions and barriers. Fulfilment of the existing agreements in this area will strengthen the foundations of the Union, and the absence of barriers will increase not only the level of confidence of states in each other, but also competitiveness in foreign markets.*



**Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of Uzbekistan:**

*In a pandemic, it is important to search for new points of interaction in this area based on the competitive advantages of our countries. It is about consolidating efforts in order to more efficiently use human, land, water and financial resources, as well as scientific and technological advances. We propose to develop a joint programme of co-operation to strengthen food security within the Eurasian space.*



**Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, President of Cuba:**

*Challenges can be most effectively confronted only by working together. Collaboration is key at a time when our agendas set a common priority — tackling the COVID-19 pandemic, which is already considered the most difficult health crisis that humankind has faced in the past century.*

# Health is above politics

Co-operation in countering COVID-19 and the irrelevance of the selfishness of individual countries. What else was discussed during the meeting of the President of Belarus with the WHO Regional Director for Europe, Dr. Hans Henri P. Kluge.

**Belarus has one of the strongest health systems and this is recognised in the world and confirmed by the assessments of the World Health Organisation. WHO is aware of our strategy for responding to the pandemic and it is generally endorsed by the organisation. Aleksandr Lukashenko told Hans Kluge about tactical plans in the fight against COVID, “The next week in Belarus will be devoted to sorting out in detail each hospital, each infected person and taking additional measures, if necessary, to treat people from COVID.”**

By Dmitry Kryat, Yevgeny Kononovich, Polina Konoga

## Valuable collaboration

Receiving the guest at the Palace of Independence, Aleksandr Lukashenko began the conversation with words of gratitude, “First of all, I want to thank you and the World Health Organisation, the WHO leadership for the election of Belarus as a member of the Executive Committee of the World Health Organisation in the current

difficult, politicised 2021.

*This speaks of a certain independence and courage of the leadership of the World Health Organisation.”*

The Head of State stressed, “As the Healthcare Minister reported to me, we have never had any problems with the WHO. You have always shared your knowledge, advised not only in matters of treating people, but also in the acquisition of certain equipment. In general, you provided all-round

support and assistance. We see this during the pandemic as well. We really appreciate it.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the current situation in the world is characterised by an increase in the incidence of COVID. This problem is objectively relevant for our region as well, “As far as I understand, the Indian strain is increasing. We designated it as ‘Delta’, so as not to offend anyone... Countries are experiencing a very serious rise around Belarus,



Hans Kluge

including a certain rise in Belarus itself. We have already reached the peak that we had before.”

The President drew attention to the fact that Minsk largely shares the WHO policy,

*“I absolutely support the World Health Organisation, primarily the leadership of WHO, in the fact that today you cannot be selfish and individualistic.*

I refer to the countries that are trying to close down, announce



# CIS: we will protect interests together

## Industrial co-operation, free trade, countering sanctions... What other important topics were raised by the President of Belarus at the meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of State.

Belarus ends its chairmanship in the Commonwealth of Independent States on the eve of the 30th anniversary of the organisation. The CIS celebrates this anniversary against the background of a special international situation when the main thing is to preserve unity. Aleksandr Lukashenko also reminded his colleagues of this, moderating the discussion as Chairman, "We need to intensify mutual trade and investment and to minimise artificial barriers. Only by combining efforts and increasing the role of the Commonwealth as a regional player will we be able to successfully counter all challenges and threats."



By Dmitry Kryat, Yevgeny Kononovich, Dmitry Umpirovich, Polina Konoga

### Items on the agenda

The Belarusian Head of State drew attention to the key aspects of interaction in the CIS, "Great importance is attached to the development of the common economic space, expansion and enhancement of the efficiency of mutual trade. Work is underway on an agreement on free trade in services, to reduce to a minimum restrictions and exemptions from the free trade in goods, as well as on the elimination of technical barriers, unification of rules and procedures for public procurement."

The President of Belarus noted that significant efforts were aimed at further developing co-operation in youth policy, culture, science, education, healthcare, sports, tourism and social protection.

Aleksandr Lukashenko focused on a particularly relevant topic, "We continue to work to minimise the spread of the coronavirus infection and its consequences."

The agenda of the summit included such important topics as the development of interaction in the field of biological security, in the spheres of migration, protection of the electoral rights of citizens and guarantees of electoral sovereignty of the CIS member states.

The leaders of the countries have also identified the Moldovan city of Comrat as the CIS Capital of Culture in 2023.

### 'Dome' of tranquillity

The President assured his colleagues,

*"Belarus has been and remains an active participant in regional integration associations. And today we confirm this once again."*

Aleksandr Lukashenko also noted that this meeting is significant, "It takes place on the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the CIS. There are different points of view about the termination of the existence of the Soviet Union, or more precisely, its forced collapse. Everyone is well aware of my negative attitude to these events... But in that critical situation, the creation of such an in-

tegration, one might say, 'dome' that sheltered the former Soviet republics from the inevitable chaos and economic collapse was most likely the right decision.

*"For three decades, the Commonwealth has had a difficult path and has become a regional organisation recognised by the international community."*

### Holding markets

Co-operation of economies is a topic that is among the priorities under the chairmanship of Belarus in the CIS. It is 'at the junction' of the interface between the integration processes in the CIS and the EAEU, and it's to this that states intend to continue to pay the most serious attention. Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed,

*"In conditions of instability in the world, the co-operation of the mutually complementary economies of the CIS states is of decisive importance. We must understand that no one is waiting for us anywhere in any markets. The markets have long been divided. Therefore,*

*God willing, we must keep our own, and it's here we need to seek our happiness."*

The subject of discussion at the summit was also the topic of sanctions pressure applied by the collective West contrary to all norms of international law. The Belarusian leader stressed that from year to year, due to impunity and the notorious law of force, the measures applied to our countries are becoming wider and not so harmless for national economies, "You all know what unprecedented sanctions pressure Belarus faced this year. And it was not only Belarus."

In this regard, Aleksandr Lukashenko proposed to take further real steps to unite efforts to jointly protect interests in the world market to strengthen the role and weight of the Commonwealth.

At the same time, the Head of State noted,

*"I believe that under the current conditions, the Union State can once again act as a locomotive of integration processes, offering the best practices for the EAEU and the CIS."*

### The heads of state — members of the Commonwealth of Independent States — adopted a statement in connection with the 30th anniversary of the CIS

The document, in particular, says:

*Our common task is to make the most of the potential of the Commonwealth, strengthen its position in the international arena and facilitate its dynamic development. Viewing trade-economic co-operation as a key factor of closer economic integration and sustainable development of the CIS member states, we declare our commitment to creating an enabling environment for effective economic interaction, fully-fledged operation of the free trade zone and transition to deeper economic integration.*

lockdowns, which — having medicines — do not always supply them to the market on time and in the right amount. Having the ability to produce personal protective equipment is not always shared with other countries, especially vaccination.

### Vaccines must be made available to all mankind.

This is an international disease, and if a country thinks to isolate itself and try its luck in this regard, nothing will come of it. Together, all 7.5 billion people must overcome this disease."

The Head of State also expressed gratitude to WHO for co-operation in various areas, "In the treatment of not only COVID, but also other diseases. We must not forget that our people are sick, and to a much greater extent for other diseases than the current pandemic. And here we get all kinds of support from your organisation."

Aleksandr Lukashenko asked to convey the warmest words of gratitude to the WHO Director General and its other leaders, "For the tremendous support that you provide to the whole world, including Belarus."

### Decent results

Hans Kluge thanked the President for the opportunity to meet, "For me, this is a very important moment. The main goal for me is to raise our relations to a qualitatively new level."

The guest noted, "I agree with you that this is a moment of opportunity, because now the healthcare system of Belarus is included in the WHO Executive Committee and can affect the global structure of the organisation as a whole. As you rightly pointed out, health should be above politics. This is my main goal, which I practice in my work."

In a conversation with the Belarusian leader, Hans Kluge said that during his visit he signed another co-operation plan for 2022-2023 with the Healthcare Ministry of our country. Later, in conversation with reporters, he noted that the co-operation plan includes issues of coverage of the population with medical services,

*"Belarus shows good results in this area. Mainly due to the fact that it has preserved the healthcare base from the times of the USSR and filled it with new high-quality content."*

The parties also intend to continue interaction to reduce the cost of medicines and digitalise medical services.

Hans Kluge especially highlighted the need to expand vaccination in a pandemic to ensure public access to various vaccines. The guest shares the position of the Belarusian leader that there should be no compulsory vaccination, "However, additional incentives should be implemented urging people to get vaccinated. It is necessary to ensure a variety of available vaccines for the population, this will become a factor of additional trust on the part of people."

Given the constant mutation of the virus, Hans Kluge expects Belarus to join the COVAX programme [a global initiative aimed at ensuring equal access to vaccines against COVID-19].

"It is important to increase production volumes. And here Belarus has a fairly high potential," he stressed.

At the same time, the WHO representative drew attention to the fact that 9 out of 10 people in the region die not from viral, but from chronic diseases, and in this area it is also necessary to continue work, "Such diseases as

tuberculosis, HIV and hepatitis C also remain on the agenda. Belarus was among the first to receive a certificate confirming the exclusion of cases of HIV transmission from mother to child and congenital syphilis. In this regard, I would like to congratulate you on such an outstanding result."

### WORD-FOR-WORD

#### Dmitry Pinevich, Healthcare Minister of Belarus:

*We already see, if not a surge, then at least an increase in the number of vaccinated people. We're looking more at those who were vaccinated with the first component, in fact 2.5 million are already vaccinated. And the numbers of those who have gone through the full vaccination cycle are increasing at a good pace. The only thing, of course, I express my regret that, as always, we have it a little later than it should have been. But better late than never... Now the cost of vaccines on the market in the same COVAX system is decreasing. Perhaps we can consider in the future the expansion of this spectrum of vaccines in terms of cost parameters.*

# ‘For the Germans and the French to wake up’



The collective West has set its sights on a change of power in Belarus, noted President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko when making personnel decisions in the state security system

**“I want to draw your attention to the fact that the situation remains tense, and it does not allow us to calm down. You know better than anyone else that the failed coup attempt did not change the enemy’s plans. The collective West continues to interfere in the internal affairs of the country, aiming at a change of power, and the most dangerous thing for us is the destruction of the independence of our state. We must remember this. We must understand and feel this every day and every hour, especially you,”** asserted Aleksandr Lukashenko.

“The sanctions are involved. Protests, extremism, terrorism are funded. Militants are selected and trained. We don’t just know this, we are working with it,” said the Belarusian leader.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that in modern conditions the KGB officers are entrusted with the task of ensuring a stable socio-political situation, protecting the country from external destructive influences.

**“The priority tasks today are to build up efforts to combat terrorism and extremism, countering anti-constitutional elements. Control of the situation in the labour collectives of enterprises and government bodies is of fundamental importance. For this, we have created the appropriate institutions,”** said the Head of State.

Addressing officers and generals, Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that the Belarusian security officers made a significant contribution to protecting the country and people from large-scale external and internal threats.

“Political emigrant centres in Warsaw and Vilnius, set up under the control of special services, are encouraging radicals to use intimidation tactics against public figures and government officials, representatives of the media and law enforcement agencies and now even the judiciary,” asserted the Head of State.

Aleksandr Lukashenko said that sabotage is planned at sites of the defence complex, economy and life support. “Foreign special services and their accomplices are studying the situation in labour teams, trying to inspire strikes,” noted the Belarusian leader.

**“The period of the constitutional referendum is being considered as one of possible dates for another attempt to start a revolution (day X, they believe),”** said the Belarusian leader.

He noted that modern information technologies tested in other countries are being used, a psychological war has been launched, aimed at forming

a negative image of power among the population of Belarus.

“These methods of influence are aimed at employees of the state apparatus and security officials in order to convince them of the lack of support from the population and to generate doubts about the correctness of the state political course,” said the President.

Aleksandr Lukashenko also voiced revealing information regarding the real actions of Poland and Lithuania in the migration issue.

“One of the key hybrid threats today is the difficult situation on our state border. Poland and Lithuania are purposefully accusing Belarus of allegedly creating a migration crisis. At the same time, they are conducting special operations to create channels to send migrants from places of detention in their territories to Germany and France, massively and cynically violating human rights,” stressed the Head of State. He also added,

**“I am disclosing this information so that Germany, together with France, the UK and other countries, finally wakes up and sees what is happening to migrants in Poland and Lithuania.”**

Aleksandr Lukashenko stated that Poland and Lithuania are demonstrating everywhere that they allegedly contain migrants in certain places: in camps.

“But in fact, these centres are transit points. They deliberately release these people from the camps, knowing that their final destination is not Poland or Lithuania, nor Belarus. They have reached this point and want to go further. They are bound for Germany, ‘warmer’ countries, as they say. Understanding this, Poles and Lithuanians are gradually letting them out of the camps. The Germans are already detaining thousands of them on their territory,” said the President. “We have this information. We have cross-checked it through several sources. It is true.

**Let them first figure out who is directing these migrants to Germany and France. According to our**

**data, people are dying there. The number of fatalities is several times bigger than that announced by Polish and Lithuanian politicians. Despite the much-vaunted European freedom of speech, the media are not allowed to access information about the real situation,”** added the Head of State.

Aleksandr Lukashenko demanded that the KGB increase the effectiveness of foreign intelligence. “Increasing the efficiency of the foreign intelligence service will boost the capacity of the KGB. The service needs to be transformed into a unit capable of addressing strategic tasks; it is necessary to enhance its offensive nature, to build up the capacity of secret intelligence and other methods and forms that you know about.”

According to him, identifying and suppressing the attempts of foreign special services to get access to classified information of government bodies and enterprises remain a priority task.

The Head of State also noted that it is vital to keep up with opponents and expand the use of modern technologies in operational activities, increase the efficiency of the KGB technical unit, radio-electronic intelligence and boost scientific potential. “It is necessary to step up efforts to protect the information space, apply new technological methods of counteraction, promote the proactive information policy of our mass media.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko paid special attention to work with personnel,

**“The main criterion for a KGB officer is patriotism, prevention of any manifestations of corruption, double-dealing and especially betrayal. Only the best representatives of society should serve in the department, guided exclusively by the interests of our state.”**

On the same day, the President appointed Sergei Khomenko Minister of Justice. He has previously served as Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs.

“Sergei Nikolayevich, I want to say publicly that you have no room for error

due to the amount of attention that is being drawn to the matter you will be working with. To a certain extent, this is an extraordinary step — for those who are not deeply involved in the matter. It is normal from the point of view of involvement in the issue,” said Aleksandr Lukashenko.

The Head of State noted that the Justice Ministry has enough experts who have been involved in jurisprudence for a long time, “There are good, highly qualified lawyers in Belarus. We need very strong organisers and administrators because they will have to handle many organisational issues. There will be a considerable number of events in the Justice Ministry, first of all, organisational ones. I will not conceal that we need loyal, well-organised and proactive people there. We do not have time to count to twenty, to ten or even to three. We need to make decisions and implement them. People will see it in the near future.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko is confident that Sergei Khomenko has a strong administrative potential, “We cannot lose such a smart and devoted person of your age, a patriot like you. This is my personal opinion, and I have warned all the officials, including the Minister of Internal Affairs (I think he spoke with you following my instruction). I hope he tried to convince you to embark on this work and to prove that you are a true administrator.”

At the same time, the President noted that, despite the fact that Sergei Khomenko has not worked at the Justice Ministry before, he has enough experience to lead it, having previously worked in law enforcement. In addition, the Ministry of Justice needs, first of all, a strong administrator and organiser, stressed Aleksandr Lukashenko.

“I hope that you will do your best. Therefore, I said at the beginning of the meeting that there is no room for error. This is my personal decision. I was thinking about different posts for you and decided that this would be the best choice for you and for the country,” summed up the Belarusian leader.

**Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by**



FORUM ECONOMICO EURASIATICO DI VERONA  
EURASIAN ECONOMIC FORUM IN VERONA  
ЕВРАЗИЙСКИЙ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЙ ФОРУМ В ВЕРОНЕ

# Is Greater Eurasian Partnership possible?



Verona

Marta Astreiko

## Scientists and experts will try to find an answer to this question at the 14th Eurasian Economic Forum in Verona

By Marta Astreiko

The meeting in Verona is scheduled for October 28th-29th and will be held in a mixed format: the in-person presence of delegates will complement the presentations by video link. The forum will be attended by members of governments, political and public figures, heads of major companies and financial organisations, as well as diplomats from different countries from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. The organisers of the event are the Conoscere Eur-

asia Association and the Roscongress Foundation.

During the online conference, the President of the Conoscere Eurasia Association, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Banca Intesa, Professor Antonio Fallico, said that significant attention in Verona will be paid to the development of reliable energy sources, alongside trade-economic co-operation in Greater Eurasia. Meetings of representatives of business circles are also expected on the fringes of the forum.

The two-day programme includes such current

topics as ‘Development Strategy and Reliability of Energy Sources in the Global Ecological Transition’, ‘Greater Eurasian Partnership from the Atlantic to the Pacific: is it Possible?’, ‘Natural Gas and Green Economy’, ‘Ecological Transition and Circular Economy’, ‘New Challenges and Opportunities for the Financial and Banking Sector in a COVID-19 Pandemic’, ‘Technological Innovation and Digital Transition as Driving Forces for Inclusive and Sustainable Socioeconomic Development’.

Antonio Fallico noted that many countries are concerned about sustainable energy supply today,

*“Alas, it is now fashionable to de-invest (not invest) in traditional sources, and this is a very negative factor. It leads to higher prices for raw materials, mainly for energy. I hope that the discussion at the Eurasian Economic Forum in Verona will be thorough, based on the realities of technological development and will not be subject to fashion and populism.”*

The Professor calls for orienting the economy for the benefit of people, “We are living in a pandemic, but in order to successfully get out of this situation, it’s necessary to radically change the neo-liberist model of economic development. A wise and realistic change is needed, taking into account the understanding of the limited resources of the planet and the importance of ethical, intellectual and social development of the human community.”

Professor Fallico also expressed his conviction that Belarus, in an alliance with Russia, can play a significant role in Greater Eurasia. In addition, the Conoscere Eurasia Association has an agreement with the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The cultural programme of the Verona forum provides for the opening of the photo exhibition *Unbelievable Adventures of Italians in Russia* in the central square of Verona. It will describe the history of work of immigrants from Italy in Russia: from the builders of the Kremlin to the present day. There will also be a concert at the Philharmonic Theatre by the Academic Song and Dance Ensemble of the Russian Army named after A.V. Alexandrov.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### The Consulate General of Belarus in New York is forced to cease its work on October 21st



This was demanded by the US authorities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus regrets this decision and asks citizens of Belarus and residents of the USA to bear with the inconveniences related to the need to apply for consular services exclusively to the Belarusian embassy in Washington due to circumstances beyond its control.

Within the limits of the resources available, Belarus will do its utmost to keep its consular services accessible for its nationals amidst the new restrictions of the USA.

The Foreign Ministry noted that the direct consequence of the demand by the United States is the deterioration of the conditions of consular services for Belarusian citizens, showing what US repeated statements about ‘support’ and ‘care’ for the Belarusian people really mean.

### Kunashir by the Belarusian director will be first screened in Japan

The documentary film *Kunashir*, by the Belarusian director Vladimir Kozlov living in France, will be released in Japan for the first time in December this year. This is reported by TASS with reference



to the Japanese company Unplugged, which acts as a distributor for the picture.

Screenings in a number of cinemas across the country are scheduled for December 4th. The film was shot in spring 2018, touching on various aspects of public life on Kunashir — the southernmost island of the Greater Kuril Ridge — as well as historical and political issues.

Unplugged also released a trailer for the film with Japanese subtitles, which begins with a speech by former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2018.

### ‘Made in Belarus’ special QR code developed for the products of the Belgospishcheprom Concern

The issues of promoting brands of Belarusian manufacturers and increasing the competitiveness of domestic goods were considered during the 1st National Forum of Food Industry *FOOD PROM*. The event brought together the largest food manufacturers, alongside representatives of government agencies and retail chains.



Quality products are produced in Belarus, but it is also necessary to be able to present them correctly. The special ‘Made in Belarus’ QR code developed by Belgospishcheprom will be placed on all labels and packaging of the concern’s products. Customers can use a QR code on their smartphones to visit the company’s promotional website and then go to the manufacturer’s website to find a complete description of the product.

### Full-cycle production of Russia’s ‘Sputnik V’ vaccine to be launched in Belarus

This was announced to reporters by Healthcare Minister Dmitry Pinevich on the sidelines of the 34th session of the CIS Healthcare Co-operation Council, held in Minsk. The full-cycle production of Russia’s ‘Sputnik V’ vaccine will be launched by the end of the year. The Minister specified that the production facility that will make ‘Sputnik V’ can be easily localised to produce the ‘Sputnik Light’ vaccine.

In April, the first commercial batch of the Russian vaccine was manufac-



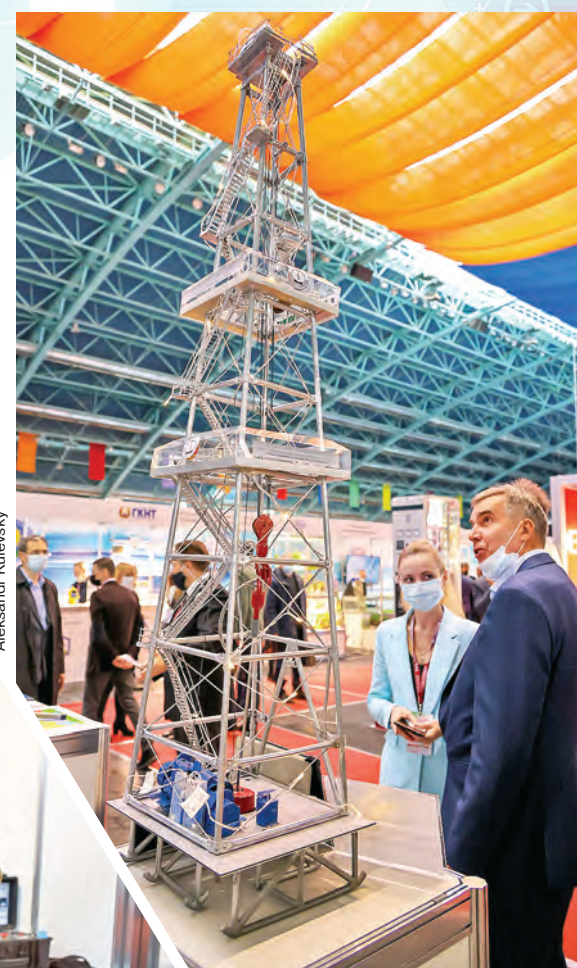
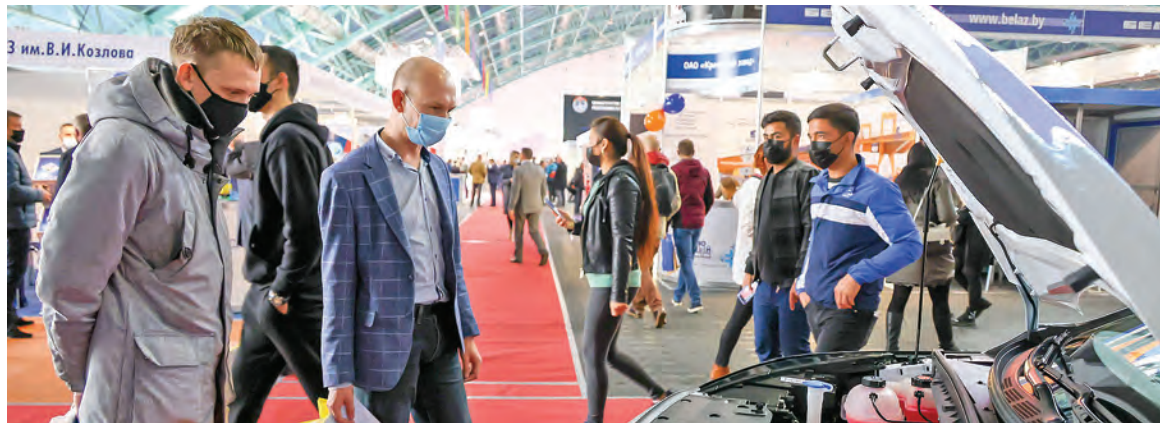
tured at the Belmedpreparaty enterprise. At the initial stage, localisation was partial: on the territory of the Republic, the preparation — prepared on the basis of raw materials supplied by the Russian side — was bottled.



Commissioning of the second power unit of the BelNPP, public transport on electricity and biodegradable materials to solve the global problem of environmental pollution: Minsk hosted the 25th Belarusian Energy and Ecology Forum *Energy Expo 2021*

# Synergy of new approaches

The forum included international specialised exhibitions *Energy. Ecology. Energy Saving. Electro, Oil & Gas Technologies, Atomexpo-Belarus, ExpoSvet, Water and Air Technologies, ExpoGorod* and the 25th Belarusian Energy and Ecology Congress. The focus was placed on strategic directions for the development of the energy industry. During the exhibition, about 200 companies and organisations from seven countries presented their achievements. These were our leading enterprises and well-known global brands.



By Natalya Tychko

## Open to innovation

“Over the long period of its existence, *Energy Expo* has acquired the status of a key event in the field of energy efficiency and energy saving, becoming a central platform for dialogue between representatives of government bodies, energy companies manufacturing equipment, organisations and the scientific community,” said Energy Minister Viktor Karankevich during his welcoming speech. “Belarus has set a benchmark to improve energy efficiency and energy saving. Thanks to the attention of the Head of State to these issues and state support, the energy intensity of our country’s GDP has decreased by 1.2 times over the past ten years. This is a significant contribution to strengthening energy security, improving the environment and enhancing the quality of people’s lives. Work on the further introduction of innovative technologies, the efficient use of traditional energy resources and the development of alternative non-hydrocarbon energy sources in Belarus will continue. The main priority is nuclear energy.”

The forum also announced the information that the commissioning of the second power unit of the BelNPP is planned for 2022. The hot run-in phase was recently completed.

The first power unit was connected to the grid on October 4th. It is now at its rated power of 1,170MW. Electricity is supplied to all regions of the country. In total, the first power unit generated almost 4 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity. Viktor Karankevich noted that with the launch of two blocks of the station, the country will receive a reliable, environmentally friendly source of energy. It will supply about 40 percent of domestic electricity needs. Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced annually by more than 7 million tonnes.

One of the tasks of the forum is the promotion of innovative technologies. Today, digital technologies are being actively introduced in our energy sector.

“All gas systems have been digitised — this is more than 65,000 kilometres of gas networks. All the technological processes already have a high level of automation. Thanks to this, labour productivity is increased, operating costs are reduced and dispatchers can quickly respond to malfunctions, sharing his modern solutions.”

For eight months, energy consumption in our country has increased by 1.8 billion kilowatt-hours. Now the figure is 26.4 billion kilowatt-hours.



“The main share of the increase (more than 1 billion kilowatt-hours) falls on the real sector of the economy: this is both the implementation of projects for the commissioning of new industries and the utilisation of existing capacities,” explained the Minister.

Viktor Karankevich said that Belarus and Russia plan to sign documents on gas supplies by the end of the year. Natural gas prices remain at \$128.5 per thousand cubic metres.

Our country has recently adopted a state programme for the development of electric transport, according to which they plan to actively switch passenger transport to electricity.

“We set an ambitious goal to transfer 45 percent of passenger

transport to electricity in cities by 2025.

This cannot be done without new materials, technologies and

energy storage devices that are being developed and created today,” said Aleksandr Shumilin, Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology.

## Exposition in detail

This year, the forum was timed to coincide with the 90th anniversary of the Belarusian energy system. The exposition is located on 6,500 square metres of the Football Manege.

For example, Belneftekhim presented a phone case that blocks electromagnetic radiation. With its help, the gadget cannot be listened to or tracked. Calls to such a phone are also not received.

“Similar covers are already on sale,” said representatives of Belneftekhim. “Now we are

positioning them, among other things, as a means of protecting bank cards in order to protect the owner from theft.”

Minskoblغاز presented the interactive *Gazbook*. To make the heroes of the pages come to life, you need to download a special application and point your phone camera at them. Viktor Karankevich noted that interactivity should be introduced not only in manuals for children, but also in work with adults.

The NPP construction game aroused great interest among the visitors. This educational project was brought by representatives of Rosatom. A model of the NPP is displayed on the screen. The task for visitors is to create a station from scratch, learn to identify problems in its work and find solutions.

More than 50 developments were presented by organisations of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, including biodegradable polymers, bio-activators and organomineral fertilisers.

# Battle details

Resident of Gomel, Ruslan Shilov, makes colourful dioramas depicting scenes of Great Patriotic War battles

**In the expositions of military museums, dioramas reproducing battle scenes attract the special attention of visitors. You can stand in front of such an exhibit for a long time, plunging into the atmosphere of the event, examining the details of military equipment, weapons and ammunition. But even more time and effort are spent on making the models. Ruslan Shilov, a Gomel resident, shared the secrets of his skill with *The MT*.**

By Ruslan Proleskovsky

He has been creating models for a little over two years though the theme of the Great Patriotic War has attracted him from childhood. The development of his interest was facilitated by films and books, as well as the subject study of WWII events during his years of study at pedagogical college.

A test of strength was the production of a model of a family house in the village of Uborok, Loev District.

“I photographed every detail, drew a plan and began to do it,” said Ruslan, describing the progress of the work. “I tried to reproduce it as accurately as possible. When I posted the photo on Instagram, many — not knowing the scale — thought it was a real home. The result pleased me, and I decided to continue.”

To implement the artist’s intention, materials that were to hand were used. The walls of the house were built from coffee stirring sticks and real putty. To simulate the soil, real earth was used: sifted through a strainer and mixed with tea leaves and coffee to add texture.

In general, there are no trifles in the business of model-makers. More precisely, the greatest attention is paid to details. After all, the thoroughness of the study and the realism of the details is one of the main criteria for evaluating the quality of work.

Figurines of people are ordered through online stores and come disassembled. It takes more than one hour to assemble them. Each element must be degreased, primed, painted, fixed in the necessary position and glued. The master’s arsenal includes a special tool for performing microscopic operations. For example, it’s necessary to hold a miniature brush with tweezers. If it suddenly falls to the floor — and this happens — you have to look for a long time. The observance of safety precautions shouldn’t be forgotten either. When working with glue, glasses prevent irritation of the mucous membranes of the eyes while a medical mask that protects against fine pollen is needed when planting ‘grass’ with the help of a special flock device.

Some technological points were suggested by the Internet, but most were mastered empirically: by trial and error. Modelling is not a cheap hobby. However, a

quick mind can significantly reduce costs. For example, Ruslan makes artificial snow from baking soda and PVA glue. Outwardly, it is no different from the purchased product. Wood, if you know how, can be made from a dish sponge. Moreover, if you paint it green and rub it through a fine grater, foliage can be made. Hairspray also performs well. For some properties, it is even better suited than glue.

The plots of future scenes mature gradually. Some of them are inspired by movies. One of the first works is based on the famous film, entitled *The Dawns Here Are Quiet*: an episode in which the foreman Vaskov scolds the girls for hanging out clothes that betray the positions of the enemy aircraft. Another composition displays a mise-en-scene from *We Are from the Future*: senior lieutenant Demin is pointing the hands of his wristwatch, and there is an unfinished letter

from his mother on the table. Yet another work shows the legendary sniper Vasily Zaitsev in the interior of a dilapidated house among the ruins of Stalingrad: there is a portrait of Stalin on the wall, a poker by the stove, broken windows, torn curtains... The more details, the more interesting it is to examine the model. One of the most difficult to perform was a German motorcycle with many small elements. It took three days to assemble it.

To date, Ruslan Shilov’s collection boasts fifteen works, and the creative process continues. There are plans to simulate not only front-line episodes, but also scenes from the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, of course, with the participation of the main character: in the same grey jacket and

with a pipe in his hands.

“The process itself gives me the greatest pleasure,” admits the artist. “Of course, it’s interesting to see the result: one you achieve with your own hands. It’s incredibly addictive and captivating.”

Ivan Yaryanovich



REGION

The Minsk Times  
Thursday  
October 21  
2021

7

# Money has no smell?



We tell you about the financial machinations of the UN Minsk Office

By Dmitry Umpirovich

This is a kind of surrealism. The money intended for support and legal assistance in our country for people with disabilities and victims of domestic violence was actually used in the interests of the morally disabled — to pay for the lawyers of the ‘zmagars’ [protesters] detained for participating in protests which were aimed at undermining statehood and overthrowing the current government. The amount seems to be not so big — we are talking about \$5,000. But there is a significant nuance: official Minsk accused the UN Office in Belarus of ‘misuse of financial resources’.

The fraudulent scheme was revealed by political observer Igor Tur on air on the ONT TV Channel. The chronology is as follows: on February 3rd, two employees of the office for the rights of people with disabilities, working with the UN, were detained in Minsk. One was released three days later, the other — Sergei Drozdovsky — was placed under house arrest as a suspect in a criminal fraud case, “Because he has a disability,” emphasises Igor Tur in the heading *To be Completed*. “That is, in Minsk they treated a person with disabilities as correctly as possible, and in July they changed the preventive measure to a recognisance not to leave and let him go home. Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei did not stir up the conflict but turned to the UN and transferred there all the information on the case, which had already been disclosed, so that responsible people at the UN could take the first reasonable step to fix it. At the same time, the Foreign Min-

istry of Belarus and the UN agree that the incident will be diplomatically silent until all issues are resolved.”

But no. Thanks to separate individuals. By the 48th regular session of the Human Rights Council, another false story about the same Drozdovsky made its way into the report of the UN Secretary General António Guterres. What would you think the subject might be? Bingo! About everyday persecution and atrocities of the regime. The story was put out by the ONT TV Channel and here is an excerpt, “Makei and Guterres personally spoke about the real picture and that it was not so, and the latter was surprised at some facts. Let me remind you: the person was held responsible for the fraud and has long been released. It turns out that not all documents reach Guterres?”

***But, since the UN has violated the diplomatic agreement on confidentiality, Minsk has a free hand for protection. This was the reason for the response from the Foreign Ministry.***

***Details were published on the website of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Belarus to the UN Office and other international organisations in Geneva. The person who initiated the misuse of funds is, they write, Senior Human Rights Adviser appointed by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to the UN Resident Coordinator Office in the Republic of Belarus. Igor Tur names him: Omer Fisher.***

“It was he who was guilty of the scandal, and it was he who brought Sergei Drozdovsky and his lawyer under a criminal case. It is ironic that Omer Fisher is the only one of them all who was appointed by the UN Secretary General; he, according to all conventions, has immunity from the UN and the Belarusian security forces did not touch him. It was he who, in August 2020, came up with a ‘wonderful’ idea: to take part in the protest movement in Minsk. Fisher decided that it was necessary to help the detained radicals with lawyers. More precisely — via money for lawyers. But the UN does not provide funds for this. And Fisher came up with a brilliant idea that lawyers for radicals are more important than disabled people, and it was decided to spend money from the budget aimed at support of people with disabilities. He called for help from his colleagues in the UN movement, citizens of Belarus: programme assistant Olga Arefyeva and human rights specialist Anna Talerenok. He set them a task: they needed to take the ‘invalid’ money and give it to the protesters’ lawyers. Important! Olga and Anna were not summoned for interrogation, but for a voluntary conversation and they were not kept in custody. Fisher set them up, because both girls were sure that such a high ranking official of the UN would not engage in machinations. And, surprised, they gladly told how everything had happened and calmly went home.”

Now about super-arrogance.

“According to our information, this

\$5,000 was taken from the targeted contribution for Belarus from... Russia,” Igor Tur does not hide his emotions. “That is, the UN Minsk Office took money from the Kremlin for disabled people in Belarus but gave it to support the overthrow of the government in Belarus — the alley of the Russian government.”

In addition, the UN — having received all the materials of the case — recalled Fisher from Belarus but didn’t fire him; instead, it gave him another position in another country: Asian.

The United Nations Office in Minsk, meanwhile, is trying to extinguish the scandal. The UN Resident Coordinator in Belarus Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecki made a statement, “The UN Resident Coordinator Office in Belarus is aware of the reports and existing concerns of the Government of Belarus in connection with the legal aid programme being carried out for the benefit of some vulnerable groups of the population. The UN maintains contact with the Government of Belarus on this issue through the appropriate legal and diplomatic channels.”

As Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecki emphasised that the UN Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team, including all UN agencies, funds and programmes working in Belarus are focused on continuing their work with and for Belarus, “We look forward to further co-operation with the Belarusian authorities and relevant partners in civil society, including in the areas of sustainable development and human rights.”

WORLD



## Symphony finished by AI

**Researchers used algorithms to finish composing Beethoven’s 10th Symphony**

Algorithms have long been driving manufacturing processes and setting the tone for everyday life. And even creativity, which for a long time was considered an unbearable sphere of human activity for artificial intelligence, is giving way to the onslaught of machines. After computers completed the unfinished compositions of Gustav Mahler and Franz Schubert, it was the turn of Ludwig van Beethoven’s Symphony No.10.

Beethoven did not manage to complete his Tenth Symphony until his death in Vienna in 1827 and left only a few short sketches and notes in his drafts. Based on them, a group of experts, which included musicologists and programmers, developed a programme using AI technology to fill in the gaps in the existing fragmentary musical material and make it available for performance.

“We must assume that Beethov-

en took notes when he had new ideas. Sometimes he wrote them down in words and sometimes in notes,” says Matthias Röder, Director of the Karajan Institute in Salzburg and head of the international reconstruction project. Based on this fragmentary material, the machine and the experts thought together how Beethoven would continue the bars of the music he had already recorded.

The machine, which had been taught to compose like Beethoven, put other works of the composer and the music of his contemporaries into its ‘intellect’, made proposals.

“Artificial intelligence offers 20 or even 100 different versions of a sequel. And this is very interesting, because each version has the right to be, if the algorithm works well,” says Professor Robert Levin, a musicologist at Harvard University.

## Sanctions boomerang

Lithuania suspends modernisation of the railway section because of EU and US restrictions against Belarus

The Board of LTG Infra that manages the infrastructure of the state-owned enterprise Lietuvos Geležinkeliai has decided to temporarily suspend the construction of the second railway line in the Plungė–Šateikiai section due to sanctions on Belarus.

“The geopolitical situation regarding sanctions imposed on Belarus by the European Union and the United States forces us to reconsider the return on investment of some projects,” the company said in a press release.

“We anticipate that sanctions could have a negative impact on the full utilisation of public railway infrastructure capacity due to lower freight and passenger flows, as well as on the company’s revenue. Having evaluated these

risks, we temporarily suspend implementation of the project worth 60m Euros,” it added.

The tender provided for the renewal of the railway track on the 13.9km section, communication systems, the reconstruction of bridges and other engineering structures, the expansion of shunting tracks at Plungė and Šateikiai stations. The railway section is located in the west of Lithuania. The end point of the highway is Klaipėda, through the seaport of which the Baltic state actively carried out export transit of Belarusian goods.

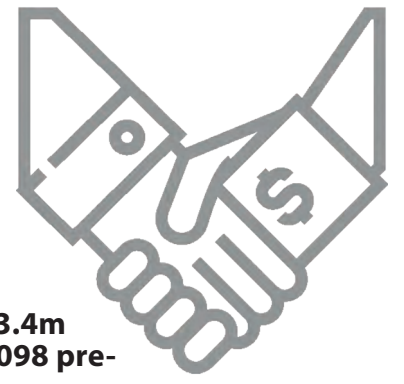
Lithuania is threatened with the loss of this transit, the lion’s share of which accounted for Belarusian potash fertilisers and oil products.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



# How to steal a billion



European politicians are very sophisticated in the appropriation of money, bribery and embezzlement

Last year alone, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) officers completed 230 investigations, issued 375 recommendations to national and EU authorities, recommended the recovery of 293.4m Euros and returned them to the EU budget, launched 290 new investigations and conducted 1,098 preliminary analyses and calculations.

The total financial loss from 1,056 fraudulent violations is 371m Euros. Since the EU members received 2 trillion Euros to recover from the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a high risk that these funds will also improve someone's personal budget.

By Varvara Morozova

A specially created European Prosecutor's Office — which began its work on June 1st — is trying to combat fraud. Incidentally, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Hungary refused to participate in the work of the new body. Some countries (for example, Slovenia) do not hide their rejection of the idea of establishing a European Prosecutor's Office. Let's see who else's guilty conscious is speaking.

## Corruption has not died out yet

The European auditor Juhan Parts said two weeks ago that there are no countries in the European Union where the scale of corruption would be the same as in Ukraine. It is the great corruption that is the cause of the so-called 'state capture' situation. Mr. Parts explained,

*"The 'state capture' means that someone, you call them oligarchs, or a group of people, use their position and various instruments — the media, politics, government and state enterprises for their own personal interests."*

To prove the unprecedented situation in Ukraine, the auditor cited the correlation between economic development and the corruption index, "If you put these two indicators together, Ukraine and GDP per capita are about \$5,000 a year, in Poland — \$18,000, in Estonia — \$23,000. But we all started in 1992 from the same starting point. This is the result of the influence of corruption. This country must be very rich, but a small group of people became so rich that they were able to take the whole country hostage."

## Chancellor-bribe-taker?

The Head of Government in Austria, Sebastian Kurz, has been forced to leave his post for the second time. Now because of corruption and bribery.

The prosecutor's office is investigating Kurz and nine of his associates and doubts the fair victory of the ex-chancellor in the elections. The politician is also accused of manipulating public opinion: according to the investigation, sociologists 'drew' the rating that

his party needed for money.

According to *Spiegel*, 'very serious charges of treason, bribery and corruption, which are fraught with real prison terms' have been brought against the chancellor and his associates. These are the events from 2016 to 2018, when Kurz's career took off.

While still in the post of foreign minister, he won the election to the post of leader of the Austrian People's Party, and then won the election and became the youngest chancellor in the history of the country.

*Investigators claim that all this time, Kurz's team has been ordering polls from a certain company, 'presenting the politician in a favourable light'. Subsequently, their results were published in the newspaper 'Austria' under the guise of objective journalistic materials, but allegedly, in fact, taxpayers' money was spent on it. The correspondence from the chats, in which Kurz personally participated, commenting on the numbers of the polls before their publication, was attached to the case.*

## Sad primacy

If the former chancellor is indicted, Kurz will be in good company. In France, the anti-record was set by ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy — who became the first head of state in modern

history to receive a real prison sentence (but not the first one to be convicted).

*A court in Paris found Sarkozy guilty of corruption and trading in influence. The former president was sentenced to three years in prison, of which one year will be a real term, two — a suspended one.*

Sarkozy's predecessor, Jacques Chirac, was convicted in 2011 of creating fictitious jobs in 1977-1995. As a result of the trial, he was sentenced to two years' suspended imprisonment. The court's decision was also influenced by the fact that at the time of the announcement of the verdict Chirac had serious health problems.

## A particularly large plunderer

Ex-minister of defence of Armenia David Tonoyan was brought to trial on corruption charges and was arrested for two months at the request of the National Security Service. A criminal case was opened on the basis of abuse in the supply of ammunition.

*Tonoyan and the director of the arms supplier David Galstyan were detained and charged with embezzlement of funds on an especially large scale, falsification and socially dangerous acts. This is about \$4.7bn in abuses.*

## Court instead of the Riviera

Parliamentary elections were held in the Czech Republic last week, which PM Babiš' party unexpectedly lost. Although is it so unexpected? Analysts associate the defeat with the scandal around the offshore companies of Andrej Babiš.

*Prior to this, the leaders of the pirate party said that the Czech PM 'laundered almost 400m through companies in tax havens to buy real estate on the French Riviera'.*

The Chairman of the National Bank of Slovakia, Minister of Finance in 2012-2019, Peter Kažimír, has just been charged with corruption. He tried to bribe the former president of the Financial Directorate of the Slovak Republic, František Imrecze, with 50,000 Euros, which he reported to the police. Kažimír denied the charges against him but referred primarily to... lack of evidence.



**In the Czech Republic, the scandal is around the offshore companies of Andrej Babiš. The leaders of the pirate party declared that the Czech PM 'laundered almost 400m through companies in tax havens'.**

**The court found Sarkozy guilty of corruption and trading in influences. The former president was sentenced to three years in prison, of which one year will be a real term, two — a suspended one.**

**Against the Head of the Austrian Government Sebastian Kurz and his associates were laid 'very serious charges of treason, bribery and corruption, which are fraught with real prison terms'.**

# Points of attraction

Top-5 famous and memorable places in Belarus, which were most popular with tourists this year

By Sergei Grudnitsky

**What is snow for us, what is heat for us, what it is pouring rain for us, when there are so many places in the country that you need to see! Although the most active time for tourists has ended with the last warm days, we can't say that the flow of visitors to national attractions has expired. With the assistance of the Tourism Department at the Sports and Tourism Ministry, we have compiled the top-5 outstanding places that were the most popular this year.**

## 1. Avgustovsky Canal

The Avgustovsky navigable canal is the pearl of the Nieman River area, which connects the Vistula and Nieman rivers. It is located in a specially protected area of UNESCO and is an excellent place for active recreation, as well as water, hiking and cycling tourism. The amazing beauty of nature attracts thousands of guests here.

In summer, two motor ships run along the canal: 'Olga Solomova' follows the route from the pier on Levonaberezhnaya in Grodno to the Avgustovsky Canal while the motor ship 'Nieman' runs along the canal itself, departing from the pier at the Dombrovka lock.

Locking is considered the most interesting and exciting moment while traveling on a motor ship.



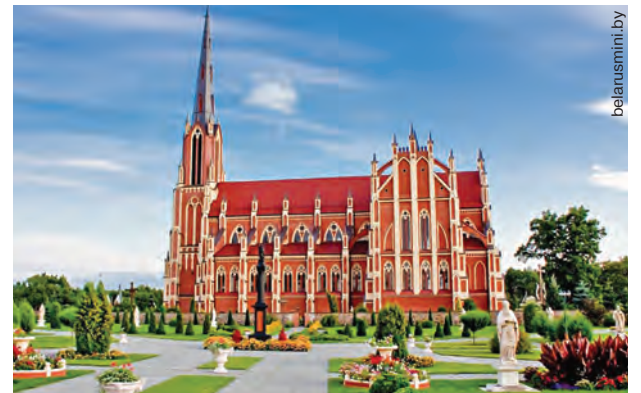
The tourist information centre in the urban village of Sopotskin was visited by 3,450 people this year. In the Sopotskin cultural and tourist centre, 45 official excursions were held in nine months — attended by 505 people. On April 11th, it hosted the grand opening of the tourist season 'Travelling Together!', bringing together 200 people, as part of the 'Pisanka' holiday.

On May 22nd, an open regional festival of folk art — *The Avgustovsky Canal Invites Friends* — took place, gathering more than 1,500 participants. Meanwhile, on June 19th, about 1,650 people attended the August Fresh holiday.

## 2. Church of the Holy Trinity in the village of Gervyaty

The Church of the Holy Trinity, located in the village of Gervyaty, is one of the tallest and most beautiful Catholic churches in Belarus. The building is completely sustained in the neo-Gothic style, with its side walls being propped up by flying buttresses and graceful arches — made following the example of the Notre Dame de Paris. The church has been preserved intact for almost two centuries. Now there is a functioning body there, which is more than 100 years old. It was created especially for Gervyaty.

Thousands of organised tourists and excursionists annually come to see this architectural structure, as well as a beautiful landscape park located next to the church, where various decorative and rare plants for Belarus grow and the figures of the apostles are installed.



## 3. The Puslowski Palace in Kossovo

The Kossovo Castle, or the Puslowski Palace in Kossovo, is one of the most beautiful buildings in Belarus. It also has a unique architecture for our places. The active development of this place began with Wojciech Puslowski: in 1821, he bought the estate, and then founded a carpet factory in the village. At the beginning of the 21st century — having survived the destruction of two wars — the building consisted of the remains of a building and a large number of ruins, which were literally covered with garbage.

Thanks to the support of the state, in 2008, the Kossovo Palace began to be restored. After the completion of all the works planned in the project, the complex will acquire the status of a palace and park estate. There is already a hotel and a restaurant there, so visitors can stay in the palace.

For eight months of this year, the attraction was visited by about 31,000 people (180 of them are foreigners). The growth rate over the same period in 2020 amounted to 124 percent.

## 4. Ola Memorial

An impressive memorial was created on the site of the village of the same name, burned down by the Nazis during the Great Patriotic War. As a result of the reconstruction of the fraternal burial, the Ola Memorial was established, which includes three functional zones: an entrance group, a memorial zone (in the territory adjacent to the existing fraternal burial) and a pedestrian route connecting them along a former rural street. In the centre of the memorial zone there is a symbolic cross and a bell. Nearby there is a belfry in the form of a stylised village barn with the number of bells according to the number of villages whose inhabitants died here.

During the period from January to September this year, the memorial complex was visited by about 9,700 people.



## 5. Yelnya Republican Landscape Reserve

Yelnya is the largest raised bog in Belarus and one of the largest lake-and-boggy complexes in Europe: the total area of the reserve is 25,301 hectares. There are more than 100 amazingly beautiful lakes on the territory of the swamp. There are about 405 species of vascular plants, of which 13 are listed in the Red Book. Moreover, eight species of insects from the Red Book have been registered within the reserve. Of the birds on the territory of the reserve, about 150 species have been recorded, of which 24 are listed in the Red Book.

The official statistics of visits to the reserve by organised tourists this year is 345 people (as of September 23rd). However, the mass flow of tourists exceeds these figures by more than five times.



# His goal is gold

## Wrestler Kiryl Maskevich tells us about the silver won at the World Cup and the Olympic Games, where he hoped for more

By Tatiana Pastushenko

At the World Wrestling Championships that finished in Oslo, Belarusians claimed two medals. First, freestyle wrestler Aryan Tsiutryn took bronze, and on the last day of the competition, Kiryl Maskevich earned silver. For the 23-year-old resident of Borisov, this season, in principle, turned out to be eventful. In April, he won silver at the European Championships, then made his debut at the Olympic Games, where, alas, in the first fight he lost to the Egyptian wrestler, Mohamed Metwally. However, Kiryl says, the season is not over for him yet.

“I’m never satisfied with a silver medal,” the wrestler admits. “This was a loss in the final where you stop just a step away from gold. It might be better to win bronze. We met more than once with Zurab Datunashvili, who became the world champion. Last year, I beat him in the World Cup while this year he beat me in the final of the European Championships. He is a very stable fighter. Zurab didn’t show anything new this time, but I couldn’t find a key for him. But all the same, I’m glad that my training wasn’t in vain. My performance at the World Championships was kind of rehabilitation for the Olympic Games, in which I did not succeed.”

— **This World Championships was missed by many athletes; nevertheless, the tournament took place after the Olympics, at the end of the season. Didn’t you think you might not attend?**

— *After the Olympics in Tokyo, we didn’t have a rest since*

*we hadn’t earned it. There were no thoughts of missing the World Cup. It turns out that this year I fought at the three biggest events of the season: the European Championships, the Olympics and the World Championships. Although I won silver medals at two of them, I don’t consider this year to be successful, because the main event was lost — any medal from the Olympic Games would exceed the awards of the world and European championships.*

— **At the Olympics, you probably counted on something more than one fight. What didn’t work out in the fight against Metwally?**

— *It’s sport, it happens. Metwally is an awkward opponent for me. Previously, we hadn’t*



unw.org

SPORT



Kiryl Maskevich

*met on the carpet, but, of course, we analysed his fights. But something went wrong with me during our meeting. Perhaps the tactics were a little wrong. I wanted more, but I adhere to the principle that we must accept both victories and defeats — no matter where they happened and from whom. It is necessary to learn from this and live on.*

— **Last year you had practically no international competitions. Did this somehow affect the preparation for the Olympic Games?**

— *All the fighters were in the same condition. I was a little tired of the fact that the situation had hardly changed.*

*For almost half a year we were locked in the same base, trained with the same sparring partners — almost ‘Groundhog Day’. But everything that could be done was done. We also tried to diversify our training, gathered as a team in an informal setting. Sometimes my personal trainer Oleg Azhigov cooked very tasty pilaf — so they whiled away the evenings.*

— **Were there enough sparring partners in our team?**

— *There is very good competition in our weight now. For the last two years we have competed with Radzik Kuliyeu and Mikalai Stadub. I won the competition, and before the European Championships this year we went different ways: I stayed in my weight up to 87kg while Radzik Kuliyeu moved to the category up to 82kg and Mikalai — in 97kg. All three won medals at that championships. There were enough sparings, but I also wanted ‘fresh blood’. When you fight the same*

*guys, you start to get to know them better, you understand what to expect from whom, it becomes more difficult.*

— **Are you planning to have a rest now?**

— *No. After returning from the World Cup, I rested for one day and went to training. Recently we started the training camp before the World Championships among athletes under 23 years old — I can still compete there. In this category in our country, I have two more competitors: masters of sports of international class, Ihar Yarashevich — a multiple winner of the world and European championships among cadets and youth — and Ilya Lavrynovich, who is a winner of the World Student Championships. One of us will compete during the championships. We will decide with the coaches whether I need this tournament. To be honest, I still have an unrealised dream: to become a world champion.*

## ARENA

### ● Close to victory

Belarusian tennis player Victoria Azarenka lost in the final of the WTA-1000 tournament in the American Indian Wells with a prize fund of \$8.7million.



In the decisive match, the ex-world number one — occupying the 32nd place in the world rankings — lost in a stubborn struggle to the Spanish tennis player Paula Badosa, ranked 27th. The first set of the final lasted 1 hour and 20 minutes and ended with victory for the Spaniard in a tie-break — 7:6 (7:5). Victoria Azarenka played the second game very powerfully and in half an hour equalised the score in the match, giving her opponent only two points — 6:2. However, in the decisive set,

it once again came to a tie-break, and again success was on the side of the Spanish tennis player — 7:6 (7:2). The final meeting lasted 3 hours 5 minutes. Azarenka previously won Indian Wells in 2012 and 2016. In total, she boasts 21 titles at tournaments under the auspices of the WTA.

On the way to the final of the current tournament, Victoria Azarenka defeated the Polish Magda Linette (54th), Czech Petra Kvitova (11th), Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich (100th), American Jessica Pegula (24th) and Latvian tennis player Jeļena Ostapenko (24th).

By reaching the finals, Victoria Azarenka will improve her position in the world rankings.

Thanks to reaching the finals, Victoria Azarenka improved her position in the WTA rankings, raising from the 32th to the 26nd place.

### ● A shower of medals

Belarusian sambo wrestlers won 11 various medals at the World Youth and Junior Sambo Championships, which ended in Thessaloniki (Greece).

In the older age group, Belarusian masters of this art of self-defence without weapons claimed six medals. Nikita Besman (98kg) earned silver while bronze medals were won by Eduard Kutsko (79kg), as well as Anastasiya Padaliachina (59kg), Anastasia Skvortsova (72kg), Palina Hramotneva (80kg) and Anastasia Grishchenko (over 80kg).

In the competitions for the younger age group, silver was claimed by Palina Burachkova (54kg) and Palina Hramotneva (80kg). Bronze medals went to



Vladislav Mardusevich (64kg), Mikhail Kukharevich (79kg) and Arseny Malitsky (88kg).

Thus, in the medal standings, Belarusian athletes are in 9th place.

### ● When everything is within reach

Andrei Filchuk won the Ikar 2021 international wheelchair tennis tournament in Moscow (Quad category).

In the final match of the singles, the Belarusian defeated Maxim Vladimirov from Russia — 6:3, 6:4.

In the doubles, Andrei Filchuk and Maxim Vladimirov defeated Vladislav Chebotarev and Yevgeny Gulyukin in the finals — 6:1, 6:0.

Wheelchair tennis is an official Paralympic sport and is held at all four Grand Slam tournaments.

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## Photo of the week



Anton Stepanishchey

Autumn River Obol in the Vitebsk Region

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



**On October 21st, 1966**, the Yak-40 passenger aircraft — the world's first jet aircraft designed for local airlines

— made its first flight. When designing the aircraft, the Aleksandr Yakovlev Design Bureau was faced with the task of finding a compromise between reliability, ensuring high flight safety and efficiency, as well as practical for the airfield and modern comfort for passengers.

**On October 23rd, 1916**, Yakov Tretyakov was born — a full holder of the Order of Glory. During the Great Patriotic War, he was at the front from 1941. The commander of the anti-tank gun, sergeant major Tretyakov, distinguished himself in the destruction of fortifications, firing points and enemy manpower in battles on the territory of the Kalinkovichi District, near the city of Augustow (Poland) and on the outskirts of Berlin. He died in 1985.



**On October 23rd, 1991**, in accordance with the decision of the Vitebsk City Executive Committee, the Marc Chagall Museum was founded.

In honour of the significant events in the life of the famous artist, Belarus' only Marc Chagall Museum was turned into a world cultural centre. Scientists, artists, writers and musicians gather here, while interesting events also take place. Moreover, International Chagall Days are held annually.

**On October 24th, 1901**, Annie Edson Taylor — American adventurer — became the first person to survive a trip over Niagara Falls in a barrel on her 63rd birthday.



**On October 24th, 1921**, Nadezhda Troyan was born — Hero of the Soviet Union, Candidate of Medical Sciences. From the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, she worked in the underground in Smolevichi, then a scout for the Uncle Kolya partisan brigade. She was also a participant in the preparation of the assassination of the General Commissioner of Belarus, Gauleiter W. Kube. After the war, she was Director of the All-Union Research Institute of Health Education of the USSR, Chair of the Red Cross Executive Committee and Vice Rector of the First Moscow State Medical Institute. She died in 2011.



**October 24th** is the Day of Special Intelligence in the Republic of Belarus.



Servicemen of special forces of sovereign Belarus are worthy successors of the heroic traditions of the legendary special forces and successfully solve the problems they face.

**October 24th** is United Nations Day, celebrated since 1948. On October 24th, 1945, the UN Charter entered into force. Currently, the UN includes 193 states. The main bodies of the UN are: General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), International Court of Justice. Moreover, the UN has a number of its own specialised agencies: international intergovernmental organisations on economic, social and humanitarian issues (UNESCO, WHO, FAO, IMF, ILO, UNIDO and others).



**On October 25th, 1936**, Viktor Turov was born — a film director, People's Artist of Belarus, People's Artist of the USSR. He worked at the Belarusfilm Studio, was the artistic director of the feature film directing workshop of the Belarusian Academy of Arts.



He shot the films *I Come from My Childhood*, *War Under the Roofs*, *Sons Go into Battle*, filmed *Polesie Chronicle* by Ivan Melezh. He was also a laureate of the State Prize of the USSR and the State Prize of Belarus. He died in 1996.

**On October 25th, 1881**, Picasso Pablo was born (1881-1973) — a French artist of Spanish descent, a public figure and one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. Together with the French artist Georges Braque, he became the founder of Cubism — an avant-garde trend in painting at the beginning of the 20th century. He often worked as a graphic artist, sculptor, ceramist.



**On October 26th, 1921**, Nikolai Chasnyk was born — Hero of the Soviet Union. During the Great Patriotic War, he was a fighter pilot on the North-Western Front from 1941. The commander of the special-purpose regiment's flight, senior lieutenant Chasnyk made 685 sorties until April 1944, in 39 air battles he shot down 16 enemy aircraft and 3 aircraft as part of a group. In 1944, he was shot down in battle and was taken prisoner; he took part in the uprising of prisoners in the Buchenwald concentration camp in April 1945. He died in 1993.

