



Minsk hosted the international information and communications technology forum *TIBO 2023*

7



National Art Museum's new building houses Boris Kustodiev's temporary exposition

10

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Anton Shunkin, the chairman of Belaya Dubrova collective farming unitary enterprise in the Kostyukovich District, is one of the youngest chairs in the Mogilev Region

It's time for proactive people

Young people are writing a new page of post-Chernobyl history in the affected regions. 37 years after the man-made disaster, the agenda of the 'Chernobyl' territories is no longer the elimination of the consequences, but the creation of strong regions. Thanks to a well-thought-out set of rehabilitation measures and stable state support, the lands are introduced into crop rotation, equipped with new agricultural equipment, the southeastern part of the Mogilev Region is no longer an outsider, but a leader in the sowing season. Business plans of the affected areas are focused on attracting investment and the active role of youth in the development of territories.

...This is the first sowing season as the head of the Belaya Dubrova agricultural enterprise for 26-year-old Anton Shunkin. Prior to that, a graduate of the Agricultural Academy had already worked for five years as the chief agronomist in the Department of Agriculture of the Kostyukovich District Executive Committee. Kostyukovich District is one of the most affected by the Chernobyl accident in the country.

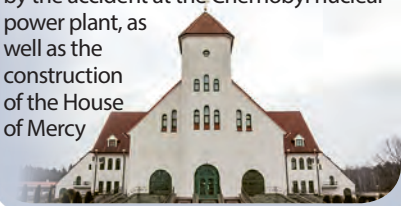
Anton Shunkin is sure that today is the time for proactive people, "If we talk about young specialists, then the state has given us all the opportunities: education, housing. Remember how much has been invested in making the wounded earth revive. The experience of Belarus is unique for the whole world. We can teach a lot. The socially oriented state coped with the consequences of a previously unseen man-made disaster, most importantly, putting the interests of its people as a priority. Now it's our turn to contribute to the future of our children."



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2002

On the construction of family-type houses for orphans and new medical and recreational facilities for children affected by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, as well as the construction of the House of Mercy



2003

On the construction of a new building of the National Library of Belarus



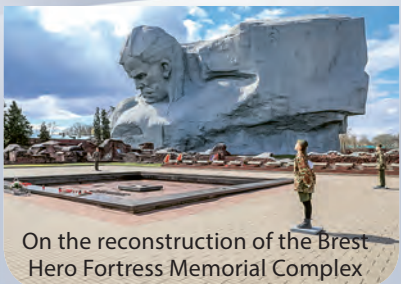
2004

On the reconstruction of the monuments of the Great Patriotic War and, above all, the Khatyn Memorial Complex



2005

On the reconstruction of the Brest Hero Fortress Memorial Complex



2006

On the technical equipment of the National Research Centre Mother and Child



2007

On the repair of the National Children's Educational and Health Centre Zubrenok and the purchase of buses for it, as well as for the publication of textbooks and teaching aids for children



2008

On 14 reanimobiles and medical equipment for children



2001

On the construction and reconstruction of hospitals and clinics; medical institutions in the districts of the Brest, Gomel and Mogilev regions contaminated with radionuclides have been re-equipped



What were the subbotnik funds spent on in previous years

Aleksandr Lukashenko and his team planted 80 oak trees during the subbotnik in Khatyn

‘We do the right thing’

For the second year in a row, the Head of State comes to the nationwide subbotnik at the Khatyn Memorial Complex. In 2022, through the efforts of the President's team, apple trees and wild roses appeared near the symbolic log cabins,

surprisingly well. As if it was always there. Besides, it has the style of the 18th century without overdoing it. What was done here in 2022 can be compared only to the creation of the memorial itself. A new life was breathed into the memorial.

The President explained why it is necessary to plant greenery in the memorial complex, “It was a beautiful village. Particularly here when it was swamped with greenery and flowers in spring... Apple trees in blossom.”



as well as a park of historical memory nearby. There were 149 seedlings — according to the number of dead villagers. This year, a small grove of eight dozen oaks was created on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the Khatyn tragedy.

Representatives of worker collectives, activists of the public association Belarusian Republican Youth Union (BRSM) came to Khatyn to participate in the subbotnik. They took care of cleaning up and landscape gardening, of adding more soil and flattening it out.

Before getting down to work Aleksandr Lukashenko together with the Director of the Khatyn Memorial Complex Artur Zelsky was made familiar with the beautification of the complex.

As he examined the territory, the President said, “It is necessary to do something every year. To add some cherry on the cake every year.” A restored church in the territory of the complex that the Nazis burned down in 1943 has become one of such ‘cherries’.

“Still, the church was hearty,” the President remarked.

“The church fits these surroundings

It is entirely your accomplishment,” Artur Zelsky noted.

According to the Director of the Khatyn Memorial Complex, over 10,000 people have visited the memorial complex within one month.

“The Brest Fortress and Khatyn are internationally famous places. This is why we certainly have to keep up the highest standards there. We do the right thing,” the Head of State stressed.

The Head of State emphasised that all the trees planted last year had taken root. The thoughts of those who did this work may have had something to do with it.

“Everything in nature feels things and is interconnected. We simply haven't learned it yet. It seems to me we know nothing at all about nature. This is why we'd better pray for it,” Aleksandr Lukashenko is convinced.



2009

On the improvement of agricultural towns, as well as memorial complexes, places of military glory, burial places of soldiers and partisans of the Great Patriotic War



2010

On the creation and development of the infrastructure of agro-towns in order to improve the quality of life in rural areas



2011

On the rehabilitation and sanatorium treatment of children living or studying in the territory of radioactive contamination



Our Khatyn

- The Khatyn State Memorial Complex was opened on July 5th, 1969, and is a historical and cultural value of the 1st category. In 2022, the staff of the complex organised and held 1282 excursions and 3 exhibitions, in January-February 2023 — 138 excursions.
- According to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No.176 dated May 13th, 2022, the objects of overhaul and reconstruction of the Khatyn State Memorial Complex were given the status of the All-Belarusian Youth Construction Site.
- On March 22nd, 2023, on the day of the 80th anniversary of the Khatyn tragedy, a meeting-requiem was held in the memorial complex with the participation of the Head of State and a significant event took place — the opening of a new museum built as part of the reconstruction of Khatyn.

Nationwide subbotnik united Belarusians in an effort to make their native land more beautiful and comfortable

As much as Br12.3 million were collected following the results of the nationwide subbotnik held on April 22nd in Belarus (figures are being specified). During this large-scale action, burial places of the times of the Great Patriotic War, memorials, complexes and memorable places were put in order, squares, parks, roadside lanes were cleaned. Many residents of the country took part in the planting of the forest.



Pavel Bogush

The number of those who choose to work for the good of their native country on Saturday in April is growing every year. In 2023, about 3 million people joined the event. For comparison: last year, about 2.4 million people worked, Br11,794,400 were collected.

Key venues for the 2023 subbotnik:

- Chairwoman of the Council of the Republic Natalya Kochanova worked on the territory of the Student Village residential complex. Here, members of the Presidium and employees of the secretariat of the Council of the Republic, as well as members of the Youth Parliament at the National Assembly and representatives of the administration of the Moskovsky District of Minsk laid the Avenue of Peace of 100 holly maples.
- Deputies of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly worked in the area of the capital's Pulkhova Street, where a new natural landscape composition appeared by the river.
- The leadership and representatives of the Presidential Administration took part in the nationwide subbotnik on the territory of the Dzerzhinsk District: they worked in the Litavets Memorial Complex, erected on the site of the village of

the same name, destroyed by the Nazis during the punitive operation Jakob on January 14th, 1943. The Nazis shot and burned 196 people, including 58 children here... Civil servants planted seedlings and seedlings of pine and birch in the adjacent territory.

- More than 250 people took to the subbotnik at the memorial complex to the prisoners of the Ozarichi death camp in the Kalinkovichi District.
- Participants of the nationwide subbotnik in the Brest Fortress were preparing a site for the future Republican Centre for Patriotic Education of Youth.

Brest border guards also joined the nationwide subbotnik. The command of the border group planted blueberry seedlings in the Peace Garden, founded on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War.

- One of the points of the nationwide labour campaign was the territory of the new infectious diseases building of the Mogilev Hospital No. 1. The construction here was already completed, the building received the first patients in March.
- Hundreds of citizens came out to help the builders on the territory of the Upper Castle in Polotsk — final work



Anton Stepanishchev

2022

On the overhaul with modernisation and elements of restoration of the Khatyn State Memorial Complex

2021

On institutions of the Healthcare Ministry and for the restoration and repair of historical and cultural values and places of military glory during the Great Patriotic War

2020

On the restoration of the National Art Museum and the reconstruction of the mass grave on the site of the burned village of Ola by the Gomel Regional Executive Committee

2019

On the overhaul and modernisation of the monument to partisans and soldiers and the Eternal Flame on Victory Square in Minsk

2018

On the purchase of medical equipment for the emergency hospital, as well as reserve beds in case of emergency hospitalisation of participants and guests of the 2nd European Games 2019

2017

On educational institutions and preparation of children's health and sports camps for the summer season

2016

On the construction of the Gomel Regional Children's Clinical Hospital

2012

On the construction of a new building of the State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History and the creation of its museum exposition

2013

On the purchase of special ambulance (emergency) medical vehicles with a complete set of medical equipment

2014

On the construction of the National Positron Emission Tomography Centre

2015

On the purchase of artificial lung ventilation devices for providing medical care to children and for the implementation of events dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Victory

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Security of the environment and life

Climate change, pollution of natural resources and scarcity of various forms have become part of the national security agenda in countries around the world



Reduction of the ozone layer, global warming, atmospheric pollution, greenhouse effect, reduction in the diversity of biological species living on Earth. All these and other problems can affect our country in one way or another. To prevent this, Belarus, in co-operation with other countries, is taking measures aimed at reducing the human impact on nature. The quality of our life directly depends on the state of ecology. After all, air, water, soil and its other integral components are the basis of human existence. Therefore, it is not surprising that environmental security, according to the updated National Security Concept, is defined as one of the aspects that is subject to protection. In the document, this term refers to the state of protection of the environment, life and health of citizens from threats arising from anthropogenic impacts, as well as factors, processes and phenomena of a natural and man-made nature.

By Svetlana Isaenok

This is how the environmental agenda becomes a pretext for trade wars

The increased attention of the world community to the problems of climate change is used as a pretext to limit the access of Belarusian products to international markets, to curb the development of Belarusian industry. This is stated in the new concept. What mechanisms are used for this purpose?

Today, the trend for environmental labelling is increasingly developing in the world. Such certification provides advantages for manufacturers, but it can also be a barrier for developing countries, since the introduction of certification involves

additional costs for companies, qualified personnel, proper technical support and an audit system are required to ensure operation. Environmental friendliness or non-ecological friendliness of manufactured products becomes a marker for entering a particular market. At the same time, there are still no unified global standards in this matter.

NATO takes on the climate?

Speaking at the NATO Public Forum last year, Secretary General Jens Stolten-

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“Respect for the environment should become a way of thinking and a norm of life for each of us, a priority direction of state policy for powers and unions.”

During greeting to the participants and guests of the 15th Republican Environmental Forum on June 7th, 2019

berg said that climate change is multiplying crises and that this is an issue of great importance to the alliance.

Stressing that ‘NATO is determined to set the gold standard on addressing the security implications of climate change’. According to him, climate change is the defining challenge of the times for NATO.

FIGURE

Environmental factors in the world annually claim the lives of about 13 million people. Over the past 10 years, changing weather patterns have displaced 23 million people a year.

Not for populism, but for the good

The ecological development of Belarus is proceeding logically and consistently. Unlike, say, the European Union, where a few years ago the climate agenda was artificially updated, and loud statements were made about the rejection of carbon raw materials, but now its extraction and burning of coal are increasing to the maximum.

Belarus consistently, comprehensively and systematically implements environmental policy. However, it gives its results. Thus, the volume of emissions of pollutants into the atmospheric air and wastewater per unit of GDP production has been reduced by 2.5 times over the past 20 years. The energy intensity of GDP has been halved.




National interests in the environmental aspect according to the draft National Security Concept

- Preservation of a favourable environment for the life of the population. 
- Overcoming the negative consequences of radioactive contamination and other emergencies, rehabilitation of ecologically disturbed territories. 
- Environmentally oriented socio-economic development of the state. 
- Rational (sustainable) use of natural resource potential, as well as the preservation of biological and landscape diversity, ecological balance of natural systems. 
- Climate change adaptation. 

Internal sources of threats to national security

- High concentration of environmentally hazardous objects on the territory of Belarus, their placement near residential areas and life support systems. 
- Nuclear pollution. 
- Increased levels of emissions and discharges of pollutants, waste generation. 
- Insufficient development of legal and economic mechanisms for ensuring environmental safety, accounting systems for natural resources and environmental quality. 

External sources of threats to national security

- Global changes in the natural environment associated with climate change, the destruction of the ozone layer, and the reduction of biodiversity. 
- Transboundary transfer of pollutants to the territory of the Republic of Belarus by air and water flows, penetration of invasive species of animals and plants. 
- Placement of large environmentally hazardous facilities near the borders of Belarus, storage of spent nuclear fuel, disposal of nuclear waste in adjacent territories. 

Measures to ensure environmental safety and a favourable quality of the environment are provided for by the programme of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus for 2021-2025 and other state programmes, such as ‘Environmental Protection and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources’, ‘Belarusian Forest’, ‘Energy Saving’, ‘Comfortable Housing and Favourable Environment’.

In addition, the national action plan for the development of the green economy for 2021-2025 is also important — this is a comprehensive document that is being implemented in 12 areas with the participation of 48 involved government agencies and organisations.

How can we continue to protect the environment?

The development of a strategy for the development of a circular economy in the Republic of Belarus until 2035 is nearing completion. In addition, Belarus is developing a strategy for the long-term development of a country with a low level of greenhouse gases until 2050, developing green financing mechanisms and other equally important areas: the development of electric transport, green building, eco-tourism and organic products.

DIRECT SPEECH

Zhanna Chernyavskaya, Chairwoman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus Standing Committee on Ecology and Nature Management,

“The world has entered a stage of cardinal changes — economic, military-political and social. But we are most concerned about such problems of mankind as lack of food and natural resources, climate change, anthropogenic impact on the environment.

Today, green economy mechanisms are being actively introduced in the country: resource saving and energy efficiency, reduction of waste generation and maximum recycling. If 10 years ago, 10 percent of the total volume went into processing, today it is already 32 percent. The goal is to reach 60 percent by 2030. Particular attention is paid to the rational use of natural resources, and the launch of the BelNPP is working towards this goal. Since it is an environmentally friendly, reliable source of energy.”



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, sent a greeting to the participants of the Anti-Fascist Forum 'The Tasks of the International Communist Movement in the Struggle for the Solidarity of Progressive Forces Against the New Fascist Threat to Humanity'.

"You have set yourself a noble goal — to warn humanity about the danger of another world catastrophe, one of the manifestations of which is the revival of the most inhuman and cruel ideologies and practices. It would seem that the ideas of Nazism, forever left in the past, find new followers today in the most enlightened countries of the world. Therefore, the voice of supporters of communist ideas in the struggle for the right of every person to peace and creative work must sound persistently and uncompromisingly," the greeting says.

The Head of State expressed confidence that the efforts of the forum participants would continue to be aimed at implementing the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.

The anti-fascist forum, which brought together representatives of more than 50 countries at the Minsk site, was held at the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History. The programme of the grandiose event included the International Anti-Fascist Conference, as well as the laying of the Alley of Peace and Creation in the Belarusian capital.

From the Russian side, the leaders of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the Central Council of the UPC-CPSU took part in the event. Leaders and representatives of the communist parties of Armenia, Georgia, Abkhazia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Portugal, Germany and Hungary arrived in Minsk. Communists of Moldova, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Transnistria, South Ossetia, Turkmenistan, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other communist parties from Europe, Asia and America participated in the Anti-Fascist Forum via videoconferencing.

Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Igor Lutsky emphasised, "It is very symbolic and revealing that the Anti-Fascist Forum is being held in the capital of the Republic of Belarus, the city of Minsk. Approaching this sacred place — the State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History — you feel that your heart is quiet and calm. Because the banner of the victorious people proudly flies over this building. And we assure you that this will always be the case on Belarusian land..."



The President of the Republic of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has always said: peace is the most important thing. It is important for us to keep the peace. That is why people who think about peace and how to prevent war meet here, hold various events. This is what the Anti-Fascist Forum is dedicated to...

I want to remind you that not only such forums were held on this land. In 1946, the Minsk Trial took place on the territory of Belarus — we judged those who set foot on our land with their forged boots. Those who brought grief and misfortune here, who set up Khatyn,

On the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity

It is very important to preserve peace and convey to the peoples of our neighbouring countries that the memory of the World War II must not be forgotten — otherwise everything will repeat itself. This was stated by Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Igor Lutsky during the Anti-Fascist Forum 'The Tasks of the International Communist Movement in the Struggle for the Solidarity of Progressive Forces Against the New Fascist Threat to Humanity'.

Ola and Krasny Bereg. They must remember, they must understand that this will always be the case: if someone sets foot on our land, retribution is inevitable."

The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus Aleksei Sokol stressed in an interview with journalists on the sidelines of the forum: the goal of all patriots, the international community is to unite and repel fascism, and also to declare that the patriotic movement lives on, that we do not forget history, building our present and future.

Noting that it is a great honour for Belarus to hold a large-scale international forum on the anniversary of the birth of Vladimir Lenin, Aleksei Sokol added,



Gennady Zyuganov and Aleksei Sokol

"No one needs to explain how relevant today the topic of the fight against the fascist plague is. Belarus has always been an island of peace, creation and good neighbourliness — and we continue this line. Representatives of the communist parties of the post-Soviet countries, the European Union have gathered today in the hero city of Minsk — and we all remember that Belarus was one of the first to take the blow of fascism — moreover, we came out of this battle with dignity.

More than 260 concentration camps and death camps were created on Belarusian territory, every third inhabitant of the republic died as a result of that terrible war."



The First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine Petro Symonenko is convinced that the coming of fascism to power in Ukraine once again confirms that these are the interests of transnational capital.

"These are the interests of those who today do not consider us to be people. They only see us as slaves to satisfy their interests. For the first time since the World War II, the voice of the Communists must be heard by the entire world community.

For the first time in these years, we are holding a forum to warn humanity about the new threat of fascism and talk about the consequences that we already have on the example of Ukraine. I really want all our comrades in the communist movement, all progressive humanity to understand the evil that we face today in a new dimension.

We must learn lessons from our history, because thanks to and only under the leadership of the communists, wherever we are — on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War, in partisan detachments, underground, in the dungeons of the Gestapo, leading the resistance movement in Europe — it was under the leadership of the communists that fascism was defeated. It was defeated because there was a system that the communists created — and it defeated fascism with its economic power," Petro Symonenko noted.

Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, head of the CPRF faction in the State Duma Gennady Zyuganov recalled the achievements of the Soviet era, "We managed to build 9,000 factories in ten years, which determined the development of the planet in the future. And when the fascist Reich captured virtually the entire continental Europe and rushed to the east to destroy the Soviet



Igor Lutsky

country, the Soviet country inflicted a crushing defeat on fascism. In May 1945, the planet was cleansed of fascism and celebrated the Great Victory. It seemed to us that fascism was completely defeated then, but the Anglo-Saxons decided otherwise. They sent all the Hitlerite methods, everything connected with violence and fascism overseas and then subsequently unleashed a whole series of wars. The main war was waged against the Russian world and our country. Today this the war, in fact, grew into a hot one — informational, technological, including military."

Gennady Zyuganov emphasised, "Today, native Ukraine fell into the clutches of the Nazis, fascists, Bandera supporters under the leadership of American provocateurs and CIA agents. This war has already claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. I hope that together today we will make a decision that will unite all patriots on our planet. Because fascism threatens each of us.

We have gathered for this forum in truly fraternal Belarus. Before the start of the event, the entire delegation passed through the museum — and I want to say that this is the unique museum on the planet. Our fraternal Belarus is the only republic in the world that paid for the victory over fascism with the life of every third citizen."

'Protect humanity from the fascist threat!': address following the results of the Anti-Fascist Forum in Minsk

The document, in particular, says, "We, the participants of the International Anti-Fascist Forum from the countries of Asia, America and Europe, have gathered in Minsk to say our firm word 'No!' war and right-wingers, neo-fascism and oppression... The direct support of the United States and its NATO allies raised the ideology of Nazism to the rank of the state ideology in Ukraine... All those who preserved the ideals of fellowship of peoples and loyalty to the Great Victory over fascism were repressed... The key to success is the unity and cohesion of the peace-loving forces planets. The victorious resistance of world strength can only be universal. We are deeply convinced that our international solidarity will be able to protect humanity from the fascist threat and sliding into the abyss of world war. We firmly state this here in Belarus. On its sacred land, the inextricable link between the past, present and future is especially acutely realised. Let us unite in the fight against neo-Nazism, right-wingers and militarism! Long live the united front of progressive forces! Long live the solidarity of the working people and peoples in the struggle against fascism! Let's not let them blow up the world! They shall not pass!"

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Reliable focus on the yuan

Chinese expert: Switching to yuan settlements between Belarus and China will accelerate mutually beneficial co-operation

The internationalisation of the Chinese yuan continues to gain momentum. The monetary unit of the Greater China is increasingly used both in Eurasia and around the world, reducing dependence on the dollar. Russia is a vivid example of this, where they have already focused on the transfer of settlements on foreign trade operations with the countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa into the Chinese currency. Belarus, as a future member of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation, is also increasingly abandoning the dollar in favour of the yuan, implementing a major China-Belarus Great Stone project, thereby opening up new prospects for co-operation with China in industry, information technology, medicine and other key economic sectors. The Professor, Deputy General Director of Great Stone Industrial Park Development Company, Doctor of Economics Ren Fei spoke about the benefits this will bring to our country.

By Ilya Kryzhevich

It is beneficial to refuse intermediaries

Speaking about the co-operation between Belarus and China, Professor Ren Fei recalled that the first loan agreements for the implementation of a number of infrastructure projects in our country were made in dollars.

— It cost more than if we paid in yuan. Therefore, in 2009, a three-year currency swap agreement worth 20 billion yuan (about \$3 billion) was signed between the People's Bank of China and the National Bank to encourage trade and investment between the two countries. Thanks to this, Belarusian enterprises could directly make purchases for this money in China.

The Professor said that after trying to work in this format, the parties realised how convenient it is. This, in turn, became a prerequisite for making settlements in yuan at the 'Great Stone' industrial park in a few years.

— Gaining momentum, the Belarusian-Chinese co-operation has made it possible to create an exemplary Silk Road project 'Great Stone'. It has been chosen as the main platform for promoting cross-border payments in yuan in the Eurasian Economic Union. In 2020, this initiative was widely discussed in the industrial park. We also invited representatives of the People's Bank of China and discussed the topic of expanding the use of the Chinese yuan in the park itself.

The Fast enterprise was the first company of 'Great Stone', which used the yuan in settlement with China. The company bought Chinese equipment and received investments in yuan.

— This was the first successful example. After that, we recommended that our residents also open an account in Belarusian banks in yuan. We wanted to expand this activity. Now the number of residents who make payments in yuan is growing.

The Professor emphasised that Western sanctions and restrictions against Belarus and Russia only increased the use of the yuan.

— The fact is that it has become much more difficult to conduct investments and transactions with China because so much was tied to working with the SWIFT international interbank payment system. In this regard, we are now actively working on the issue of using a similar Chinese CIPS system.

Professor Ren Fei noted that despite the logic of this decision, there are some problems with the transition to the Chinese payment system in Belarus.

— Banks here are very used to SWIFT, so CIPS is moving more slowly than we would like. Although, SWIFT brings extra costs in terms of making payments with China. Today, those financial institutions that have suffered the most from the sanc-



tions are most actively working with the Chinese system. But I think that over time CIPS will be looked at better. There are banks in Belarus that are already working very well with the Chinese system.

The professor also believes that if the West increases its pressure, it will push the financial organisations of Belarus and Russia to a greater extent to work with CIPS. He noted that in Russia these processes are now moving faster.

“Until 2030, the yuan will exceed dollars and euros in settlements in the current geopolitical conditions on the territory of Eurasia.”

The West only brings the East closer

The Professor Ren Fei is convinced that now the settlements in yuan between countries will only increase. He explained that the day before, Russia supported the transition to the yuan in foreign trade settlements with the countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa. This was stated by Russian President Vladimir Putin during Russian-Chinese talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

— It is worth noting that now the share of the yuan in Russia's export settlements is about 16 percent. Therefore, it is safe to say that the yuan is becoming an international settlement currency. Russia has taken a serious step towards this. From my point of view, the use of the yuan in Belarus and moving away from the dollar and the euro will also be beneficial. If we evaluate the situation at the moment, then a large part of the Belarusian economy is tied to the dollar. In the context of political complications, this becomes problematic. In turn, China treats its partners with great respect and will not engage in political blackmail or pressure.

The Professor separately noted that one should not forget about the banking crisis that is now taking place in the United States. This crisis in the future will affect not only the United States, but also the European economy. He emphasised that in America they turn on the printing press more often and create unsecured dollars, spurring global inflation. It brings harm to the whole world.

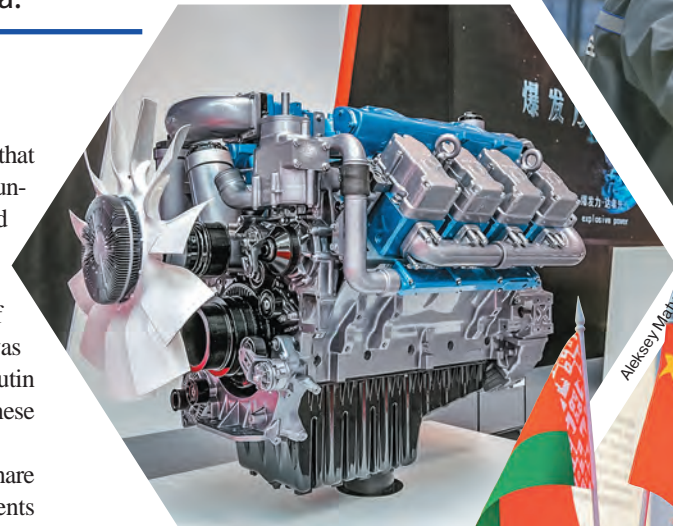
— China, for example, is trying to move away from an empty and unsecured dollar. In January 2023, China cut its holdings in US government debt for the sixth consecutive month, mainly due to the Fed's interest rate hike and the long-term diversification of China's foreign exchange reserves, which has now become more deposit-safe. The statistics confirm this. China's holdings in US Treasuries fell to \$859.4 billion from



Yelizaveta Kobetskaya



Vitaly Pivovarchik



Albkey Mal'kosh

“China is an important driver of modernisation and the arrival of new technologies for Belarus. Switching to yuan will only improve this process.”

\$867.1 billion in December 2022, according to released data from the US Treasury Department. Thus, Chinese investments in the US national debt are at the lowest level since May 2010.

True perspective

The professor drew attention to the fact that Belarus continues to actively co-operate with China in many financial areas. This is how the Belarusian side receives Chinese technical and economic assistance, investments, and uses Chinese loans.

— Therefore, the calculation in the Chinese CIPS system will be more profitable and less risky or large industrial projects. China is an important driver of modernisation and the arrival of new technologies for Belarus. Switching to yuan will only improve this process. We get rid of obvious risks and speed up the process of agreeing and receiving funds without intermediaries

in the form of US banks. This would allow attracting larger Chinese projects to work in Belarus. Many companies will come more boldly when the conditions for more convenient settlements are created for them, among other things.

The expert separately noted the fact that the number and amounts of settlements in yuan between the SCO partners are also growing significantly.

“SCO member states are now making settlements with China in yuan. This expands the possibilities for barrier-free co-operation. When Belarus joins this organisation, it will receive additional opportunities for the development of its economy through the use of the yuan. Until 2030, the yuan will exceed dollars and euros in calculations in the current geopolitical conditions on the territory of Eurasia. For example, Kazakhstan also buys a lot of goods from China, and China buys oil there for yuan. The West will only push for this,” Professor Ren Fei summed up.



Social media accounts of our Belarus Segodnya Publishing House were acknowledged with a special diploma at the TIBO Internet Award

By Vladislav Sychevich, Ilya Kryzhevich, Vera Arteaga

Ceremonial start

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, sent a greeting to the participants and guests of the 29th edition of the international information and communications technology forum.

The Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko addressed the participants with a welcoming speech at the solemn opening ceremony. The Head of Government noted that the task of TIBO 2023 is to provide a comprehensive vision of achievements and opportunities for maximising the innovative potential of the IT sector in the interests of society and the state, as well as partners, primarily within the EAEU.

“We have already achieved significant results in the development of e-government: there is a unified portal of electronic services, unified systems of remote identification and the opportunity to use electronic digital signatures. Businesses can obtain licenses online. Technologies for unmanned transport are being developed, and robotic systems are being introduced in production,” the Prime Minister noted.

He focused on the fact that given the complex geopolitical agenda and increasing external pressure, it is necessary to ensure not only technological independence, but also digital sovereignty, relying on our partners, primarily the Russian Federation and other countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

Surprise and wonder

More than 260 exhibitors were represented at the exhibition. Including collective stands of ministries and departments. For the first time this year, the Great Stone Industrial Park took part in the exhibition.

The digital future is here today

Minsk hosted the 29th edition of the international information and communications technology forum TIBO 2023 — the country’s main technological event. This is a unique platform for the exchange of best practices in the field of information technology, analysis of the best global practices of digital transformation and discussion of the prospects for the effective use of the latest technological trends in traditional sectors of the economy. For four days, state organisations and private companies demonstrated their developments and know-how at the Minsk Arena site.

The central exposition of the Communications and Informatisation Ministry and government agencies called *Cities of the Future — Smart Cities* was the highlight of this year. It visually reproduced the urban environment and was a rather interesting exhibition with more than 40 locations. Here everyone could find something interesting for themselves. Among the novelties are the projects of the Taxes and Duties Ministry and the Social Protection Fund. Social Protection Fund introduced an application that allows one to monitor one’s work activities. It contains all the information

needed for scientific and technical information Yevgeny Prilutsky.

In the virtual workshop, one can thoroughly disassemble specific parts of dump trucks, which are made in detail. Everyone could test the work of all three projects personally by wearing virtual glasses.

Make life comfortable

At TIBO 2023, the implementation of the unified digital platform Smart City was discussed. Today, about 56 percent of the world’s population, or 4.4 billion people, live in cities. The trend of urban population growth is ex-

PEACEFUL ATOM

The digital partnership is growing stronger

The implementation of joint projects in simulator building and the creation of ‘digital twins’, co-operation in the field of telecommunications equipment, the creation of ‘smart cities’ will be carried out by Belarusian organisations with the support of the State Corporation Rosatom. The relevant agreements were signed on the sidelines of the TIBO 2023 forum.

According to Energy Minister Viktor Karankevich, such interaction is especially important in the face of external restrictions and sanctions pressure, “By signing the agreement, we made another step towards stronger technological sovereignty of our countries. Belarus’ co-operation with Rosatom advances in a number of areas. Those include the construction and operation of the Belarusian Nuclear Power Plant, management of radioactive waste, and allied industries – manufacturing sector, nuclear medicine, and electric vehicles.”

In turn, the Director for Digitalisation of the State Corporation Rosatom Ekaterina Solntseva expressed her conviction that co-operation between Belarus and Russia represented by Rosatom is a guarantee not only of technological independence here and now, but also of technological independence both in the medium and long term, “Digital technologies are the basis that will determine the competitiveness of industry, energy and the economy as a whole. Therefore, what is happening now is the first and very significant, and I am convinced that it will not be the last, step in our joint movement towards the creation of a new generation of digital technologies.”



Aleksandr Kulevsky

from the work book. The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus demonstrated more than 50 developments and technologies. The educational industry was represented by more than 20 educational institutions. Belarusian universities and five educational institutions from the Russian Federation showed their educational services and training opportunities on the ‘educational alley’.

Employees of BELAZ showed a working software solution for demonstrating a virtual exhibition of the company’s developments at the stand of the Industry Ministry. “This is our own development. We are also demonstrating a virtual tour, where you can find how the largest machines in the world are assembled, where they work and the stages of their production. And the third project, which is the largest and large-scale — a virtual workshop,” said engi-



pected to continue and by 2050, 7 out of 10 people worldwide will live in an urban environment. Experts from different countries discussed the past, present and future of smart cities at the Digital Economy Forum. Elena Shorr, the Deputy Head of the Department for State-run ICT projects and Procurement at the Communications and Informatisation Ministry, spoke about the strategy for implementing smart cities in our country. She noted that Belarus has all the conditions for the

successful implementation of this project, “It can be stated that the introduction of technologies for the development of this initiative in Belarus is a priority. This is very important for the successful implementation of the project. This can be clearly seen at the exhibition part of the TIBO 2023 forum, where the central stand is dedicated to our achievements in this direction. Today, the country is carrying out planned and systematic work to promote and introduce smart city technologies.”

As an example, she cited the *My City* platform implemented by Beltelecom. This application allows one to access many city services at once on one site. Initially, it was created to work in Polotsk, then 7 cities were connected to it, and today the application provides access to the services of more than 40 settlements. The information technology centre of the Minsk City Executive Committee also presents many solutions: the automated information system ‘Accounting for Operating Costs for a Residential Building’, the information system 115.bel and much more. All this can be implemented on a single digital platform.

Speaking about the introduction of a single digital platform *Smart City (Region)*, the specialist noted that **according to the plan, the state platform Smart City will cover 17 regional centres and cities with a population of over 80,000 citizens in 2025.**

How much controversy there was about the American political system! One of the main subjects of criticism is the presidential elections. They are carried out according to an archaic procedure, and are frankly manipulative, and resemble a primitive Hollywood-style show... However, they are watched all over the world. Especially now, when the United States is engaged in a deadly battle to maintain its own global hegemony.

Two of a kind

Elections in the US
are increasingly turning
into a show



By Vadim Gigin, Ph.D. in History

Power of magnates

The post of the President is only formally the highest in the country. And it's not about the scope of authority. Under the US Constitution, the Head of State has significant power. No wonder this country is considered a model of a presidential republic. But again, only on paper.

In reality, the levers of control are concentrated in the hands of a small group of magnates who place their bets on certain politicians and then impose their will on them. The United States is essentially a state of the victorious oligarchy.

Yet the one who becomes the owner of the White House has a certain meaning. At least in the context of which of the ruling groups occupies a dominant position in a particular period. The favourites of the election race now, at its start, are the current Democrat President Joe Biden and his predecessor Donald Trump. In addition, here there are many unusual things that testify to the crisis of the American political model.

The advanced age of the candidates is striking. Biden is 80, and Trump is 76. One might argue: so what? After all, the great Winston Churchill left the post of Prime Minister of Great Britain when he was under 80! Moreover, Trump, in his age, demonstrates excellent energy. What, however, cannot be said about his opponent.

No wonder the current President of the United States was nicknamed Sleepy Joe. He became the unwitting author of numerous memes, confirming his far from the best physical and mental condition. So after all, there are a dime a dozen such in the government offices of the 'Washington regional committee'. Take, for example, the recent Speaker of the House of Representatives, 83-year-old Nancy Pelosi, the grandmother of American democracy, who remains influential to

this day. The American political elite has grown old, which indicates serious problems with the functioning of social elevators for young politicians.

Forgetting all decency...

The figure of Donald Trump is also indicative. At one time, the establishment needed it in order to somewhat bring down social discontent. He was given the place of such a billionaire rebel. A successful businessman and popular showman, he made speeches that career politicians trained in political correctness could not afford. And people liked it. But this is where he should stop. Become someone like Bernie Sanders. There is such an 'independent' American politician who is considered almost the biggest leftist in Washington. True, no one will let him become President. Although he tried to achieve the highest post. Nevertheless, Trump did it! And it seems that none of the oligarchs counted on this.

Because the system did not accept Trump. It turned out to be too ruffly, uncontrolled and popular. As soon as they did not try to overthrow him! The most influential American media launched a coordinated campaign to persecute the 45th President.

All the norms of decency were forgotten. Trump was hit by the BLM protest movement. Impeachment proceedings were initiated against him twice. And that was all for nothing! During his presidency, the American economy began to get out of the crisis. Trump would certainly have been elected President for the second time, but only the COVID-19 pandemic turned all his plans upside down.

The 2020 presidential election has become more of a campaign against Trump by the entire united Washington establishment. The bosses there were ready to smuggle anyone into the White House, just to throw Trump out of it. A veteran of American politics, Joe Biden, was at hand. But his victory was not easy.

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"A stronghold of democracy... Look at what is happening with these elections [in the USA]. This is a disgrace, a mockery of this democracy... Because everything was violated there, even domestic legislation. It is very interesting how the Germans, the French, the super-democrats, and the Anglo-Saxons and others will demand re-elections."

During a visit to the Belarusian Nuclear Power Plant on November 7th, 2020

Total boycott

The imperfection of the electoral system made numerous frauds possible. There is a huge amount of evidence for this. This outraged the citizens, and resulted in street protests, which culminated in the bloody events of January 6th, 2021, in the Capitol.

After hesitation, Trump still did not dare to continue to challenge the election results and said that he would take revenge in 2024. He was immediately removed from all popular social networks. That is, the former US President was declared a total information boycott.

But Trump is Trump. He showed character and found ways to reach out to his constituents. His political activity was so bright that it simply could not be ignored. As a result, Elon Musk, the new owner of Twitter, restored Donald Trump's account after a user survey conducted in November 2022.

And there is still no end to the intrigues. In the Republican Party, real conspiracies were organised several times to prevent their own candidate from being elected.

But Trump turned out to be so charismatic that he easily cracks down on any competitors. This is evidenced by the multimillion-dollar fees received by his election fund. In addition, this is one of the main indicators of the popularity of a politician in the United States.

Not so bright prospects

In a panic, the establishment moves Biden to a second term. Nevertheless, the form of Sleepy Joe is so obviously far from satisfactory that the option of enacting the 25th amendment to the US Constitution continues to be discussed. It allows the President to prematurely terminate his powers in the event of his incapacity. Then Kamala Harris will take over the top post. But the prospects of her leadership may not seem so bright for many Washington politicians. It's just that the current Vice President became famous for her, to put it mildly, not very smart statements.

Almost all of these facts are unprecedented. Let us emphasise once again: this speaks of the growing problems of the current system, not only the political one. Take, for example, the outbreak of the banking crisis.

The question is quite appropriate: what outcome of the elections is beneficial for us? There should be no illusions here. After all, it is only propaganda hostile to Trump that accuses him of being 'pro-Russian'. He did nothing of the sort in his post. Indeed, some Russian Americanists suffer from the old disease of their profession, trying to see in this or that candidate at least some sympathy for their country.

Despite all the internal squabbles, the American elite will wage a fierce struggle to maintain its dominance in the world. In addition, this is what you need to tune into. The best outcome for the entire planet will be if, over time, the result of the elections in the United States is no more interesting than in another country.

In the meantime, we are watching the show unfold. Joe Biden has formally announced his campaign for re-election in 2024, asking Americans for four years to 'finish this job'.

Derailed

In the United States, a series of man-made disasters has been going on for the past few months, and the lion's share of them is associated with accidents on the railway. Almost everyone has heard about the largest disaster in Ohio, where the area was contaminated with vinyl chloride, but this case is far from the only one. The trains began to derail as if on schedule. However, some explosions with fires began with a very enviable regularity at industrial enterprises. It would seem that the country is quite developed, but suddenly such a prohibitive number of accidents appeared. Let's take a look at what's going on with the railroads, and why America is accidentally faced with so many different incidents.



The imbalance of public and private interests that began more than 100 years ago is at the heart of modern rail accidents in the United States

By Yuri Terekh

Formation

It is impossible to exaggerate the role of the railroad in the development of the United States. This is one of the factors that allowed America to assume the image that we know today.

The development of railroads in America began in the middle of the 19th century, and at first the growth was exponential, roughly corresponding to the growth of industrial needs. Indeed, in the first place, the railways served the industry, while passenger transportation was on the second place.

Everything developed so rapidly that by 1916 the Americans had built more than 400,000 kilometres of railways. Naturally, such a simplification of logistics could not but have the most favourable effect on the growth of production and exports. The railways began to bring incredible profits to their owners, and investments in this industry became one of the most promising.

Almost everyone who could invest in it began to engage in both the transportation of goods and passengers. So, it was at this moment that the very crack was laid, which would later lead to disaster.

The fact is that the railways were built not according to some general plan, but in accordance with the requirements of the market. They built railways exactly where it was possible to invest immediately. Thus, they were guided not by a strategic development plan, but by short-term profit.

Break

Meanwhile, business grew, and the railroads became more prestigious. The passenger transport sector has also grown, with trains becoming truly luxurious. The construction of passenger stations began, many of which can be called architectural masterpieces. On trains, one could go on a 'cruise' around the country, with all the attendant comfort. And at the beginning of the twentieth century it seemed that this was all forever...

After 'promiscuity', rampant motorisation was the second harbinger of disaster. People began to give preference to personal transport, wanting to get there quickly and cheaply, rather than slowly and luxuriously. The segment of passenger transportation began to decline significantly, and the industry could not recover after that.

Things were a little better with cargo transportation, but difficulties began even there. Here again, cars, namely trucks, acted as competitors. You remember that the railway tracks were not built in accordance with reasonable planning, but as the investor wanted. This led to the fact that it was not possible to provide the logistics needs of the entire country with the help of railways. It was then that the very culture of American truckers was born.



A train derailment in Ohio that caused a major environmental disaster

Catastrophe

In 1967, the final blow was dealt to American railroads. The US Postal Service abandoned rail transportation, and it was thanks to mail transportation that many companies still somehow remained afloat. This led to a whole series of bankruptcies, mergers, and other phenomena common in crises. Here the federal government had to intervene, the remnants of the companies were actually nationalised and planted on subsidies, well, in order to maintain at least some passenger traffic in the country. As for freight transportation, with the help of a system of benefits, the industry managed to be kept from complete collapse.

However, all this led to the fact that only 220,000 out of more than 400,000 kilometres of roads remained. At the same time, almost 80 percent of the routes did not serve passengers. This is the result of their market economy.

Nobody wanted to engage in modernisation, and everyone finally relaxed after the collapse of the USSR. Industry in the United States worked at a minimum level, everything was taken abroad, well, it was just more economically feasible, and they didn't want to spoil the environment at home. The dollar as an international currency closed all issues with the economy, the railways in the existing volumes were simply not needed. And somehow imperceptibly for the layman and very gradually, the same catastrophe occurred, which brought the railway network into a state completely unsuitable for full-fledged operation.

30 years later

When Donald Trump became President of the United States, one of his main theses was a call to return production to the country. He perfectly understood the catastrophic nature of the situation, because he came from business and saw the situation realistically. Indeed, it was possible to live on the export of the dollar, but this is far from the most reliable strategic model. Nevertheless, everyone was happy with everything, the initiatives stalled, and nothing was radically decided then. Quite a bit of time passed, and Russia began to conduct special military operation...

Somehow it suddenly turned out that China has long been stepping on the heels of the United States, and is not against strengthening its currency instead of supporting the dollar. And in general, it has become more than a serious competitor with a modern technological base. Production in Europe has suddenly become unprofitable due to the cost of energy, and the US cannot allow the EU to purchase resources from Russia, well, it's not comme il faut amid the general political background.

It turned out that Trump was very right when he sounded the alarm and called for the return of enterprises to the United States. He had to hastily deal

with the restoration of production and their transfer from Europe. The fact that their industrial base was in an absolutely deplorable state, and a hasty attempt to launch old factories led to a series of disasters with explosions and fires, this is not the worst scenario, however...

Industry requires advanced logistics. No one was engaged in railways all this time, all the problems only worsened over time. Some of the permanently operated tracks are in a relatively acceptable condition. Then it was urgently necessary to organise logistics within the country. But the tracks no longer allow one to safely move along them, so we can observe constant train wrecks in recent months. This is a consequence of the launch of traffic on rotten infrastructure.

Will the United States be able to somehow correct the current situation? Well, if a few fundamental legal issues are eliminated, and sums comparable to their own military budget are invested in the restoration of logistics and industry, the situation will begin to improve in a few years.

The moral is...

The whole situation described above is the result of pure market regulation. This happens when each part of the system is chasing maximum profit, and no one thinks about the overall strategy and prospects. Of course, there should be elements of self-regulation in the economy, but someone should also carry out strategic planning. Otherwise, miscalculations can backfire in a hundred years, as, in fact, happened... Sometimes it is more important to think about the prospects than to chase a quick profit. The problem here is that only the state is able to think about long-term prospects, business, by definition, is not capable of building on the basis of the situation in several generations. It needs to earn money right now, and preferably more. So what to do? You just need to strike a balance, and everything will be fine.



Pennsylvania Railroad Station in New York. It was demolished in 1963.

The new building of the National Art Museum houses a Boris Kustodiev temporary exposition on the occasion of the 145th anniversary of the gifted Russian painter. And here, in the 'blue hall' of the modern gallery, almost the entire collection of Kustodiev, which is in the collection of our main treasury, is presented. As it turns out at today's exhibition, the National Art Museum stores many precious masterpieces of the 'last singer of the merchant-kulak environment', including stately Kustodiev women, the famous watercolours from the *Rus* series, and little-studied sculptures of the artist.



The National Art Museum hosts an exhibition not to be missed



At the Window



The Mansion

Spring with Boris Kustodiev

By Victoria Popova

Opening the summer season

So, the main lure of the current exhibition at the National Art Museum can be called photographs by Boris Kustodiev. Few people know that he was a keen photographer. Since 2009, his family black-and-white photographs have been kept in the house-museum of B. M. Kustodiev in Astrakhan — the photo album was presented to the city by the artist's granddaughter Tatyana Kirillovna. Today, many of these photos have been digitised, they can be found on the Internet, but the originals are presented to the Belarusian audience for the first time thanks to the co-operation of the National Art Museum with Astrakhan colleagues.

It is well known that the artist spent the happiest years of his life in *The Mansion* — a country house in the old Russian style in the Klevantsovskaya Volost of the Kineshma District of the Kostroma Province. A series of photographs dedicated to the construction of the house, side by side at the exhibition with a wonderful warm picture called *The Mansion (My House)* — the pearl of the exhibition. It is curious that the canvas was painted by the artist in 1914 as a landscape, with the facade of his favourite dacha in the centre. But in 1918, Boris Kustodiev returned to the painting to include himself and his loved ones in it — his wife Yulia with the dachshund Daisy in her arms, son Cyril and daughter Irina.

"Since 1916, the artist had to use a wheelchair due to illness and could no longer go to his beloved dacha. Maybe that's why he inscribes a family portrait in the landscape, as a sweet memory of happy days. And he puts all his love into the picture, which will subsequently help him survive a severe physical illness," exhibition curator Alla Vasilevskaya says.

Alas, the fate of the wooden *The Mansion* can be considered

unenviable. The house was not preserved: empty, at first it was plundered, and then completely burned down. But the architectural appearance of the dacha, built according to the project of Dmitry Stelletsy (a friend of Kustodiev) and according to the plan of the architect Yuri Stravinsky (the elder brother of the composer Igor Stravinsky), is captured for eternity in the picture, which is kept in Minsk more than a hundred years later.



Maslenitsa



Bust of the artist M.V. Dobuzhinsky

If you are a dancer, then dance

Due to a tumour of the spinal cord, doctors forbade Kustodiev to paint, but he did not listen to them, and the period when the artist was already seriously ill remained the most prolific in his creativity. His works in the field of sculpture are practically unknown. In 1922, Kustodiev took up small-scale plastic arts in earnest, creating two models — *Merchant in a Fur Coat* and *Merchant's wife on a Walk*. A year later, he made two models of figurines based on his picturesque images from the *Rus* series by order of the Volkhov Plant — *Harmonist* and *Dancer*, they are presented at the exhibition. Over

the years, this porcelain pair became a textbook and was later produced at other factories, in particular at the Leningrad LFZ and the Dmitrovsky factory in Verbilki.

"Despite the fact that the models were created by a completely ill artist, Kustodiev managed to transfer his cheerful vision of the world into miniature figurines: by the way, they are still popular among modern porcelain collectors," exhibition curator Alla Vasilevskaya explains.

provide a panoramic view of the urban space, and at the same time to write out the details in a jeweller's way. Look at the face of this lady, how masterfully her cheeks, dimples and smile are written out," the curator pays attention.

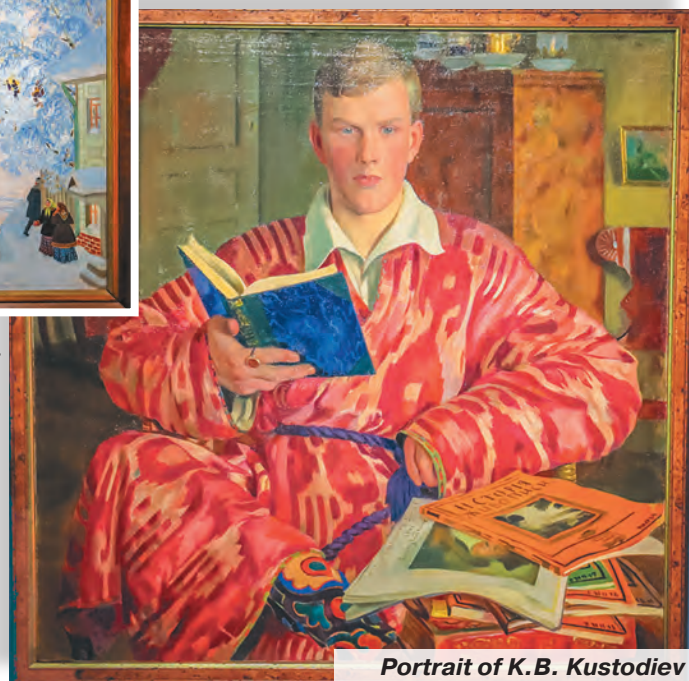
It was interesting to learn from Alla Vasilevskaya, a researcher at the fund department, that Kustodiev is a very technical artist. He constantly studied the school of the old masters, not only their style of painting, but also technology. Hence, the good preservation of his paintings. "As they say, great masters are talent-

Times are always the same

It is curious today to reread the review of the *Flea* of the first People's Commissar of Education Anatoly Lunacharsky, "In the performance of the Art Theatre, there was no depressing impression. It was terribly fun. The wonderful art of the actors, as it were, reconciled with reality. Yes, it's all gone, it's all wild, it's all pitiful, but it's all drawn before you by the finest artist, and the beauty of his colouring, the grace of his painting, the softness of his touch enchant you and soften the sharpness of the impression..." the author continued.

By the way, after the revolution, the artist was offered to go abroad. His daughter recalls father's reaction: "In 1924, the Dobuzhinskys left Leningrad. Somov went abroad to accompany our exhibition and did not return. Kustodiev was also offered to go... Dad even turned pale with indignation: 'I am Russian, and no matter how difficult it is for all of us here now, I will never leave my homeland!' I don't remember who this 'offerer' was, but dad no longer shook hands with him and was worried for a long time, recalling this conversation... *For the past two years, his right hand has almost completely dried up, he could no longer work without a bullpen. Once he showed me his hand asking me to see how the muscles have sunk, it has completely dried up... How much inexpressible torment was in these words and how much courage and patience! But even in these difficult years, he steadfastly and courageously endured hardships — lack of everything, cold. And despite his illness, he worked daily, hourly, creating paintings for the people, 'for everyone', as he liked to say.*"

Be sure to visit the Boris Kustodiev exhibition at the National Art Museum. Everyone can visit it until May 21st. *Such an extensive collection is presented for the first time in the last quarter of a century, it includes 40 works of painting, graphics, sculpture and decorative and applied art.*



Portrait of K.B. Kustodiev

There is no art outside the craft

We walk with her past the famous painting by Kustodiev *Merchant's Wife with Purchases*, we both pay attention to how attentive the artist is to the costume — the bright dress, the lace mantilla, the painted scarf of the white-bodied stately woman definitely return us to the era where the petty official Balzaminov dreams about an advantageous marriage.

Another priceless painting by Boris Kustodiev in the collection of the National Art Museum is Maslenitsa, 1919. In total, there are at least 15 of them in the artist's creativity.

"But ours differs from others in that it clearly reads the influence of Pieter Bruegel the Elder on the work of Boris Mikhailovich. Here he seeks to

ed in absolutely everything, there is no art outside the craft," the curator concludes.

Kustodiev's sketches of scenery for theatrical productions are very rarely exhibited. Fortunately, there are as many as eight (!) sketches for the *Flea* play based on the play by E. Zamyatin at the Moscow Art Theatre in our exhibition. "Never have I had such a complete, such an inspiring unanimity with the artist, as when working on the *Flea* play. I got to know the whole meaning of this community, when Kustodiev's showy, bright scenery appeared on the stage, props and dummies made according to his sketches appeared. The artist led the whole performance, took, as it were, the first part in the orchestra, which obediently and sensitively sounded in unison," recalled production director Aleksei Dikiy.



The 2nd CIS Games will be the main sporting event of this year in Belarus. The peculiarity of the upcoming colourful festival is that the competitions will not be concentrated in one specific location, but will be held widely and everywhere — in eleven cities, thus covering all regions of the country. In August, Belarus will turn into a large and noisy cultural and mass platform, where there is a place for bright emotions, great victories, and, of course, excellent mood.

Games for everyone



Brest. Palace of Water Sports.



Sports facilities are ready to receive guests in all regions of Belarus. Grodno. Central Sports Complex Neman.

“The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,
“The 2nd CIS Games is a milestone for you, a very serious criterion. If you fail the 2nd Games, then I will tell you frankly: you have nothing to do in sports.”
During a conversation about certain issues of the development of sports under sanctions on December 15th, 2022.

By Sergei Kanashits

Come to us. We will be glad

The first Games held by Kazan in 2021 were attended by 1,139 athletes aged 14 to 23 from nine CIS countries. The competitions will be much larger in Belarus. Already, it is presumably planned that more than three thousand athletes will come to test their strength and compete for the championship, and the total number of guests (coaches, judges, medical personnel, other members of delegations) will gather at least twice as many. Geographically, the name of the competition seems to limit the list of countries that can take part in them, but the 2023 Games have their own neat feature in this regard: they will be held in an open format. This means that representatives of any other country outside the CIS will be able to apply, register and participate. Invitations have already scattered around the world and there is a feedback: a number of states have expressed their interest. Egypt and the United Arab Emirates, for example, are considering entering their representatives in the weightlifting tournament. Athletes from Mongolia, China, Cuba, Iran, Oman and Saudi Arabia are ready to come to Belarus and compete in several disciplines at once... However, delegations from the CIS countries will be in focus: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Competitions will be held from August 3rd to August 15th in 20 sports in 11 cities of the country. Minsk will host tournaments in 3x3 basketball, volleyball, athletics, beach soccer, modern pentathlon, shooting and rhythmic gymnastics. In Brest, handball players and swimmers will reveal the strongest, in Vitebsk — representatives of Thai boxing, in Gomel — judokas, in Grodno — field hockey players and weightlifters, in Mogilev — karatekas and archers. In addition to the regional centres, the Games will visit regional cities: Borisov (futsal), Zhlobin (sambo), Molodechno (beach volleyball), Orsha (boxing), Soligorsk (freestyle wrestling, classical wrestling, women’s wrestling). Deputy Sport and Tourism Minister Aleksandr Baraulya says, “The idea to involve all regions was not born by chance. This will make it possible to show guests our entire country and present a great sports festival to residents not only of Minsk, but also of regional centres and district cities. I would like them to be able to come to the



Brest. Victoria Palace of Sports.



Mogilev. Olympiets Sports Complex.



Minsk. Palace of Rhythmic Gymnastics.

competitions with their families, with the kids and cheer for fellow compatriots and so on. It is a good timing for the forum. August is a period of holidays and vacations. If someone has not yet been, for example, in Soligorsk, there is a great opportunity to kill, as they say, two birds with one brick — to see the city and support our wrestlers. On the other hand, if you have been going to Grodno for a long time, this is a reason not to postpone the trip anymore. You will be able to see exciting weightlifting competitions there.”

Initially, the CIS Games format was conceived as youth competitions — the main platform for viewing talents and getting rich competitive practice close to the Olympic atmosphere. In most sports, youth and juniors will compete for awards in Belarus as well. However, there are

types of programmes in which all the strongest athletes are invited, regardless of age, and in which the national teams of our country will put up the strongest teams: in sambo, weightlifting, rhythmic gymnastics, beach football and field hockey. If we take into account that the representatives of Russia, Belarus, Azerbaijan and Mongolia are the main trendsetters among sambists, then the level of these competitions will be quite comparable to the World or European Championships. Incredible beauty awaits everyone on the gymnastic carpet, where the best graces of the planet will demonstrate their skills, led by the inimitable Alina Harnasko, Anastasiia Salos and the younger Yelizaveta Zorkina. Crazy heat matches can be expected in the beach soccer tournament, where the Russians have the second world

rating, our team is in the top 10, and teams from China, Venezuela, Paraguay, China, Egypt are also planned to be among the participants...

Through hardship to the stars

The delegation of Belarus became the fifth in the team medal standings, having won 69 medals (8 gold, 32 silver and 29 bronze) in Kazan in 2021. Greco-Roman wrestler Hleb Makaranka was one of those who became the champion. Since then, he has significantly improved his skills, won many important victories, became the champion of Belarus and the leader of the national team in his weight category. In August, Hleb plans to take to the carpet again and compete for the title of two-time CIS Games champion. “There were tough fights and strong opponents in Kazan. I am glad that I was able to reach the final and win. Of course, I would like to perform at home CIS Games. The platform on which we will compete is familiar to me. A good venue, it is comfortable to perform in it, there is a place to warm up. We don’t know all the opponents yet, but, given the experience of 1st CIS Games, I have no doubt that all competitors will be strong, and we will need to prepare to every single fight,” Hleb Makaranka recalls.

Cornflower from the heart

The logo of the future Games, which was developed by the National Olympic Committee, reflects a number of elements characteristic of Belarus. Namely, an ornamental eight-pointed star that blooms into a bright cornflower.

The approved motto ‘Strong in Spirit, Strong in Game!’ in a short and concise form conveys the main goal of the Games: the triumph of sport is the moment of a bright game, which is impossible without the presence of a strong character and the will to win. The mascot of the Games was an original Belarusian lynx named Rysia.

“In heraldry, the lynx is always described as an agile and fast beast, possessing intelligence and a sharp mind, all qualities that are ideal for a sporting mascot. If you take a closer look, you can see that the patterns on the body of the lynx are made in the style of Malyavankas, inspired by the artist Alena Kish,” Head of the Marketing Department of the NOC Vitaly Ostrovsky.

In each city that will host the competition, rich presentation programmes will be prepared for the guests, all conditions for fruitful work and good rest will be created. There will be completely free entrance to all arenas.



Photo of the week

HC Metallurg Zhlobin defeated HC Neman Grodno in the final of the national ice hockey championship. The President's Cup was presented to the winners personally by Aleksandr Lukashenko.

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On April 28th, 2001, Russia opened the era of space tourism. On this day, the first space

tourist American millionaire Dennis Anthony Tito flew into space on the Russian Soyuz TM-32 spacecraft with cosmonauts Talgat Musabayev and Yuri Baturin on board. Tourist Tito was engaged in photography and video filming, kept a diary and picked up food for everyone on the ISS.

On April 29th, 1818, Alexander II of Russia was born (1818-1881), a Russian emperor (since 1855). The reign of Alexander II of Russia was marked by the implementation of reforms: emancipation reform of 1861, university reform of 1863, land and judicial reform of 1864, etc. He continued the policy of territorial expansion and strengthening of the Russian Empire in Central Asia and the Far East.



April 29th is International Dance Day. It has been celebrated since 1982 by decision of the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute of UNESCO on the birthday of the French choreographer



Jean-Georges Noverre (1727-1810). The main idea of this holiday is the unification of all areas of dance as a single art form.



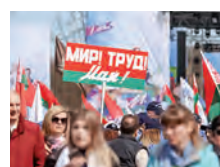
On April 29th, 1897, an English physicist Joseph Thomson announced the discovery of the electron. The electron is the first discovered elementary particle, which is the material

carrier of the smallest mass and the smallest electric charge in nature. The scientist was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for the discovery of the electron in 1906.

April 30th is International Jazz Day. It was proclaimed at the 36th session of the General Conference of UNESCO (2011) in recognition of the contribution of jazz to the dialogue of cultures. Jazz originated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States as a synthesis of African and European cultures, and to this day remains a unique form of musical art that unites races and nationalities.



May 1st is International Workers' Day (The Day of Spring and Labour), which was originally called the Day of International Workers Solidarity. On May 1st, 1886, American workers went on strike in Chicago demanding an 8-hour day. The strike and



accompanying demonstration ended in a bloody clash with the police. For a long time, May Day was a symbol of the irreconcilable class struggle, had political overtones and was marked by demonstrations. Nevertheless, this context was gradually lost. Today it is a bright spring holiday, and is celebrated in more than 140 countries of the world.

On May 1st, 1840, the London post office was unusually busy: the world's first postage stamps with a portrait of Queen Victoria went on sale. These stamps were allowed to be stuck on envelopes and used when forwarding letters. Rowland Hill was the originator of the idea of using stamps to pay for postage, who in 1854 became the chief postmaster of Britain.



On May 1st, 1918, the first military parade of the Red Army took place on the Khodynka Field. It was attended by the troops of the Moscow garrison as well as Vladimir Lenin. In addition, the most memorable military processions in the 20th century were, of course, the parades of 1941 and 1945 on Red Square in Moscow.



May 5th is Press Day in Belarus. This date was chosen for the holiday in honour of the first edition of the *Pravda* newspaper in 1912. Although the

Belarusian press has much deeper roots. For example, on August 6th, 1517, Francysk Skaryna published his first book in Prague. On May 5th, 1581, Andrej Rymsha's calendar called *Chronology* was published in Volyn, in the Ostroh printing house of Ivan Fyodorov in the Old Belorussian dialect. It was also the first printed calendar of the Slavs.

May 5th, 1921, is the birthday of Chanel No. 5 perfume. According to legend, having mixed 80 different scents in one bottle with the help of perfumer Ernest Beaux, an emigrant from Russia, Coco Chanel chose the fifth out of 10 perfume tubes, added a little 'lily of the valley' to it and gave the resulting fragrance her name with the ordinal number of the trial vial. Chanel has become the most famous and best-selling perfume in the world.



May 7th is Day of Radio. It was on May 7th, 1895, that the Russian scientist Alexander Popov made a presentation and demonstrated his invention, the world's first radio receiver, at a meeting of the Russian Physical and Chemical Society. Therefore, today this date is a holiday for workers in all branches of communications.