



On September 17th, Belarus celebrates the Day of People's Unity which emphasises the inviolability of the Belarusian statehood

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'And this is not the limit!' — Belorusneft discovered a new black gold deposit

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INTERNATIONAL

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Eleonora Kachalovskaya crowned Miss Belarus 2023

Miss Belarus 2023

Thousands of people witnessed a magnificent celebration at Minsk's Sports Palace, with President Aleksandr Lukashenko also attending the event.

Architects, educators, engineers and future doctors — 24 beauties from the regions and the capital competed for the Miss Belarus title in the finals of the 13th National Beauty Pageant. Some of them have been in modelling for a long time, while others are just starting... Everyone has their own interests and lifestyle, but the goal is the same — to become the main beauty of our country. The main struggle for the elegant crown consisted primarily of working on oneself: long-term training in fashion shows, choreography classes, master classes in speech production and makeup application. The finalists' busy schedule also included working with a nutritionist, stylist, cosmetologist, makeup artist, charity events, creative meetings with actors, and even filming a movie.

The Miss Belarus competition was first held in 1998. Every year it becomes more and more popular. For example, this year about 850 girls attended the castings.



‘Minsk speaks in favour of a just world, and we go to Africa as friends’

Negotiations between President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko and Equatorial Guinea President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo took place at the Palace of Independence in Minsk

“Everyone perceives this African continent differently. But everyone shares the view that Africa will in many ways shape the future of the planet. I also hold this opinion. For me, Africa is no longer a mysterious continent. In the past I visited mostly North Africa, while in recent years I have been able to visit both the centre and the south of your continent. Therefore, I have an understanding of what Africa is, and I am happy with the processes that are taking place in Africa. Africa is pushing forward, African nations are becoming truly independent. In other words, Africa is freeing itself from its colonial legacy. You should know that we absolutely welcome this process way and will support those nations that want to become independent,” the President said during the talks with Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo in a narrow format.

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that Belarus is a tech-savvy nation and is ready to share its technologies not only with Equatorial Guinea, but also with other interested African states.

In turn, the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea thanked the Belarusian side for the warm welcome and hospitality. He also apologised for having to reschedule his previously scheduled visit due to a change in his work schedule.

“My visit to Belarus is evidence of my conviction that Belarus and the Belarusian people are a fraternal people and a fraternal country for us,” Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo said.

According to the distinguished guest, during the visit he intends to discuss all the issues on the bilateral agenda and co-operation projects between Belarus and Equatorial Guinea. The negotiations also touched on current international issues.

“We do not forget that the Soviet Union and its member countries played a great role in liberating the African continent from colonial dependence and continue to do so [contributing to the liberation from neocolonial dependence]. We are getting close to celebrating the 100th anniversary of acquisition of independence by a number of African states. At the same time we understand that they acquired kind of nominal independence. We continue to remain victims of neocolonialism. We still feel the pressure of the countries that try to carry on this policy. If extreme poverty still exists on the African continent, it means that imperial neocolonial forces continue exploiting our countries, taking natural resources from us and sucking everything that could invigorate us out of us,” Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo emphasised.

Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo stressed that representatives of Equatorial Guinea and other countries had repeatedly mentioned all of these problems and situations within the framework of the United Nations Organisation, however, as the practice shows, nothing has changed.

Following the results of the negotiations in a narrow format, the Head of the Belarusian State noted the openness of the parties and readiness to discuss a wide range of issues.

“It is obvious that Africa is going through kind of a renaissance. Africa is becoming the key to the planet’s sustainable development in the 21st century before our very eyes,” the Belarusian leader stated during the talks in an expanded format. In his words, the joint peacemaking mission of leaders of the African Union countries to Ukraine and Russia, Africa’s active role in BRICS and the Non-Aligned Movement vividly testify to it.



“African countries are resolved to escape the diktat of Western transnational corporations, which see them only as mere suppliers of raw materials, extract oil, gold, and natural gas from them, and doom the peoples of Africa to wretched existence and hunger. Unlike Western ‘democratisers’ Belarus is ready to help you be the masters of your land for the benefit of your own people by creating national manufacturing sector, modernising agriculture, developing science and technologies. Working within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, together with Russia and other republics of the former Soviet Union, we offer your country access to unique technologies, goods, and services,” Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

The Head of State noted that for three decades Belarus has been dealing with the pressure of the West and is categorically opposed to any attempts at pressure, “Belarusians do not have colonial habits and do not try to impose anything on anyone. Minsk speaks in favour of a just, multipolar world, and we go to Africa as friends. Our machines, vehicles, and technologies are known well on your continent. Many medics and engineers of yours have been trained in Belarusian universities. This is why we should not have any particular difficulties with establishing the dialogue. I am convinced we will not have.”

The Head of State stressed that independence and sovereignty of a country primarily stem from a strong economy

while Belarus has experience and accomplishments to become an active participant of the social and economic flourishing of Africa and Africa’s final liberation from the yoke of former colonial powers.

As for Equatorial Guinea, Belarus is ready to help with the country’s industrialisation, modernisation of agriculture, with ensuring food security, with deliveries of a broad range of machines, vehicles, and equipment, other industrial and food products.

The Head of State emphasised that the interest of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea in each other is enormous. “The current situation in the world is pushing for more active interaction. I have already told my colleague and friend that no one will leave Equatorial Guinea, a relatively small state but very rich in resources, alone. The President agreed with me.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko is convinced that in a short time the parties will conclude new contracts and put millions of dollars into the treasury of relations.

“I am confident that with your personal support, Belarus and Equatorial Guinea will in the near future make progress in the supply of equipment, modernisation of agriculture, and ensuring food security. We are ready to work with you in this regard. Moreover, we not only offer you our products and are ready to buy your products from you. We need to co-operate, create joint ventures in your country and ours that will produce these goods. We need to go deeper. We are ready for this. Likewise, we are ready to train your specialists who will work at enterprises with advanced technologies in Equatorial Guinea,” the Head of State addressed the President of Equatorial Guinea.

It is also planned to expand partnerships in the petrochemical sector and the extractive industry, in education and training, medicine, and the development of human relations.

A number of international documents were signed following negotiations between the Presidents of Belarus and Equatorial Guinea, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo.

Among them are an intergovernmental framework agreement on economic, trade, cultural, scientific and technical co-operation, an agreement on visa-free travel for holders of diplomatic and service passports. Agreements on co-operation in the field of healthcare and education, and a memorandum of understanding between the relevant departments of the two countries on co-operation in the field of agriculture were also signed.

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the joint work of business circles and national chambers of commerce and industry should become a key link in the process of building and forming new sustainable business ties.

Following negotiations with Equatorial Guinea President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Aleksandr Lukashenko said,



Foreign Minister of Equatorial Guinea Simeón Oyono Esono Angue and Belarus' Foreign Minister Sergei Aleinik during the signing of a number of documents

“We welcome peaceful initiatives of African Heads of State to resolve the Ukrainian crisis. We are in solidarity with the need to end deaths and suffering of people as soon as possible... Furthermore, we hope that through joint efforts we will achieve a steady increase in trade turnover between our countries. We will strive to exceed \$100 million in trade turnover in 2030.”

An agreement was also signed between the Culture Ministry of Belarus and the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Craft Promotion of Equatorial Guinea.

Aleksandr Lukashenko appealed to the participants of the signing ceremony so that they do not delay the implementation of the agreements reached.

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Focus on greater results

The Belarusian Head of State, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has met with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Türkiye to the Republic of Belarus Mustafa Ozcan

“Recently, we have done a lot in terms of deepening relations between Belarus and Türkiye. However, there are still a number of unresolved issues in terms of our agreement with [Turkish President] Recep Tayyip Erdogan. I think these issues are solvable. We have similar positions on many issues of international relations, including the crisis situation in Ukraine. We have spoken about it many times. Both Türkiye and Belarus take the position of diplomatic resolution of this conflict,” the Head of the Belarusian State said, welcoming the diplomat.

As for trade and economic relations, Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that the states once agreed to reach \$1.5 billion in trade.

“I think we have more than \$1 billion in mutual trade for the second year already. We need to reach this level. Moreover, we have such opportunities,” the Belarusian leader said.

The Head of the Belarusian State also

praised the Turkish President in shaping an independent policy of the country, “We are eagerly following your sovereign independent politics. You solve issues the way the Turkish people need. In this matter your President has surpassed, one could say, all expectations of the Turkish people.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko continued, “We stand ready to do everything to contribute to the development of your country. We are not philanthropists. We are looking to benefit from this too. We need to remove the unresolved issues that we still have. We very much hope that Türkiye will lend us a helping hand in this difficult situation. I would like to discuss a number of issues that we will have to solve together with you in the near future.”

In turn, Mustafa Ozcan thanked the Head of State for the opportunity to meet to discuss issues on both the bilateral and international agendas. He also conveyed



warm greetings from the President of Türkiye and words of sincere gratitude to the Belarusian side for the assistance rendered after the earthquake in Türkiye in February 2023.

“We were amazed by the solidarity of the Belarusian people, and we will never forget the help provided by the Belarusian people,” the head of the diplomatic mission emphasised.

Later, the Turkish Ambassador spoke to reporters. Mustafa Ozcan commented on the agreements to achieve trade turnover between the countries at one and a half billion dollars, “We will undoubtedly be able to reach it. But we must understand that there are external factors that, unfortunately, are not helping us work in this direction quickly enough. Nevertheless, we are ready to work together to find mutually acceptable solutions.

Türkiye is very closely connected with the Western world and Western institutions, and this has to be taken into account when developing relations with other countries. Belarus is a very good partner and friendly country for Türkiye.

The ambassador said that in the near future, with the assistance of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, the joint Turkish-



Mustafa Ozcan

Belarusian research centre will open in Minsk. Mustafa Ozcan expressed gratitude to his Belarusian colleagues for their help and noted that this centre will contribute to the development of relations between our countries in the field of culture and science.

The Heads of the two States regularly hold telephone conversations and meetings at international venues. In 2019, the Presidents of Belarus and Türkiye agreed to gradually increase the volume of bilateral trade turnover to \$1.5 billion. In 2022, mutual trade in goods reached \$1.04 billion, and services — almost \$107 million. In January–July 2023, trade turnover amounted to \$674.9 million (129.1 percent compared to the same period in 2022).

Since 2009, the Belarusian Emergencies Ministry annually sends two MI-8 helicopters to Türkiye to assist in the fight against forest fires. In 2021 and 2022, our side additionally provided helicopter equipment with a Belarusian crew (MI-26T) to monitor fire situations and eliminate fires that engulfed the southern Turkish coast.

To assist in search and rescue operations in the south-eastern regions of Türkiye affected by the devastating earthquakes that occurred on February 6th, 2023, on behalf of the President of Belarus, a special response team Zubr of the Emergencies Ministry was sent, and humanitarian aid was also provided.

President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko met with Chairwoman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan Tanzila Narbayeva

The Head of State noted that the visit takes place in the year of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Belarus and Uzbekistan.

“A lot has been done, but there is room for improvement in this difficult time, when we are at a turning point in international relations,” the President said describing the level of co-operation.

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, Belarus is ready to expand relations and share any technology. The Head of State especially welcomed effective interaction and mutual support on international platforms and in integration associations. At the same time, the President appreciated Uzbekistan’s decision to uphold Belarus’ efforts to fast-track its admission to the SCO.

“We will always support you, because we share your commitment to peace and friendly relations with neighbours and other countries,” Aleksandr Lukashenko noted.

The President believes that the Be-

Minsk—Tashkent: new goals and objectives in co-operation

larus-Uzbekistan Women’s Business Forum in Minsk will play its role in the development of relations between the two countries. “I would really like us to switch to regional co-operation (we already have this experience with the Russian Federation), the core of which is the economy. This is important for us, and even more important for Uzbekistan in terms of technology. In this case we will not have to start out from simple trade, but from co-operation between enterprises, technology transfer to Uzbekistan — it would bring some benefits to you. We are absolutely open for this type of co-operation,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed.

The Head of State emphasised that Belarus has very warm feelings for Uzbekistan and its people who are similar to Belarusians in one important way — they are very hardworking people who had to overcome many trials in their history.

Speaking about his personal attitude to this country, Aleksandr Lukashenko said that he had been closely watching developments in Uzbekistan for a long



Tanzila Narbayeva

time. He believes that the people of Uzbekistan are lucky with the incumbent leader, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, “You have a very good President. I tell him right in his face: you should not let down your people who have so much trust in you and who believe you so much. You are lucky in the sense that he is strongly determined to make life bet-

ter for Uzbekistan and its people. Uzbekistan has a great future. And here is my advice to you: try to keep your President in office as long as possible. He needs time to show what he can do.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled that he had visited Uzbekistan several times. Together with Shavkat Mirziyoyev he has recently toured the south of this republic; this part of the country is stunningly beautiful. Uzbekistan’s Head of State invited the Belarusian counterpart to come to his country again. The President of Belarus admitted that he would like to visit the mountainous regions of this country in winter, “I will try to make time to visit your mountains in the near future.”

In turn, Tanzila Narbayeva conveyed greetings from the President of Uzbekistan and an invitation to visit the country: the Belarusian leader is expected to come to Uzbekistan at the end of this year or the beginning of next year.

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Pride for the country unites

MOTHERLAND

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Pavel Bogush

On September 17th, Belarus celebrates the Day of People's Unity — a public holiday established by Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus dated June 7th, 2021, No. 206. Declaring September 17th as a holiday was an act of historical justice in relation to the Belarusian people, divided against their will in 1921 under the terms of the enslaving Treaty of Riga. This day is already firmly entrenched in the national historical tradition. The unity of the divided people restored in 1939 allowed Belarus, together with other republics of the Soviet Union,



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“During its thousand-year journey to self-determination the Belarusian nation worthily overcame multiple attempts to deprive the people of its historical prospects, cultural and spiritual distinctiveness. The date September 17th, 1939, is a symbol of historical formalisation of the Belarusian nation and of the sincere eagerness of Belarusians, who were separated against their will, to live in their own home as one family.

After acquiring a holistic and unique image of a cosy and hospitable country in the centre of Europe, the reunited Belarus became a place of strength for millions of citizens, who honourably endured complex twists of the 20th century and now stand guard over the sovereignty and independence of the native land.”

From People's Unity Day greetings to fellow Belarusians on September 17th, 2022

to endure during the Great Patriotic War, take an honourable place in the international community, and become one of the co-founders of the United Nations.

Today, the Belarusian people are united in choosing a strategic course for the development of a strong, sovereign and prosperous country. The establishment of the Day of People's Unity on September 17th emphasises the continuity of generations, the inviolability and self-sufficiency of the Belarusian nation and statehood.



A people divided into parts

The peace treaty that ended the Soviet-Polish war and was signed on March 18th, 1921, in Riga without the participation of the Belarusian side, led to the fact that the ethnic Belarusian lands, the Belarusian people were artificially divided into parts for almost two decades. This section dealt a serious blow to the processes of national-cultural and political construction of Belarus, made the ‘Belarusian question’ one of the main fields of tension in Polish-Soviet relations in subsequent years.

The western regions of Belarus (about 100 thousand square kilometres with a population of over 3 million people) became part of the Polish state for two decades. In these territories, the right of Belarusians to self-determination was not realised, and they had to endure various forms of discrimination — social, national, religious and economic.

On the lands of Western Belarus, which the Poles disparagingly called Kresy Wschodnie — Eastern Borderlands, a purposeful cruel policy of exploiting the local population, plundering natural resources, exporting and destroying cultural and material values was carried out. Western Belarus was used by Poland as a source

of raw materials and cheap labour.

Despite all the large-scale repressive measures that were taken by the Polish authorities for two decades against the local residents of Western Belarus, they did not succeed in destroying the national identity



Encounter of the Red Army in the Grodno Region. September 1939.

of the Belarusians, breaking the foundations of the spiritual connection of the Belarusian people, artificially divided by the border.

On September 1st, 1939, World War II began with the German attack on Poland. The first weeks of the war were marked by the rapid advance of German troops across

Poland, the flight of the Polish government from the country, and the virtual liquidation of Polish statehood.

In this situation, the USSR declared that it ‘takes under its protection the life and property of the Ukrainian and Bela-

rusian population of the eastern regions of Poland’. On September 17th, the Red Army crossed the Soviet-Polish border. Archival documents eloquently record the enthusiastic mood of local residents, who happily greeted the Red Army soldiers as liberators with flowers, bread and salt. Belarusian poet Maksim Tank, a witness

of those September events, later said that ‘no resumes, reports, later evidence of historians can convey the enthusiasm and joy with which the working people of Western Belarus met the news of reunification’.

A unique layer of visual sources on the history of the Reunification are photographic documents, which are mainly stored in the Belarusian State Archive of Film and Photo Documents. The photographs and newsreels depict episodes related to the entry of the Red Army units into the territory of Western Belarus and their meeting with local residents, agrarian reforms, elections to the People's Assembly of Western Belarus, etc.

Archival documents clearly show that the reunification of the Western Belarusian lands with the BSSR in the autumn of 1939 was an act of historical justice.

The national holiday — the Day of People's Unity — serves as an objective reminder of the self-sufficiency of the Belarusian nation and the inviolability of the Belarusian statehood, symbolises the continuity of all generations of the Belarusian people, creates a sense of involvement of every citizen in the fate of the country and strengthens the cohesion of society on the path to building a strong, sovereign and prosperous Belarus!

17 Facets of Unity

The socio-political marathon called 17 Facets of Unity, initiated by the Belarusian Party Belaya Rus and dedicated to the Day of People's Unity, started on September 6th in the city of Dzerzhinsk, took place in 17 cities of Belarus, visiting every region of the country.

In the Brest Region this season, the marathon was hosted by Kamenets, Luninets, Ivatsevichi, in Vitebsk Region — Orsha and Glubokoe, in Gomel Region — Kalinkovichi, Buda-Koshelevo and Svetlogorsk, in Grodno Region — Dyatlovo, Iyve, Volkovysk, in Mogilev Region — Shklov, Gorki, Bykhov, in Minsk — Zhodino, Vileyka and Dzerzhinsk.

“Cities will change every year, and in this way we will be able to cover all the regional centres of each region in order to discuss the most pressing topics

of concern to our society. They will concern the ideology of the Belarusian statehood, the tasks of the country's political parties in the development of the state and civil society, challenges and threats to political stability and sovereignty, achievements of sovereign Belarus and others. There are many topics on today's agenda,” said Oleg Romanov, Chairman of the Belarusian party Belaya Rus.

The speakers of the marathon were activists of the Belaya Rus party and the public organisation of the same name, and everyone could take part in the marathon, regardless of the public association.

The socio-political marathon 17 Facets of Unity will end tomorrow, September 15th, and the result will be the publication of a booklet that will summarize materials on the speakers' speeches and the most popular issues.



Aleksandr Kulevsky

Interconnection between past, present and future

Aleksei Avdonin, an analyst with the Belarusian Institute of Strategic Research (BISR),

“Our sovereignty, independence and the interconnection of history, present and future now define three holidays. These are May 9th, July 3rd and September 17th, when in 1939 the unification of Western Belarus and the BSSR took place after the first was liberated from the so-called White Poles. From 1921 to 1939, the destruction of the Belarusians

as a nation, the destruction of the economy, any political manifestations, the closure of Belarusian schools, while the BSSR was developing, took place on that territory. Our sovereignty is the result of a long process of Belarusian struggle. We must now value it to the utmost, pass it on to the younger generation, understand that in modern conditions, when the collective West is oriented towards escalation in our Eastern European region, all this can ultimately lead to undermining the sovereignty and independence of our republic. Sovereignty can be undermined in different ways. We see how this process took place in 2020, when the political technologies of the velvet revolutions were used. Now — after the failure of the Velvet Revolution — the orientation is towards a military escalation, the creation of a pre-war situation. And in this case, the task of both the state itself and our partners within the CSTO and the Union State is to prevent under any circumstances the implementation of such malicious plans of the collective West on our territory and a repetition of the events of the early 20th century.”

A large-scale plenary meeting of the first Belarus-Uzbekistan Women's Business Forum was held at the National Library. An exhibition-presentation of products and goods of the two countries was also held here. The day before, Uzbek guests visited some Belarusian enterprises, and a parliamentary delegation led by Chairwoman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of Uzbekistan Tanzila Narbayeva met with the leadership of Belarus at various levels. This meeting can be called a key one in terms of summing up the results and laying down new vectors for expanding co-operation, which was agreed upon by the presidents of Belarus and Uzbekistan.

This is just the beginning!

Results of the first Belarus-Uzbekistan Women's Business Forum

By Yulia Demeshko, Irina Lukashik

Distance is not a barrier

Chairperson of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus **Natalya Kochanova** confidently noted that all agreements, arrangements and contracts concluded during the forum are just the beginning, and the results obtained will multiply, "There is an opportunity for mutually beneficial co-operation to ensure annual growth in trade turnover, development of industrial co-operation and an increase in the share of innovations.

Belarus is ready to steadily supply products which are in demand in Uzbekistan's market, including meat, dairy and other food products, products of woodworking and pharmaceutical industries, and offer a wide range of fabrics. We see prospects in co-operation with Uzbekistan's mining companies for the supply of our machinery. We need to develop banking, construction, transportation services, geological exploration, IT sector. Furthermore, we are interested in interaction with Uzbekistan in culture and tourism. We are ready to build tourist routes to friendly countries, despite the distance."

Natalya Kochanova proposed to work on the issue of preparing an educational programme on the topic of women's entrepreneurship, creating a unified information platform, organising events for mutual consultation and providing methodological assistance. And also to take under parliamentary supervision the businesses born on the sidelines of the forum.

"In the context of the tasks set by the Heads of our States, we hope that this forum will become a traditional event under the auspices of the upper houses of parliaments and will be recognised as an integral element of the strategic Belarusian-Uzbek partnership. In general, the agenda of bilateral women's co-operation cannot be limited to purely entrepreneurial topics. There are many pressing global problems that we need to be involved in solving," the Chairperson of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly emphasised.

Deepen partnership step by step

Chairwoman of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis **Tanzila Narbayeva** specified several areas in which Uzbekistan is interested in intensifying co-operation with Belarus:

- expansion of partnerships in the field of light industry, exchange of advanced technologies in the textile, clothing and knitting industries, development of co-operation between manufacturers of fabrics, clothing, footwear, fur and leather products;
- development of connections in the IT-sphere, joint development of digital products for entrepreneurship, especially for women;
- strengthening of co-operation in the field of medicine and education. The priority areas of interaction could be the industrial production of medicines, transplantation, the creation of medical clusters of institutions and branches of leading universities, including medical ones;
- introduction of new interaction mechanisms for the development of agriculture, the food industry, advanced training of specialists in the agrarian sector of Uzbekistan at Belarusian enterprises and higher educational institutions.

Work and expand the range

Among the partner countries of Belarus, Uzbekistan is confidently in the top ten in terms of trade turnover — last year it amounted to more than \$500 million. Of



SEE AND TRY

In front of the building of the National Library, an outdoor exposition of Belarusian equipment was unfolded. Amkodor, BelGee, MTZ, MAZ, Belkommunmash, Belshina and many others presented their products here. At the exhibition site, one could taste chocolate and sweets from Kommunarka, zefir and marmalade from Krasny Pishchevik, various types of biscuits from Slo-dych. Kamvol, Elema and Belwest also presented their products. **In general, 72 enterprises and organisations from Belarus, as well as 26 enterprises from Uzbekistan, took part in the exhibition-presentation.**

ACCENT

As a result of the forum, 14 memorandums and co-operation agreements were signed, including an agreement on the establishment of a joint leather and footwear production, as well as 14 commercial contracts worth over Br60 million, or 226.5 billion Uzbek sums.

course, this is not the limit. Economy Minister **Aleksandr Chervyakov** explained that the basis of Belarusian exports to Uzbekistan are meat and dairy products, wood products, pharmaceutical products, tractors, tractor units, and so on. At the same time, imports of goods from Uzbekistan are represented by light industry products, as well as vegetables, fruits, copper wire, pipes, and so on.

In Belarus today there are 84 organisations with Uzbek capital in the field of production of special vehicles, tractors, and footwear. And more than a hundred enterprises are registered in Uzbekistan, the founders of which are residents of the Republic of Belarus.

Create joint ventures

Chairwoman of the Bellegprom concern **Tatiana Lugina** focused on the prospects for interaction between enterprises in the field of light industry, "The economies of Belarus and Uzbekistan are very similar in the strategic development of the light industry; the Heads of our States paid a lot of attention to this industry. Last year, the turnover between the countries in light industry goods exceeded \$165 million. But we are ready to expand co-operation in the supply of wool and linen fabrics, fabrics for school uniforms, and special purposes."

Preserve folk traditions

Chairwoman of the Committee on Family and Women Affairs under the Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction of Uzbekistan **Ozoda Parpibayeva** emphasised that this business forum is a unique platform for exchanging experiences between women entrepreneurs in Belarus and Uzbekistan, ensuring gender equality, identifying shortcomings and taking measures to eliminate them, "Supporting the family, ensuring the legal rights and interests of women, increasing their economic, social and political activity are identified as one of the important vectors of the development strategy of the new Uzbekistan. And participation in the sectional platforms of the Belarusian-Uzbek forum gives good results in these areas.

A memorandum was signed with the Belarusian Union of Women, thanks to which they began to draw up a joint road map. We will co-operate regionally in absolutely all areas and preserve folk traditions. This will contribute to the development of our states and international relations."

On the eve of the Day of Oil, Gas and Fuel Industry Workers, which is annually celebrated in Belarus on the first Sunday of September, a new oil field and deposit, as well as several other promising objects, were discovered. The production association Belorusneft made a gift not only to itself, but also to the country's economy. The geography of the finds covers the Rechitsa District and Western Siberia.

By Marina Severyanova

Time of discovery

“For us, new deposits are truly a miracle. For example, oil is heavy in the Rechitsa District, so its extraction is a very difficult process. Thanks to technology and highly qualified specialists, we can do it,” the enterprise shares great news.

The Vostochno-Nekrasovskoye field is located in the Rechitsa District — in terms of oil production, it is closest to Gomel, it took an hour to get there by car. Despite the scorching sun, we decided to see everything with our own eyes. Just recently, geologists of the enterprise discovered a pre-salt structure at this place. The specialists continued to study the territory, covering an area of about 150 square kilometres with seismic surveys. The outcomes of the work became an occasion to delve into its study. As a result, using the hydraulic fracturing technology in the exploration well, it was possible to obtain an oil inflow of about 30 cubic metres per day — a fairly good indicator. The new field is waiting for the detailing of the structure, the state balance sheet and the calculation of hydrocarbon reserves. And they, according to experts, are at least 200 thousand tonnes.

A new deposit was also discovered at the geological field of the Rechitsa District after drilling exploratory well No. 11. Belorusneft noted that there were no discoveries here for 15 years.

With the help of modern methods, which were first used in the Pripyat Trough, specialists updated the data on the territory. The discovery will increase the company's resource base by at least 600,000 tonnes of oil. It is here, by the way, with a high content of associated gas, so the benefits of the discovery are twofold.

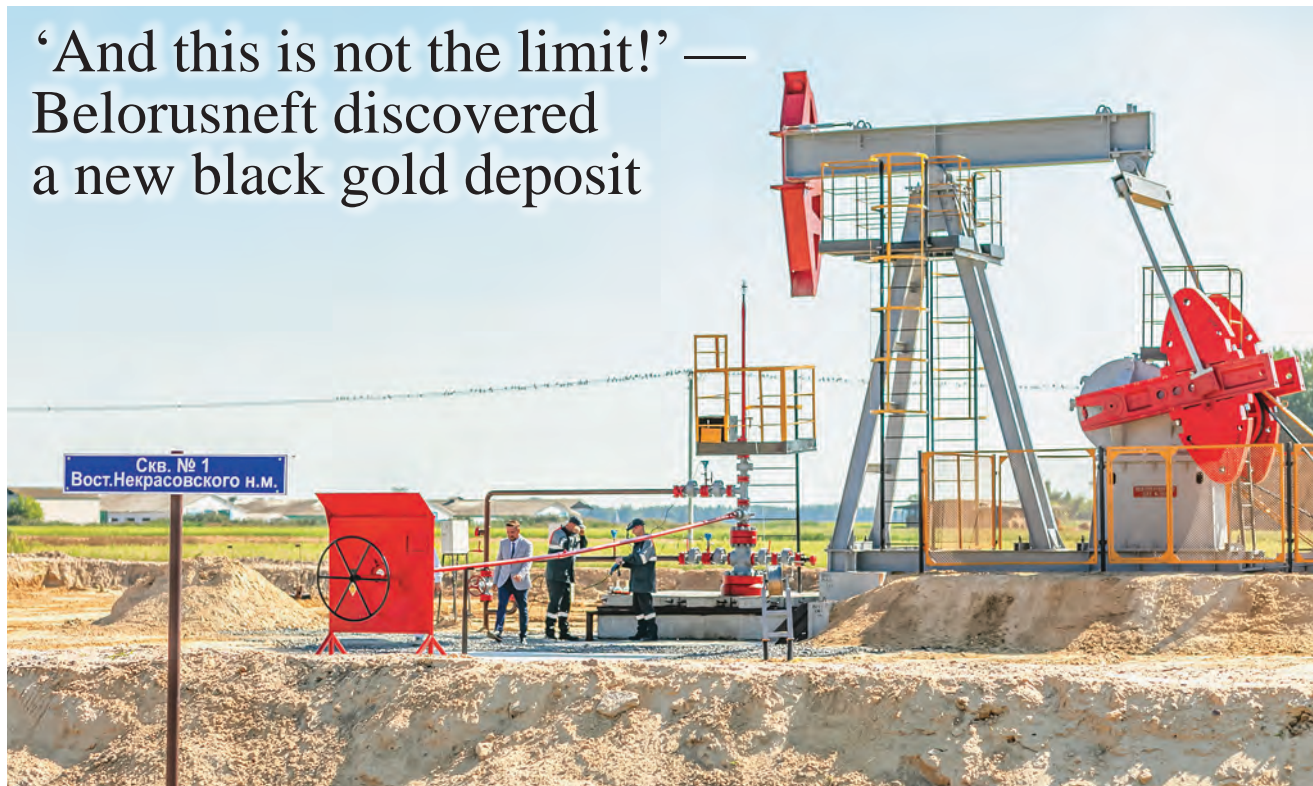
The company clarified that associated petroleum gas is a valuable hydrocarbon component that is released from the mined, transported and processed minerals containing hydrocarbons.

More than half of the reserves of Belarusian black gold are hard to recover, so the further and deeper experts look into the prehistoric caches of the Polesian subsoil, the more difficult, and therefore more surprising the discovery is. This strategy has fully justified its feasibility.

Belorusneft Production Association Deputy Director General for Geology Piotr Povzhik says, “The number of exploratory wells drilled has grown to 14 per year, and the penetration rate has risen to 52,000 metres. Research is carried out in Rechitsa, Khoyniki, Svetlogorsk, Kalinkovich, Zhlobin and Bragin Districts. As a result, the increase in recoverable reserves for 2018-2022 amounted to almost 9 million tonnes. During this time, nine new oil fields and 32 deposits were discovered. Objects-2023 is another confirmation of the competent work of the specialists of our company, which now employs 27 thousand people.”

The plans include a comprehensive study of the Maisko-Makeevsko-Dneprovskaya area. This is more than 1200

‘And this is not the limit!’ — Belorusneft discovered a new black gold deposit



Focus on innovation



square kilometres of territory. It is located in unique geographical conditions, including the Dnepro-Sozhsky nature reserve in Loyev District.

Siberian prospects

A few more discoveries were made in Western Siberia by a subsidiary of Belorusneft, the Yangpur company. A new deposit of natural gas has been discovered at the Metelnoye oil and gas condensate field — Siberians have been developing it for about six years. Approximately two years ago, natural gas production peaked here — over a billion cubic metres. For natural reasons, already known deposits began to lose their potential: reservoir pressure decreased, and ‘light’ reserves were exhausted. In this regard, research here began to be carried out even more intensively — and the result did not disappoint.

“From well No. 829s2 of the Metelnoye field, an inflow of natural gas with a volume of 260 thousand cubic metres

per day and condensate of three cubic metres per day was obtained. According to preliminary estimates, the recoverable reserves of natural gas in open deposits are up to 700 million cubic metres. The result is quite significant for the company, as it will allow increasing the gas reserves of the entire field by 15 percent,” Alexander Polyakov, Director of the Yangpur oil company explained.

Surveys in Western Siberia really took on a serious scale and brought specialists to the Izvestinsky subsoil area, where oilmen drilled an exploratory well and discovered a significant resource base. In addition, here, geophysicists' instruments reached much more ancient structures: a new deposit was discovered based on the results of their testing.

Exploration well No. 201 at the Rozhdestvenskaya structure has already shown that the recoverable oil resources here are 198 thousand tons, natural gas — 485 million cubic metres, condensate — 43 thou-



sand tonnes. According to the results of geophysical studies in the Lower Cretaceous and Jurassic deposits, rocks saturated with hydrocarbons were identified. Deep-lying deposits of the pre-Jurassic base are noted as promising.

There are also views of the Ust-Purpeysky subsoil area — the Yangpur company acquired it in 2021. Here, when testing the formation in the new well No. 561 of the Gubkinskoye field, an initial flow of oil of 30 tonnes per day and gas of 150 thousand cubic metres per day was obtained.

The achievements of oil workers are the sum of many factors, the most important of which is the colossal work of a huge team of specialists from an international company that ensures the well-being of its enterprise and the country's raw material security.

Member of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly, Belorusneft Production Association Director General Aleksandr Lyakhov concluded, “The discovery of new sources, especially in the territory of the old oil province, where the company has been producing hydrocarbons for more than half a century, is the result of the systematic work of the geological block of Belorusneft over the past few years. An important role was played by serious investments in technological renewal, digitalisation of processes, as well as great attention to employee motivation and working conditions. Such an integrated approach to work allows us to achieve success in all areas. We are breaking records in oil and gas production, we have reached the maximum drilling volumes over the past 50 years, we are building a mining and processing plant in the Brest Region, we are developing the best electric transport charging network in the CIS. The company always relies on innovation in all areas.”

Photos by the production association Belorusneft

Belarusian education is valued in the world: citizens from more than 110 countries come to our country for a diploma. It is generally recognised that we have a high quality of teaching, a good material and technical base of educational institutions, a beautiful country in which there is something to see and where to relax. In addition, Belarusians are open, friendly and tolerant people who respect other people's customs, traditions and interests.

How much does it cost to study in Belarus for foreigners, is it possible to study for free, how the export of educational services is progressing — we talked about this and other things with Andrei Krasutsky, Deputy Head of the International Co-operation Department of the Education Ministry.

Knowledge without borders

Export of educational services annually brings about \$90 million to the republican budget



BELTA

HOWEVER

Top 5,000 different ratings include ten Belarusian institutions:

- ◆ Belarusian State University (QS, SIR, WRWU, Unirank);
- ◆ Belarusian State Medical University (WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Belarusian National Technical University (QS, WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno (WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics (QS, WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Francisk Skorina Gomel State University (WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Polotsk State University (WRWU);
- ◆ Belarusian State Technological University (WRWU, Unirank, SIR);
- ◆ Belarusian State Economic University (Unirank);
- ◆ Grodno State Medical University (Unirank).



Aleksey Stolyarov

By Yulia Statkevich

Interest is increasing

— How many foreign students are currently registered in the country's universities?

— More than 28.5 thousand foreign students studied at higher education institutions in the 2022/23 academic year, which is 12 percent of all students.

— What is the rate in other countries?

— According to the data on international student mobility, presented by the joint global research initiative Project Atlas, the percentage of foreign students to domestic students in each country is different depending on national priorities. Thus, in France there are 15 percent of foreign students in higher education institutions, in Russia — 10.7 percent, in the USA — 4.9 percent, in China only 0.5 percent.

— Where do young people come to us to study?

— The export geography of educational services is extensive — over 110 countries. Foreign citizens study in almost all state institutions of higher education, as well as in some private ones.

Thanks to the similarity of educational programmes due to the preserved traditions of the Soviet higher education, the practical absence of a language barrier, a significant share falls on foreign students from the CIS countries and the EAEU — 42 percent of the total. At the same time, students from Uzbekistan make up 18.8 percent of all students, from Turkmenistan — 14, Russia — 6.3.

China remains the undisputed leader in terms of the number of foreign students in Belarus — 32 percent.

The potential of the national education

of Belarus is of interest to the citizens of many African countries. We have students from more than 30 African countries, with foreign citizens from Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Morocco and Egypt prevailing.

Recently, representatives of the states of the so-called far arc, who have not previously studied in Belarus, are increasingly encountered. For example, from New Zealand, Wallis and Fortune, Central African Republic, El Salvador.

— What determines the demand for our education?

— We have created programmes for different levels of education that are of interest to foreign students: bachelor's and master's programmes in English, double diploma programmes, additional professional education programmes, advanced training, summer schools, Russian language courses, distance learning and others.

— Are domestic colleges popular?

— More than a thousand young people from other countries study in the system of secondary specialised and vocational education, mainly citizens of Russia (54 percent), Ukraine (16.5 percent) and Kazakhstan (6.7 percent).

Amount involved

— How much does it cost to study in our educational institutions for visitors from abroad?

— The cost of education is determined by the educational institution for the academic year, depending on the form of education. It is established in the amount of economically justified costs necessary for the training of specialists in a particular specialty. Depending on this, as well as the language of instruction, the cost of education in Belarus for foreign

citizens varies from 2 to 5.7 thousand dollars a year.

— How much does the export of educational services bring?

— It brings about \$90 million to the republican budget annually.

— I heard that foreign students can study here for free. How does it work?

— Thanks to the support of the Head of State for the implementation of specific joint projects in foreign countries and the training of personnel for them, the promotion of initiatives aimed at strengthening the foreign economic and foreign policy relations of the Republic of Belarus, a system of grants has been operating since 2018. In accordance with the Decree of the President 'On Grants for Education', up to 100 quotas are allocated annually from the republican budget for the education of foreign citizens in our educational institutions. This mechanism is in demand among the target foreign audience. If in 2019, 19 foreign citizens were enrolled in educational institutions at the expense of grants for education, then in 2023 — already 52.

Technological and comfortable

— Please tell us about the conditions that are created for those who come to study here.

— Modern educational infrastructure is an important aspect of the attractiveness of domestic education for foreign students.

To do this, classrooms are being equipped for laboratory and practical classes with special equipment, computer equipment. The technical base is being updated to improve the quality of online educational events.

To create comfortable living conditions for students, three dormitories for 2760 places are being built for BNTU,

BSUPC, BSUIR and BSMU. In addition, the major overhaul of the BSTU dormitory for 960 people is being completed.

— What else is being done to promote the export of educational services?

— I would like to note that work to increase and diversify the export of educational services is being carried out as part of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Concept for the Development of the Export of Educational Services (promotion of the Education in Belarus brand) for 2022-2025, other programme documents in co-operation with the republican government bodies and our foreign institutions.

Universities and colleges regularly update information on the English version of their websites, post advertising and information materials about the benefits of educational programmes on export information support portals, send video materials for placement on the specialised YouTube channel Study in Belarus Online in Russian and English with subtitles. They also manage accounts on popular social networks.

Data on the issues of training foreign citizens in the system of vocational education are posted on the official website of the Education Ministry, on the Vocational Education in Belarus website, as well as on the websites of Belarusian foreign institutions.

A presentation catalogue on the education system in Belarus has been developed in Russian and English in printed and electronic form. Presentation and exhibition events are held to promote the educational services of higher education institutions. The format of joint educational programmes is actively used, which is most in demand with Chinese, Russian and Uzbek partners.



India to be renamed Bharat?

A change to the Sanskrit name is backed by PM Narendra Modi's BJP, which says the word 'India' is a symbol of colonial slavery

The Narendra Modi-led government is likely to bring a resolution for changing India's official name to 'Bharat' during the special session of Parliament, scheduled from September 18th-22nd, reported Times Now.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh also confirmed that the official G20 dinner invitations from the Indian President have been sent under the name of 'President of Bharat' instead of the usual 'President of India'.

"So the news is indeed true. Rashtrapati Bhawan has sent out an invite for a G20 dinner on September 9th in the name of 'President of Bharat' instead of the usual 'President of India'," Ramesh said in a post on Twitter).

BJP Rajya Sabha MP Naresh Bansal also pitched the proposal during the recently concluded monsoon session in the Upper House, saying that the name 'India' is a symbol of 'colonial slavery' and 'should be removed from the Constitution'.



US hegemony and its perils

Xinhua Institute releases report on facts and dangers of US military hegemony

The report, titled *Origins, Facts and Perils of US Military Hegemony* and released by Xinhua Institute, the think tank of Xinhua News Agency, outlines the formation of the US military hegemony, summarises the means Washington adopted to maintain it, and delves into its perils with facts and data

By presenting facts and data, the report traced the root of US military hegemony, explored how America has pursued, maintained, and abused its military hegemony, and shed light on the perils of the country's hegemonic practices.

US military hegemony is a central pillar to the country's pursuit of a unipolar world and hegemonic order, according to the report.

The hegemonic acts of the United States, such as waging wars wilfully and

intervening militarily in other countries, have destroyed human lives, trampled on human rights and the sovereignty of other countries, undermined global peace and development, and unleashed great suffering and disasters onto the peoples of certain countries, which are the greatest source of chaos threatening global security and stability and impeding the progress of human civilisation, the report stated.

A group of foreign experts from Asia, the Middle East, Africa, the Eurasia, Europe, and Latin America as well as several Chinese scholars participated in the seminar in person or virtually, and they spoke highly of the report.

Dmitry Suslov, Deputy Director of the Centre for Comprehensive European and International Studies at the National Research University Higher School of Eco-

nomics in Moscow, described the report as 'deep, accurate and timely'.

"The United States has always been the most expansionist power in the world," Suslov continued, stressing that its military hegemony 'was characterised by staunch violations of international law and illegal military interventions'.

Zivadin Jovanovic, President of Belgrade Forum for a World of Equals and former Serbian senior diplomat, said that 'this document will play an important role in strengthening global understanding, solidarity and coordination of efforts toward building polycentric, more just, inclusive, truly democratic new world order'.

The report was released globally via various platforms including websites and social media in Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Russian, and other languages.



The Rolling Stones are back

The Rolling Stones will release their first album of new music in 18 years in October, lead singer Mick Jagger, fellow founding bandmate Keith Richards and bass guitarist Ronnie Wood announced in London

The album, *Hackney Diamonds*, is the first since the death of drummer Charlie Watts in 2021, and the first containing original material since 2005's *A Bigger Bang*.

"We didn't want to make just any record and put it out," Jagger, 80, told a launch event at the Hackney Empire theatre in east London, hosted by American talk show host Jimmy Fallon.

"I'm not saying we're big-headed about it but we're pleased with it and we hope you all like it," the octogenarian rocker said.

The Stones' 24th studio album, set for release on October 20th, has twelve

tracks, with the single, *Angry*, the first to come out.

Wood, 76, confirmed during the launch that American superstar Lady Gaga features on another, *Sweet Sound Of Heaven*, adding she 'sings really sweet' on it.

Two of the tracks were recorded with Watts in 2019. The others feature drummer Steve Jordan, whom Watts recommended to replace him.

"Ever since Charlie's gone, it's different," said 79-year-old guitarist Keith Richards of recording the new album without one of the band's founders.

"He's number four, he's missing, he's up there. Of course he's missed incredibly."

Chinese EVs pose real threat to Europe's car industry

Europe's carmakers have a fight on their hands to produce lower-cost electric vehicles (EVs) and erase China's lead in developing cheaper, more consumer-friendly models, executives said at Munich's IAA Mobility Show

"We have to close the gap on costs with some Chinese players that started on EVs a generation earlier," Renault CEO Luca de Meo told Reuters at the car show, adding when manufacturing costs decline, prices will also go down.

De Meo said as part of the French carmaker's drive toward price parity with the Chinese, its R5 EV due out next year will be 25 percent to 30 percent cheaper than its electric Scenic and Megane models.

Chinese EV makers, including BYD, Nio and Xpeng are all targeting Europe's EV market, where sales soared nearly 55 percent to about 820,000 vehicles in the

first seven months of 2023, making up about 13 percent of all car sales.

Xpeng plans to expand into more European markets in 2024, and Zhejiang Leapmotor Technology announced five models for overseas markets, including Europe, over the next two years.

About 41 percent of exhibitors at this year's Munich event are headquartered in Asia, with double the number of Chinese companies attending, including BYD, Xpeng and battery maker CATL.

The arrival of Chinese EV makers in Europe has raised concerns they could dominate EV sales.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Terespol gates to hell

The authorities of interwar Poland carried out inhuman experiments on prisoners in Brest, leaving them no chance for life



By Maksim Osipov

The disappeared general

Recently, a number of Internet sources published information that interwar Poland not only had its own concentration camps, but, like the Third Reich, conducted cruel medical experiments on prisoners.

It was reported that they were held in Brest, and the prison was located on the territory of the Brest Fortress. The weekly *Mysł Polska* published on this occasion excerpts from a historical book about the death of General Włodzimierz Zagorski, who was kidnapped and imprisoned by the political police of the Second Polish Republic. Perhaps he also became one of the victims of the regime's experiments, and his life path was interrupted precisely in Brest...

The corpse was dissolved in a ceramic bath

Let us quote the final excerpts from the book, which are given by the Internet resource Rzeczpospolita Czterech Narodów,

“During the investigation, interesting evidence was collected regarding, among other things, chemical and biological experiments conducted in Brest-on-Bug. These experiments began in the second half of the 1920s, although they did not intensify until 1933. Witnesses who conducted them at that time, including Dr. Alfons Ostrowski, testified about the work of the Brest laboratory and the experiments carried out there, also mentioning their victims, who died in terrible agony.”

In May 1955, doctor Jan Golba sent a letter to the Prosecutor General of the

In 2021, *Newsweek Polska* published a lengthy interview with historian Bartosz Wieliński, deputy editor of *Gazeta Wyborcza* and author of *Bad Germans*, a collection of portraits of people drugged by National Socialism. In it, the historian spoke about the terrible experiments that Nazi doctors during the World War II carried out on concentration camp prisoners, children, and the disabled, justifying this with a ‘humane’ lie. However, in that interview, there was not a single word about the fact that interwar Poland was doing the same. The fact that it was it who erected the first concentration camp of the Nazi type (in Bereza-Kartuzskaya) is now widely known. However, Rzeczpospolita overtook the Nazis in medical experiments on people. And also on the territory of modern Belarus...

People's Republic of Poland, in which he wrote, “I really did experiments on individuals with pathogenic microorganisms at an experimental station in Brest-on-Bug. This is a fact that I do not deny.”

He then explained, “The execution of these tests was entrusted to me by my superiors in the form of a military order. Before carrying out the experiments, my superiors concluded that the persons on whom the experiments were to be carried out were irrevocably doomed to death.

According to the doctor, he was convinced that this was the best way to support the homeland, which was threatened by external enemies. People intended for experiments were delivered to Brest by the Head of the 3rd department of the General Staff. Usually they were locked in a pressure chamber into which a typhoid suspension was pumped. The rate of action of the bacteria was then observed.

After death, the corpse of a prisoner was dissolved in a special ceramic bath filled with a mixture of hydrochloric acid with the addition of carbon disulfide and concentrated nitric acid. Hydrochloric acid decalcified bones, carbon disulfide dissolved fats, and nitric acid burned tissues (proteins) and decalcified bones.”

THE FATE OF THE ‘SCARY GUY’

In September 1939, Colonel Kósteck-Biernacki, avoiding participation in hostilities, went to Romania with the government. In the autumn of 1945, the Romanian authorities released him, but a week after his return, he was arrested by the communist authorities of Poland and spent eight years in prison, and for a long time in the same cell with the Nazi criminal Eric Koch. In April 1953, after a four-day trial, he was sentenced to death, later commuted to 10 years in prison. Released from prison on health grounds in November 1955, died May 25th, 1957, in Warsaw.

Covering up traces

According to Rzeczpospolita Czterech Narodów, the first traces of biological experiments on prisoners in Brest date back to 1927. The resource asks the question, “So, did Kósteck-Biernacki really participate in some experiment in Brest-on-Bug in 1927 with a new type of weapon that was still in its infancy?”

The publication refers to the memoirs of the then wife of Gendarmerie Colonel Jan Yura-Gozhechovsky: “Gozhechovsky cursed terribly during his stay in Brest



“The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“Interwar Poland brought itself to collapse. When the decision was made to start the liberation campaign of the Red Army, Poland no longer existed as a subject of international politics... Here's another paradox of history. The Belarusians, in alliance with other Soviet peoples, not only won, but also — having cast aside previous grievances — liberated Poland from fascism in 1945. Over 600,000 Soviet soldiers, many of them Belarusians, remained forever lying in Polish soil.”

At the patriotic forum — This is OUR History! — to mark the People's Unity Day on September 17th, 2022



and was ill every day of his stay, which he treated as a godsend, but obedience to the marshal did not allow him to avoid this hated work. In 1927, Gendarmerie Colonel Jan Yura-Gozhechovsky replaced Kósteck-Biernacki as commander of the garrison in Brest-on-Bug. He told General Kordian Zamorsky that he needed to go to Brześć in order to finally eliminate the remnants of gas experiments (allegedly carried out there by Kósteck-Biernacki)... He allegedly ordered that the remnants of the experiments be buried, and then, having established a post, he forbade even cows to graze in this place.

We must not underestimate any of these circumstances. The history of the Austrian intelligence archives after the Great War is excellent material for work that must be done as soon as possible.

A fierce struggle began for their capture on the territory of the Second Polish Republic already in the first hours of independence. The materials concerning Józef Piłsudski were partly in his hands, the rest were destroyed. However, the marshal knew: there is no guarantee that someone did not leave something, and suddenly it will not see the light.

KÓSTEK HANGER: FROM BREST TO BEREZA

Let's pay attention to the figure of the then commandant of the Brest Garrison. Waclaw Kósteck-Biernacki was not only a fanatical admirer of Marshal Piłsudski, but also the most famous Polish Satanist, apologist and worshiper of evil, writes Rzeczpospolita Czterech Narodów. In addition, it cites one of his characteristic statements, **“Only fools can feel sorry for a fallen enemy, his wife, children, etc., and liars feel remorse.”** Here's his another characteristic thesis, **“Murder is the greatest need of man.”**

A remarkable moment: after being expelled from the Polish school for bestial Anti-Russian sentiment, he entered the Lvov Medical University, where he honed his own radicalism and inhumanity. After serving in Algiers as part of the legion, he completed courses for staff officers and served as head of the field gendarmerie. The nickname Kósteck hanger was assigned to him due to the abundance of death sentences to peasants (mainly for ‘espionage in favour of the Russians’).

Fight if you can

He did not win a single fight, but became the winner of the tournament. How is this possible? Look for a woman...

Oleg Smaikevich from Minsk is a real knight! He is fond of historic reenactment and makes bright shows out of performances. Even armour weighing 35kg is not a hindrance. Steel vestment, by the way, costs like a ten-year-old foreign car: it is made individually by a blacksmith, and only the most enthusiastic can afford it. Behind the scenes of the thematic festival, we talked about the nuances of medieval battles, strong opponents and everyday life of reenactors.



By Olga Nevmerzhitskaya

It comes from the past

People in unusual costumes scurry around the campground. The impression that I moved in time with Count Godfrey and his stunned servant Jacquasse from *The Visitors* movie. Women in strange bonnets and men in funny tights are talking enthusiastically about something. And a soldier clad in armour walks along the path. The equipment is not conducive to jokes, and it is clear from the concentrated face of the hero that the battle is going to be fierce.

“Is it scary?” I ask.

“Not at all! We are not fighting to the death. It only seems so to the viewer. In fact, it is customary to treat the enemy nobly, as was once the case in medieval tournaments. Even if the sword fell, in 99 percent of cases we allow you to pick it up and continue the fight. But this is actually a loss,” the knight breaks into a smile.

The courtly behaviour of the competitors does not mean that the opponent will be pitied. Hitting the head and hitting with full force is a sacred thing. And it remains intact only because the warriors have a helmet with a cunning. Inside is a thick quilted lining stuffed with linen. The body is also protected. The chest and back are covered with a cuirass, under it is chain mail, arms and legs are also in steel. Details of armour are attached to underarmored clothing with laces or straps and tightened tightly.

Moving in such a structure is unrealistic. But this is for me. And Oleg Smaikevich also cuts his opponents like cabbage. Figuratively speaking, of course. Visibility is practically zero. Through the helmet, you can only distinguish weap-

ons, a shield and a person in front of you. Even the sounds inside penetrate weakly. Like air, to be honest.

In tournaments, they fight with the weapons that they like. Spears, daggers, polaxes, axes, halberds and morningstars are popular. But swords are less common. Usually one and a half (up to two kilograms) or two-handed. Any weapon is supposed to have humanisers — elements that protect against injury. However, the kicks counted by the referees must hit vulnerable spots. For example, in the armpits. More lethal attacks from an opponent — a higher chance of superiority.

However, it happens differently: the participant did not win a single fight, but became the winner of the tournament, “Some fights have a court of ladies. For a bright fight or a good deed, the girls give the participant roses. This is a bonus that you can use to your advantage. And the decision to award the first place is up to the organisers. They also determine how you will perform: according to a rigid tournament grid or choosing opponents on your own. But the most surprising thing is that at some festivals there are no winners at all. This is the format.”

Camera, action

Historical reenactment clubs usually have a clear time division. Oleg Smaikevich is fascinated by the events of the first half of the 15th century — from the beginning of the Battle of Grunwald to the end of the Hussite wars. No one else is dealing with this topic in our country. He demonstrated his fighting skills at Belarusian and Russian festivals, going out to fight even with opponents that are much larger in size. What’s the secret?

— *Weight, height and skill do not always win. Endurance is the main*

thing. I have shaped it in numerous tournaments and I feel confident, even if I fight with the best of the best. And I am also guided by the ‘let nothing stand in your way’ principle. If you really want something, you can move mountains.

Reenactors are often invited to the cinema. Oleg Smaikevich starred in four films. Filming took place in Minsk and outside the city, in Lida and Mir castles. According to the plot, he had to gallop on a horse, fight, but the most difficult thing, he admits with a laugh, is to go up and down the stairs. For the twentieth time, he lost his nerve.

— You have to wait for your scene for several hours. The shift starts early in the morning, and sometimes ends after midnight. An interesting fact is that representatives of different eras can fight in the background, but the audience usually does not notice this. That is, the situation when a warrior of the 13th century kills a warrior of the 17th century on the screen is a frequent occurrence.

And this is just one blunder that a professional sees. There are also worthy

films in terms of historical reenactment, but they are few. Oleg highlights black and white paintings of the 1950s-1970s. And from the modern ones, I liked *The Last Duel* with Matt Damon in the title role. The only negative is the knight’s half-open helmet: this does not happen in battle.

Smaikevich became a knight last year at a festival in Novosibirsk. Everything is as it should be — standing on one knee. To the historical name that he used before — Aleh z Navagradka [the small homeland of the hero — Novogrudok], the appeal ‘pan’ was added.

Being an experienced warrior, he nevertheless admits: there is room to grow. He would like to compete with the multiple world champion in historical fencing Sergei Ukolov. And once again meet with an experienced reenactor from Russia Ilya Esik. Aka Bezhdrih from Shtrizhnitsa. He is not afraid to lose to titled opponents. He assures: this is the case when the main thing is the pleasure of the battle.

Photos from the personal collection of the hero

Yahor Sharamkou does not give up hope for Olympic success

The leader of the national artistic gymnastics team, Yahor Sharamkou, lives in Mogilev, but it's not easy to catch him in his hometown. However, I was serious about the interview and didn't stop trying, because there was a weighty reason to talk — the athlete recently won the Russian Cup in the Men's Floor Exercise, leaving behind even Olympic champion Nikita Nagornyy! The efforts were crowned with success. Yahor is calm, reasonable, smiling and pleasant to talk to. He's just a golden boy. In every sense.



By Lyubov Solovieva

— Congratulations on the victory! You have already won the Russian Cup twice. A year ago in Kaluga and now in Sochi. What are your emotions about this?

— Of course, I'm happy with the result, but I'll be honest: on the podium, first of all, I felt a sense of relief that I did everything I could. I am calm about the fact that we managed to defeat the titled Russian guys, who at one time were the best in the world. Perhaps they were not so well prepared for these competitions. Maybe they weren't that important to them at all. One can philosophise on this topic for a long time. It turned out the way it turned out.

— It seemed that the refereeing was very strict.

— I agree with this. I don't rule out that forces from above helped me, but I managed to perform very well. It was only better in 2020, when I took silver and bronze at the European Championships: the programme was a little more difficult, and the execution was much cleaner. But then the years were different, there were many competitions in the schedule, including international ones.

— An injury prevented you from winning a second medal in Sochi in the vault. Was it something serious?

— Fortunately, it wasn't injured, I only damaged the thigh muscles. I've been working a lot for the past month, and my body couldn't handle too much stress. The doctors said that it's nothing serious, I need to rest more, which I'm glad about. I don't want it to be like in 2015, when after the first medal in my life my back was seized so much that I could neither bend nor straighten. Sometimes my ankles hurt a lot. I even had to wrap them with plaster when I did the triple jump (this is one of the most difficult elements in the Floor Exercise), although this did not help much. Before then, I'll rest for one day, and then he'll let me go. Now one day is not enough for me. I am recovering with the help of baths, massages, anti-inflammatory drugs.

— Please, tell us a little about the behind the scenes of the competition in Sochi.

— We have very easy communication with the Russian team. I mean both the athletes and the rest of the staff. They often help us. For example, when my leg hurt, I went to them for procedures and for medications. No one makes a distinction: our athletes can do this, but yours cannot. In addition, Russia is a gymnastics power with many masters. In August, we held a three-week joint training camp with them on Krugloye Lake and trained together. We are following the Russian guys in terms of sports, taking some training points into account. Although we, Belarusians, can teach the Russians something.

While we are talking with Yahor, his coach Ivan Makarenko passes by and with a smile throws out 'Maligner!', hinting that the gymnast is not training, they want him to have already plowed his stuff. I ask Ivan Vasilyevich to stay and say a few words about the pupil.

— He came to me as a very young boy. He was a blast and couldn't get off the trampoline. During his youth, he had to be raised using the whip method. Sometimes I was late for training and was lazy. He is what I call an energy-saving guy. Now there are no questions — it works great. He tries to do what I tell him. But it cannot be done without mistakes. At the Russian Cup, when we were standing on the platform, I sometimes wanted to close my eyes. I saw how he goes to the first element and does it incorrectly, and the second may not work out at all. The experience was quite great. Don't forget a bright show, a large platform, a lot of spectators — all this is beautiful and great, but at the

same time it can interfere with the athlete. The young people would definitely get lost, this energy would destroy them. Fortunately, Yahor had already competed at the World and European Championships and was able to cope.

Yahor joins the conversation, "I've been in gymnastics for 19 years, I know where I'm going. I remember my first medal. I took first place in the vault at the Olympic Youth Festival in Georgia in 2015. Since then, I've developed a taste for it and want to develop further and add to my collection of awards. The life of gymnasts is short-lived, especially on vaulting apparatus, like mine, where there is a lot of stress on the back. But I definitely have a few years left. I can also say my weighty word in gymnastics. In a month I will perform at a tournament for the prizes of gymnastics legends in Belarus. Already on September 13th we are leaving with the team for a training camp in Staiki. We also hope that the information will be confirmed, and we will

be allowed to participate in international competitions in January. I dream of getting to the Olympics, and then the cards will fall."

— By the way, how did the suspension affect your physical fitness and psychological state? What motivated you to go to training?

— With the desire to train, everything is simple. This is at least my job; it was not difficult for me to do it. Moreover, Mogilev has a wonderful hall. The best in the country, except for Staiki. We easily find a common language with the coach, I love him. That is, there are no problems with everyday work. The most difficult thing was the lack of international competitions. When you don't see your competitors, on the one hand, it's easier to perform. Because when one performed brilliantly, the second fell, the third, God forbid, broke something else, all this affects your thinking and the result. But stewing in your own juice is also not an option.

DIRECT SPEECH

Coach Ivan Makarenko,

"Of course, I would like us to be allowed to participate in the World Cup stages. Russia is good, there are great gymnasts there, but I would like to see something else. Travel to another country and communicate with athletes. This is an experience. We aim to ensure that next year Yahor, at the age of 25 — at his peak, at his prime — gets to the Olympic Games. I'm sure that if we were admitted, we would have made it there. Even if in a neutral status. Of course, we want to compete under our own flag, but we can't pick and choose. Anyway, the whole gymnastics world knows Yahor and exactly what country he represents!"





Aleksey Vyazmitinov

Photo of the week

15 thousand people took part in the Minsk Half Marathon, including guests from 17 countries

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



September 15th is Library Day in the Republic of Belarus. The commemorative date was chosen in honour of the founding of the National

Library of Belarus, the country's main book depository. Its building in the shape of a huge glass diamond has become a landmark of Minsk and a symbol of the country. Currently, there are about 3,000 public libraries in Belarus. The first collections of books on the territory of the country appeared in the 11th century.

On September 15th, 1916, the first tank attack in the history of world wars took place. A tank attack was carried out for the first time in the world during a large-scale offensive operation of the Anglo-French troops against German formations in the French theatre of the World War I in the battle near the village of Flers near the Somme, in which 49 combat machines of the Mark I (Mk I) model took part.



On September 16th, 1380, Russian troops won the Battle of Kulikovo. The battle of the Russian regiments led by the Grand Duke of Moscow and Vladimir Dmitry Ivanovich and the army under the command of the Horde beklyarbek Mamai

became a turning point in the struggle of the Russian people against the yoke of the Golden Horde. Mamai's army was completely defeated. The dominance of the Golden Horde was dealt a severe blow.



On September 17th, 1783, Nadezhda Durova (1783-1866), the first female officer and memoirist in the Russian army, was born. In 1806, posing as a man, she joined a cavalry regiment, participated in the war of 1812, and the campaigns of the Russian army abroad in 1813-1814. She was an orderly with M. Kutuzov. A number of works of literature and art are dedicated to Nadezhda Durova — *The Hussar Ballad* feature film, A. Bogatyrev's opera *Nadezhda Durova*, etc.

September 17th is the Day of People's Unity in the Republic of Belarus. The holiday was established by presidential decree in 2021. On September 17th, 1939, the Red Army entered the territory of Poland in accordance with the agreements on the Secret Protocol to the Non-Aggression



Pact between the USSR and Germany. The result of the campaign for the BSSR was reunification after the division of the territory under the terms of the Riga Treaty of 1921, when the western lands of Belarus were ceded to Poland.

September 17th is Forestry Worker's Day in the Republic of Belarus. The forests of Belarus are not only a source of renewable raw materials and energy resources. This is a treasury of biological and landscape diversity, an important environmental factor. Belarus is one of the ten leading forest states in Europe. The total area of the forest fund of the Republic of Belarus exceeds 9 million hectares.



On September 19th, 1648, the famous mathematician, physicist and thinker Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) conducted an experiment that proved the existence of atmospheric pressure. With the help of a glass tube sealed at one end, tipped over at the other end into a cup of mercury, he measured the height to which the liquid metal rises in it at the foot and at the top of the mountain. In honour of this discovery, the unit of pressure measurement was called 'pascal'.



On September 19th, 1883, a glass factory was founded in the Berezovka tract of the Lida District (it was destroyed during the Great Patriotic War, in 1944 it was restored as the Neman glass factory). In the Neman price list of 1911, customers were offered 1828 types of products — from chic sets and vases to public household utensils. The enterprise was constantly improving, which made the Neman trademark prestigious and recognisable not only in our country, but also abroad.



On September 19th, 1888, the first ever beauty pageant was held in Belgium. The contestants were supposed to remain not known to the public, but the girls were selected for the final according to the photographs sent to the jury. The winner was 18-year-old Creole from Guadeloupe, Bertha Sucret.

On September 20th, 1946, the opening of the first Cannes Film Festival took place. 46 films were submitted to the competition, 11 of them received the main award — the Grand Prix of the film festival. The Palme d'Or, as the festival's highest award, has been awarded since 1955.

