



The 11th National Philatelic Exhibition *Belphila-2021* has opened in the Vitebsk Regional Local Lore Museum

7



A scattering of large reservoirs surrounded by centuries-old forests is a paradise for tourists

10

INTERNATIONAL

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In the old days, the Kupala Night wreath was not just an ornament, but also an object of power. The girls wove them for the sake of fulfilling their desires and divined their fortune by throwing wreaths on the water. In the photo: During the celebration of Kupala Night in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha.

Kupala Night celebrated in Belarus

Shrouded in myths and legends, Belarusians have enjoyed and cherished the ancient holiday of Kupala Night for many centuries. Every year, at the height of summer, it is celebrated all over the country with beautiful festivities: weaving Kupala Night wreaths and making wishes, lighting bonfires, singing songs and looking for the mysterious fern flower...

It is possible to see the Kupala Night celebrations in different places of Belarus, but the largest festival — *Alexandria Gathers Friends* — takes place in the Shklov District of the Mogilev Region, on the picturesque bank of the Dnieper River. The first event in Alexandria took place back in 2010. The idea of holding the festival was supported by the Head of State who proposed to make it traditional. In 2012, the Kupala Night holiday acquired international status, and one of the oldest folk holidays became a national cultural symbol of Belarus, as well as one of the centres of attraction for numerous tourists. → 3



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Belarus will be able to defend itself

Sanctions pressure from the West on our country and retaliation measures discussed at a meeting with the President

The leadership of the Government, the banking sector and the power bloc were invited to a serious — and even difficult — conversation at the Palace of Independence last Tuesday. The agenda included our response to the restrictive measures of the collective West. Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed a fundamental point, “In fact, the use of restrictive measures as an instrument to put pressure on a sovereign state is lawlessness and blackmail on an international scale. I remind you that blackmailing is condemned in the documents of the UN and other international organisations as an unacceptable measure.”

By Yevgeny Kononovich,
Dmitry Umpirovich

‘It’s basically a punitive operation with a modern twist’

Minsk is not going to remain silent and has already taken a number of retaliatory steps. The Government has developed a strategy and tactics for action in the conditions of economic restrictions. At the same time, the President recalls the main requirement, the essence of which is that neither the economy nor people should suffer.

It’s not that the Belarusian model allegedly does not correspond to western models. The reasons are much deeper, and Aleksandr Lukashenko explained, “If it smells like money, the West does not care about the dictatorship. I don’t want to name the countries. It doesn’t matter if people are killed there, hanged, buried alive — it doesn’t matter. They cooperate with them. Meanwhile, they claim Belarus is a dictatorship. This is not the case. They planned all these ‘changes’ only with one aim: to make room for their own business. We have already seen the same happen in our southern neighbour — Ukraine. They destroyed all Ukrainian enterprises, even agricultural ones. Ukrainian land is ‘golden’ and they laid everything to waste. They want to do the same to Belarus. They need no competition. This is one of the reasons to pressurise Belarus.

Everyone knows that the sanctions are initiated by specific corporations that finance the political interests of certain western figures. Many of these corporations have a criminal history — like these political figures. From high European platforms, they are calling for finishing the Belarusian government and nation, while turning the country into a source of raw materials for Europe.”

At the same time, western politicians don’t mention that the sanctions actually target not the Belarusian authorities but the Belarusian nation, primarily working people. “Their aim is to strip people of their income and throw them out. This is basically a punitive operation with a modern twist,” the Head of State said. “Those who have chosen Belarus as a geopolitical target have forgotten that they are dealing with a nation that has been through a lot, but that has never been brought to its knees and that has never pleaded for mercy.

There is nothing that can bring us to our knees. We will not become an expendable bargaining chip and will defend our sovereignty by all means possible.”

‘They want to turn Belarus into a filtration camp’

Belarus has had enough obligations to the European Union, and our country has always taken a responsible approach to fulfilling them. It was us who acted as the outpost on the path of nuclear non-proliferation, fight against smuggling, international organised crime and illegal migration. Belarus continues to deal with these issues today — however, as the Head of State emphasises, ‘to the extent we find it necessary, beneficial and financially possible’. “If someone wants more, you are welcome. We are ready to negotiate this and agree upon the terms,” he adds.

However, our neighbours prefer to make claims and accusations instead of conducting a constructive dialogue. However, they themselves contribute to an increase in the flow of refugees. Recently, they announced that they would speed up the registration of those coming from Belarus [the time spent on processing of asylum applications]. Aleksandr Lukashenko wonders, “Who do you send this signal to? If you declare to the whole world that you will register those who make their routes through Belarus even faster, they will keep going. You are opening the door for these migrants even wider...”

But if some think that we’ll close the border with Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Ukraine and become a filtration camp for fugitives from Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Tunisia, they are mistaken. We won’t keep anyone here. We’re not their final destination after all. They are headed to the enlightened, warm, cosy Europe.”

Another important agreement for the European Union concerns readmission. The President emphasises that our Government and the Foreign Ministry are now being reproached for refusing to comply with the provisions of this treat-

Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei told journalists:

* We believe that sanctions are an anachronism of not only of the 20th but also the 21st century. Those experiencing the euphoria of sanctions now — primarily in the West, as well as our fugitive opponents — are deeply mistaken, thinking that sanctions will lead to something positive. In the end, they will not lead to anything positive — primarily, for them.

* We have suspended our participation in the *Eastern Partnership*. The initiative was born to create a so-called stability belt around the European Union: on the border between the European Union and the East. Over the 12 years of its existence, it has turned out that the European Union failed to create any stability belt. Moreover, it is a belt of instability and constant turbulence. Without Belarus, this loses all meaning, since a whole gap is formed in its arc.

* As for the readmission agreement, it was very important for both the European Union and Belarus. However, given the fact that — after the well-known events of last year — the European Union stopped financing certain projects under this agreement, what is the point of us participating in it? The money that was planned for construction of the border infrastructure and implementation of other projects related to mobility will now be allocated to eliminate the consequences that are likely to take place in Belarus in connection with the sanctions imposed.



Roman Golovchenko, Prime Minister:

For the Government, the main counter-sanction is the lack of effect from sanctions. At the moment, all actions are aimed at ensuring that those who have unleashed a sanctions war against our country fail to achieve their goal. We also know how to do this. The tactics of actions that will be applied both at the level of enterprises and industries have been developed... We are in control of the situation and adequately assess the possible losses that may follow. I’m convinced the Belarusian people will not feel this influence. Despite all the alarmists who once again predicted our fall and destruction, we are growing very well in exports — by almost a third in five months — to generate additional \$4bn. The country’s balance of payments is the best in the last ten years. Belarus is not a supporter of trade wars. We hope that common sense will prevail in the West and we are still ready for dialogue, ready to negotiate all issues in the interests of our country and the Belarusian people — but without being dictated to.

ty. However, such actions by our country look quite logical. Aleksandr Lukashenko explains,

“They want to turn Belarus into a filtration camp: people are fleeing westwards because of grief, misery and war, and they want us to take them and keep them in ‘filtration camps’ here. This will not happen since you have chosen this policy with regard to Belarus and Russia. People flee the war and run to where they have been invited. The European Union pays allowances for those who arrive there. Therefore, please, deal with them independently there and do not ask for any excess from us. If you escalate the situation against Belarus by introducing new sanctions, then you will bypass the country through the North Pole and across the Mediterranean Sea. So far, in the conditions of the pandemic, we have behaved with humanity in terms of transit, movement of passenger and cargo transport, and so on.”

‘We need to take every measure to make them feel what Belarus is’

Under the current circumstances, the key is to protect our people, asserts the President. As for individual manufacturers from Germany, the USA and other countries who spoke against the supply of components to the Belarusian market, they should have remembered that Belarus knows how to respond to unfriendly steps. Aleksandr Lukashenko mentions

Skoda and Nivea as an example. For political reasons, they refused to sponsor the Ice Hockey World Championship in Minsk which was planned to be held this year. “We told them: guys, thanks, see you later. First, we need to stop their sales in Belarus. Second, we need to stop the shipment of their goods via Belarus. The same measures should be applied to Germans. Let them ship their products via Finland to China and Russia, or via Ukraine.

In other words, we need to take every measure to make them feel what Belarus is. I want them to think before using economic weapons.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko demands the Foreign Ministry respond more actively to any unfriendly moves in relation to Belarus. As the President states, the modern world is much bigger than the borders of the European Union. “Our economy is not that big to worry about these sanctions. We can sell the surplus that we have to the rest of the world,” he says.

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, the Republic has significant reserves in trade with neighbouring Russia, a huge potential in Asia, primarily in China, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, as well as in Africa, Latin America, the Persian Gulf countries and the Middle East,

“These are dynamically growing economies, solvent markets, real competitors to today’s superpowers. They do not find fault with us and do not teach us how to live. We just need to more actively go to the places where we are waited for, to the countries ready to conduct a respectful dialogue with us.”

‘We are a nation!’

Why Aleksandr Lukashenko called Kupala Night a national treasure, what qualities are inherent in Belarusians and why the President thanked the participants of the Alexandria Gathers Friends Festival

This summer promises to be hot not only because of the weather: a series of branded Republican festivals have begun. Only a few days are left before the opening of the *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk while last weekend — on Kupala Night — Alexandria met tens of thousands of friends. The event was aimed at not only enabling the guests to relax and try to find their own ‘fern-flower’, but also at reminding them about the unity of the Slavs and that the Belarusians want to live peacefully. This is exactly what Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke about from the stage,

“We know that Belarusians’ striving for independence is explained by the non-submissive and freedom-loving nature of our ancestors who never were slaves or slave owners. And never in their history were they aggressors, quite the opposite, they always tried to maintain peace and accord with their closest neighbours. Therefore, the unity of the people of Belarus in their ethnic, cultural and religious diversity is unshakable.”

Our values

On this Kupala Night festival, Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke about the importance of preserving the age-old traditions that closely unite Belarusians and unite us as a people and a nation. He emphasised the main principles of Belarusian policy, “We do not claim foreign lands. We do not want to cause trouble for our neighbours and distant nations. We want to live in peace and harmony with everyone, like the way we did. We are a nation. A nation who



— for the first time in hundreds of years — built their independent and sovereign state that always differs from others in terms of character, morals and traditions. We are Belarusians and we have all the features of a nation.”

According to the Head of State, Belarus always welcomes those who come to our house with peace and kindness,

“We, Belarusians, are always ready to accept into our big family everyone who shares our values and way of life, our historical memory.”

“Representatives of various countries performed at the festival and all these years they have shared a piece of their culture with participants and guests of the festival. The history of the Kupala Night festival in Alexandria

continues uninterrupted despite the pandemic and external political disagreements. It will always be so. This year is no exception, because we are the keepers of this tradition, the people who shape their future and choose the right path,” he said.

United via Slavic rushnik

Kupala Night is an occasion to remember traditions. The main mascot of *Alexandria-2021* festival is a rushnik. It is unique and peculiar in every place, but at the same time it is the very sign of the unity of the Slavic peoples, the personification of our historical genetics.

Our craftsmen have repeatedly reminded guests at the festival that this symbol is still alive and that the skill of creating it is passed down from generation to

generation. During the festival, at one of the sites, Belarusian needlewomen were weaving a rushnik of national unity on two looms. The audience was also shown an authentic Kupala rushnik from the Chausy District, which is more than 150 years old. In total, during the opening ceremony, our masters presented more than 150 rushniks from all over Belarus.

However, not only the rushnik, but Kupala Night festival itself is also a brand for Belarusians. The President called this holiday a national asset for the country,

“These are the origins of our devotion to traditional values, the main ones are family, caring for children, and respect for older generations. This is where our character, our habits and our traditions

come from: from there, from the millennium.”

Alexandria Gathers Friends is not only a colourful festival. This is one and a half kilometres of shopping malls, numerous master classes, exhibitions and competitions, all kinds of concerts by pop stars and amateur groups. The programme — keeping the traditional canvas from year to year — never ceases to amaze with innovations. This year, the brightest events of the Republican Kupala Night festival in Alexandria were the show of new linen clothing collections from Belarusian manufacturers of the Belleprom Concern, the competitions of the family Republican project *The Lord of the Village-2021* and the gala-concert, entitled *Songs of My Homeland*, which was also attended by the Head of State.



Wishing you victories!

Sports victories are akin to political wins, Olympic successes will become responses to enemies, the Games in Tokyo are unlikely to be easy, the Motherland will fervently support its national team... These and other topics were touched upon by the President during the solemn farewell ceremony for the Belarusian sports delegation to the 32nd Summer Olympics.

Sports with a taste of politics

Sport has changed. It’s no longer a fair competition for dexterity, speed and strength but is increasingly becoming an instrument of manipulation. Aleksandr Lukashenko addressed the Olympians with this in mind,

“Your successes should become a response to those people who first took everything they could from the country and now wish it and you defeat, a response to those states that are strangling or trying to strangle us with sanctions.”



After the reception at the Palace of Independence, the delegation of our Olympians laid commemorative wreaths at the Eternal Flame in Pobedy Square

The Head of State warns that the competitions will not be easy, “We all — athletes and fans — have been looking forward to these Games for a long time. I strongly believe that the delay of the Games, accumulated energy, developments in the country and the world will make the forthcoming medal battles tough as never before. I want to tell you that your sporting achievements are not only a personal triumph. Today they are akin to other kinds of victories, up to political ones.”

True, it will not be easy. Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke about this honestly and as it is, “You know that your rivals will be incredibly strong. Restrictions related to public health and increased control by various structures will also create certain difficulties. Pressure with political overtones is not excluded either. The motto ‘Sport and Politics Do Not Mix’ is long gone.

However, we believe that obstacles will only add to your determination to win. You are

Belarusians. We have inherited the ability to overcome difficulties and win. It has always been like that.”

Cheering for our national team

Though we will be far away from our athletes, we promise them the most sincere and fervent support. Aleksandr Lukashenko assured the athletes of this, “You should know that millions of fans in Belarus, being thousands of kilometres away, will support you every second on and off the

arena. You will become household names in every home. I’m sure that your names will be mentioned with joy and great pride.

Remember that the people are behind you who are waiting for the National Flag of Belarus to fly in the sky over Tokyo.”

In a solemn ceremony, Aleksandr Lukashenko presented the National Flag of the Republic of Belarus to the captain of the Belarusian sports delegation, Ivan Tikhon. The veteran of domestic sports, who will turn 45 in August, and for whom the Tokyo Games will be the fifth in his career, proclaimed the Olympic oath, “On behalf of the Olympic delegation, I promise that — at the Olympic Games in Tokyo — we will compete in a truly sporting spirit, in a fair fight, without doping. We will comply with the rules of the competition and the fundamental principles of Olympism. We will be united in our desire to represent our country with dignity, to show the best result in the name of sports and for the glory of our native and beloved Belarus.”

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Faulty products from the West

What is behind the attempts to ‘export democracy’ and why its values cannot be borrowed from outside

The West uses exports of the western model of democracy and the topic of human rights protection as a weapon to destabilise social orders in developing countries — as discussed as part of the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council which hosted an online event — *Human Rights in the West: the Lack of International Oversight and Response to Violations of Human Rights* — initiated by Belarus with the support of Venezuela, China and Russia

By Maksim Osipov

Noting that exports of democracy are used to protect the global dominance of the West, the Chairman of the Standing Committee on International Affairs of the House of Representatives, Andrei Savinykh, outlined the key problem, “There is a faulty democracy in the West. It’s organised in such a way that transnational corporations never lose control of the situation. Democratic decisions are made only within strict limits that do not contradict the interests of the financial and industrial elite. Any way out of these limits is impossible. Please note that, in the West, any democratic decisions are strictly limited by the right of private property and non-standard activity of citizens — i.e. the Occupy Wall Street movement — is considered a crisis of democracy.”

Mr. Savinykh expressed his conviction that, in the modern West, politics has ceased to be a representation of civil society,

“The core of representative democracy is rapidly being emasculated. Today, contractual structures imposed on society by the wealthy classes remain and are being strengthened in the West. For the rest of the world, this means at least one thing: we cannot use the western model of democracy as a model for our own development.”

The Belarusian parliamentarian stressed that democratic traditions are a unique product of development in every society, which does not obey market laws, “It cannot be copied, imported or borrowed. Such a product can only be grown independently, making every effort to do so and creating an appropriate political atmosphere for this within society and the country. As a rule, this takes a lot of time, since it requires the formation of certain concepts, ideas and taboos in the consciousness of each member of society.”

This leads to the only logical conclusion which was voiced by our parliamentarian in front of the international audience,

“If we want to build a real and viable democracy in our countries, we need to get away from the assistance of the West and its representatives — also eliminating their participation in the processes of democratic development within our countries.”

During the online event, an official presentation of the report of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry — *The Most Notorious Cases of Human Rights Violations in Certain Countries of the World* — was organised. Other high-profile issues were in focus as well as part of the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council. For example, representatives of Russia, China, Syria and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees expressed concern about

human rights violations committed by Australia. This continental state often spreads false information for political purposes and uses human rights as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. At the same time, the Australian military indiscriminately killed civilians and committed serious war crimes during foreign military operations, but still remain unpunished.



Andrei Savinykh

In the interests of well-being rather than confrontation

The Head of the Central Office for Multilateral Diplomacy of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, Irina Velichko, presented a report issued on June 30th: *The Most Notorious Cases of Human Rights Violations in Certain Countries of the World*. The Belarusian diplomat noted that the facts presented in the report indicate numerous and systemic violations of human rights in western countries. She encouraged the latter to take care of their domestic problems in this field instead of accusing other countries.

As the Foreign Ministry website notes, special emphasis was placed on the need to restore the original meaning of human rights in accordance with international treaties and make them a real factor of well-being and sustainable development of societies and states, rather than a source of confrontation and political complaints.

Shot through banner of democracy

What happens when neighbours’ political ambitions prevail over common sense

By Yevgeny Kononovich,
Maksim Osipov

The leadership of Ukraine never seems to get tired of throwing new pranks at its citizens. After the total bankruptcy of the leading industrial enterprises, the authorities took up the land market, which has been functioning under new rules from this month. For the sake of the requirements of the IMF, the sale of agricultural land has been allowed in the country since July 1st. In theory, this is presented as a market reform, but in fact, the sale of Ukraine’s independence continues.

Despite the fact that at the first stage, individuals — citizens of Ukraine — can buy land plots, they simply do not have the money for it. This means that the main player at the auctions of land plots will be moneybags-resellers who will buy up the most delicious and fertile pieces and resell them to foreigners. Such is the knight’s move contrary to the interests of ordinary Ukrainians. In addition, according to the results of a sociological survey of the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, the absolute majority of Ukrainians — almost 85 percent — do not support the sale of agricultural land to foreigners. Unsurprisingly, the Zelenskyy regime, which initially promised a referendum on the issue, eventually abandoned it. All this causes nothing but indignation among the opponents of the authorities.

“Today the system is so destroyed and misregulated that an ordinary citizen will not be able to protect their rights, including those to land,” Ruslan Bortnik, the Director of the Ukrainian Institute for Analysis and Policy Management, said on air at the Belarus 1 TV Channel. “These functions have been taken away from the prosecu-



Vadim Gigin

tor’s office and law enforcement agencies. It remains to file a lawsuit, but legal costs have increased significantly and taxes have been raised to form a claim. The judicial system lacks at least a third of judges, dozens of courts do not work.

“An ideal opportunity is being created for large players — capable of influencing politicians — to corrupt the judicial system, the leadership of the state cadastre to seize land assets.”

He is echoed by a public figure, who heads the Derzhava Party, Dmitry Vasilets, “By law, Ukrainians are driven into conditions where it is simply unprofitable to be the owner of the land. For this, its estimated value and land tax are increased. And the Ukrainian farmer, the owner, is simply forced to sell the land.

“By 2024, objectively, there will be practically no land owners among the Ukrainians, all the land will be owned by dealers. This is a clear loss of sovereignty.”

Well, ‘democracy’ is good, there is nothing more to say. Under such circum-

stances, the Ukrainian authorities only have to spread rot in Belarus, thoughtlessly assenting to their bosses in the West. It’s much easier than putting things in order at home.

Violence via proxy

“According to the Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Belarusian State University, Candidate of Historical Sciences, Vadim Gigin, a para-fascist state system has been created in Ukraine. However, the West refuses to acknowledge this, continuing to be a donor of tension in the region.”

Commenting on the July 7th attack by Ukrainian radicals on the sanctioned rally of the Belarusian diaspora near our Embassy in Kiev, Vadim Gigin said on the air of the ‘Budni’ (Weekdays) talk show on Alfa Radio, “Of course, Poroshenko, Zelenskyy and Avakov, who control these formal so-called proxy groups, are obviously not fascists in the classical sense. They are rather ‘de-ideologised’ in many ways. But to retain power and suppress the disaffected, they use numerous groups of the fascist trend. The latter are also different: there are neo-Bandera, neo-Nazi, racist, street groups, those close to fan groups. They [the Ukrainian authorities] are stirring up this whole conglomerate. Bandit attacks are becoming the key form of activity of these associations.”

Based on this, the public attitude towards our country is being formed in Ukraine. The expert emphasised, “Belarus now acts in the region as a country positioning itself as anti-fascist, a country that proclaimed as its ideology rejection of any form of Nazism, neo-Nazism, radical nationalism, etc. Of course, in this sense Be-

larus and President Aleksandr Lukashenko are the main enemy for these neo-Nazi and neo-fascist groups in Ukraine.”

It’s not surprising that the reaction of the official authorities of Ukraine to the incident at the Embassy was ‘practically none’, and Europe’s simply ‘none’. Vadim Gigin added,

“This again suggests that the banner of democracy carried by the collective West has been shot through in many places. Moreover, these shots were made by the representatives of the West themselves with their hypocritical policy. Nothing destroys democracy more than the hypocrisy of those who adhere to it.”

About Polish Wikileaks

Commenting on the newly revealed facts claiming the involvement of top Polish officials in destructive anti-Belarusian activities, Vadim Gigin drew attention to the overwhelming hypocrisy, “On the one hand, they proclaim that they will not allow interference in their internal affairs. On the other hand, they completely openly and shamelessly interfere in our affairs. They do not see us as a fully-fledged and equal partner. After all, imperial thinking still remains in Poland. They have never been a normal and fully-fledged empire. Poland wanted to be such, but due to internal leapfrog, due to the behaviour of the gentry, who danced, drank and vomited all the greatness, it was not possible.”

“Nevertheless, it is in the interests of Poland to have good-neighbourly relations with us, with Russia. However, political ambitions both now and then prevail over common sense. Meanwhile, they also show the face of those who control them.”

Innovations are our future

made in
BELARUS



A large-scale national exposition of Belarus on show at *Innoprom* expo in Yekaterinburg

Yekaterinburg hosted a major industrial exhibition — *Innoprom*. It featured Belarus' national exposition which represented 40 industrial enterprises and scientific organisations. The Belarusian delegation was led by the Industry Minister, Piotr Parkhomchik.

The *Innoprom* international expo is a key event for industrialists of Russia and the CIS. Over 600 companies from 30 countries took part and, apart from Belarus, national expositions of Belgium, Hungary, Germany, Zimbabwe, Italy, Kazakhstan, Poland, Uzbekistan, the Czech Republic and Japan were on show.

This year's expo focused on agile manufacturing, with close attention paid to modern fabrication technologies and practical issues of the adaption of industrial enterprises to rapidly changing conditions.

Belarusian organisations presented their innovative solutions for metalworking and power engineering, industrial automation and mechanical engineering, mining and processing industries.

In particular, the Minsk Motor Plant (MMZ) put on display a small-power MMZ-3LD engine for compact agricultural machines and special-purpose machines and a diesel pump unit for the oil and civil engineering industries. MMZ sells a considerable amount of products in Russia, including via a proprietary trading house and intends to start the joint production of small-power engines there.

The Automotive Components Holding, in turn, presented a line-up of parts: starter motors, generators and onboard systems. Many of them

are already sold to Russia's main assembly lines, including the Belarusian company's key partner: KamAZ.

The R&D products stand, arranged by the State Science and Technology Committee, featured innovative products for the oil and gas industry: meters for metering and fiscal measurement of natural gas consumption for residential buildings and industrial enterprises. The highly effective absorbent 'Penopurm' was also presented at the stand. This innovative material is designed to absorb oil spills.



Belarus' exposition at the show was recognised as one of the brightest and most technologically advanced

The National Academy of Sciences demonstrated new materials, which can replace laminated electromagnetic steel for making transformers, electric motors, and generators, and other R&D products for electric transport industry, mining and mechanical engineering industries, solutions for automating manufacturing processes at industrial enterprises.

The Belarusian Steel Works presented its innovation: graded round

bars made of 'C50 mod' carbon steel for manufacturers of automobile components. The technology will help manufacturers improve their production cycle.

Mogilevliftmash, in turn, brought its line-up of lift equipment under the 'Movel' trademark, among other things. Such lifts are fitted with an uninterrupted power supply unit which allows passengers to safely evacuate in case of power outage. The company also demonstrated new automobile parking systems for densely populated areas.

Integral presented new microelectronic components for the space industry.

This year's *Innoprom* was organised in a hybrid format. It was the first time Belarus' offline national exposition was accompanied by an online platform which made it possible to find the Belarusian pavilion at the expo, see the featured products and developments and get the contact information of the manufacturers.



Vitaly Vovk and George Khanishvili

Positions being strengthened

Minsk Tractor Works (MTZ) to establish long-term co-operation with Georgia

MTZ intends to build up long-term co-operation with Georgia, the company's Director General, Vitaly Vovk, said as he met with the Georgian First Deputy Minister of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, George Khanishvili.

At present, around 17,000 MTZ tractors operate in Georgia, mostly vehicles that have survived since Soviet times. "There are almost no new BELARUS vehicles as well as no maintenance centres or supplies of spare parts. We are currently looking for serious partners in Georgia that could offer the market the entire range of BELARUS machinery, provide high-quality maintenance services, and maintain a fleet of spare vehicles," Mr. Vovk noted.

He told Mr. Khanishvili in detail about efforts to upgrade MTZ manufacturing facilities and expand the range of products. "We are ready to co-operate with Georgia and will consider all options for interaction to ensure that our machinery fully satisfies the demands of final clients," Mr. Vovk added.

In turn, Mr. Khanishvili stressed that the agricultural sector of Georgia experiences a shortage of machinery and the state will allocate sufficient funds to improve the situation.

In addition, a supplement to the contract with MAR-MOT JSC worth around \$30m (in equivalent) was signed at the Embassy of Belarus to Georgia. According to it, MTZ will deliver another 48 tractors to Georgia, bringing the total number of supplied vehicles to 81.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Foreign Ministry announced a decision to reduce to a minimum the diplomatic representation of Lithuania in Belarus



In connection with the systematic unfriendly actions of Lithuania, grossly violating the agreement on good neighbourliness and co-operation between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Lithuania, Charge d'Affaires of the Republic of Lithuania in the Republic of Belarus, Asta Andrijauskienė, was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"It was pointed out that the statements by top officials of the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs about granting an official diplomatic status to ephemeral structures like the office of the so-called Belarusian diplomatic representation in Vilnius are categorically unacceptable," the Foreign Ministry of Belarus said in a statement.

It was underlined that the public discourses of Lithuanian officials have nothing to do with the provisions of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.

Belarus and the Republic of Korea set up a Business Co-operation Council

The corresponding protocol was signed by the Chairman of the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BelCCI), Vladimir Ulakhovich, and the Chairman of the Korean International



Trade Association (KITA), Koo Ja-yeol, at the inauguration session which was held via video-conference.

The Council was established as part of the implementation of the co-operation agreement between the BelCCI and KITA, signed on December 15th, 2020. "The Business Council will include heads of companies from Belarus and the Republic of Korea who have successful experience of collaboration and contribute to the expansion of bilateral business and economic relations, and also enterprises interested in the implementation of joint projects in the most promising areas," said the Chamber.

The Council will be chaired by the leaders of the BelCCI and KITA.

Millionth key of electronic digital signature issued in Belarus

In honour of this event, the ceremony of presenting a commemorative certificate and souvenir to the owner of the millionth EDS key was held in the Republican Certification Centre of the National Centre for Electronic Services. It was an individual entrepreneur from Minsk, Vyacheslav Volosevich.

"Today businesses are very actively using EDS, because it enables them to in-



teract with the state remotely. EDS will be present on the ID-card, which is planned to be issued from September 2021. The ID-card will have an electronic digital signature application, so now every Belarusian will always have an EDS at hand in the literal sense. Thus, if today USB-media and a SIM-card are used as carriers, then from September 2021, the EDS will have a new look: in the form of cryptographic application ID-cards," explained the Director of the National Centre for Electronic Services, Roman Gradusov.

A book dedicated to the 180th anniversary of writer Eliza Orzeszkowa published in Belarus

The new book — *Eliza Orzeszkowa* — was published by the Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House. Eliza Orzeszkowa is the author of more than fifty volumes of fiction, being one of the most in demand writers in the world at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

"For many years, we treated Eliza Orzeszkowa as a foreigner, unambiguously classifying her work as Polish literature due to the fact that her native language was Polish. But the writer was born on our land and has always been a living symbol of the Belarusian city of Grod-



no. Beloved and revered by everyone, she lived here most of her life, and the characters of her best works were copied from Grodno and Vilno townspeople, as well as Belarusian villagers and farmers, from representatives of the Belarusian gentry and local Jews," emphasised the Publishing House.

ECONOMY



High strength co-operation

Experts discussed results of the two states' joint work in scientific, economic, media and cultural spheres as part of a Belarusian-Chinese forum in the Great Stone Industrial Park

The Great Stone hosted a Belarusian-Chinese forum of business, scientific, media and cultural co-operation, with the leaders of public organisations, parties, figures of science, art and education, as well as experts from many areas in which the two countries interact today. They summed up the results of joint co-operation while also outlining the prospects for development. In addition, the participants took part in the summit of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and political parties of the world on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the CPC.

By Ilya Kryzhevich

As noted by the forum moderator and the Board Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Journalists, Andrei Krivosheev, the event was dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the CPC which largely influenced not only the fate of the Chinese people but also fates of the peoples of the world. "We'd like to contemplate China's party building again in a new deep way since Belarus is now undergoing a very important stage in its development: the process of modernisation of our Basic Law — the Constitution — is in place, while a new political and party field is being formed," he said.

In turn, while assessing the level of co-operation between Belarus and China, the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, Aleksei Sokol, noted that the *One Belt, One Road* initiative has become the world's largest platform for business co-operation, "Thanks to the special, friendly relations of the leaders of our states and the merit of the Communist Party of China, our two countries are building strong economic ties. Last year alone, the trade turnover between Belarus and China exceeded \$4.5bn and exports of Belarusian products increased by almost 10 percent. In 2020, China became the second trading partner of our country, following Russia. This potential is annually increasing."

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of China to Belarus, Xie Xiaoyong, stressed that Belarus is an important comprehensive strategic partner of China and one of the first countries that responded to the participation in the *One Belt, One Road* initiative, "In recent years, Chinese-Belarusian relations have enabled us to increase co-operation in various fields and bring fruitful results." He greatly appreciated the interregional liaisons. According to the diplomat, the two countries have also demonstrated that 'friendship is more valuable than gold' in their anti-epidemic co-operation. "All this reflects a high



The Belarusian-Chinese forum of business, scientific, media and cultural co-operation brought together leaders of public organisations, parties, figures of science, art and education, as well as experts from many fields

level of bilateral relations. Next year, China and Belarus will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. The two countries have even greater potential and broader prospects," he added.

During the event, the First Deputy Education Minister, Irina Starovoitova, noted in her welcoming speech that co-operation in the field of education between the two countries is moving along the path of bilateral political and economic dialogue. "For our part, we will make every effort to ensure the further strengthening of fruitful co-operation for the benefit of our countries in the field of education. It is education that forms intellectual, scientific and creative potential, creates the basis for sustainable socio-economic development and is the guarantor of social stability in society," she stressed.

Thanks to joint efforts, it's become possible to significantly increase the dynamics and content of Belarusian-Chinese co-operation. The legal framework in the field of education, formed by agreements of the intergovernmental and interdepartmental level, is supplemented by about 500 agreements on co-operation between educational institutions of the two countries. Two joint educational structures and four scientific laboratories operate on the basis of educational institutions.

"We can now talk about a significant increase in the number of students



Yury Mozolevsky

from China against last year's figures: almost a two-fold rise is registered," Ms. Starovoitova noted. "The same applies to Belarusian citizens who study in China. Among other things, opportunities for learning Chinese are expanding in our country. Specialised institutes, centres and Confucius classes operate in Belarusian higher educational establishments."

Aleksandr Yaroshenko, the Head of the Administration of the Great Stone Industrial Park, emphasised that, for many years, China has been a strategic partner of Belarus. He said,

"Our countries are enhancing interaction, actively implementing initiatives and projects. Great Stone is a major project of successful bilateral co-operation. It's one of the key platforms of the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative and the project largely contributes to its development by attracting advanced ideas and technologies."

After the forum, the summit of the CPC and political parties of the world on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China started via video-conferencing. It was attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping who delivered a keynote speech.



Great Stone Industrial Park is a major project of successful bilateral co-operation

Figures are impressive



"The Belarusian Cement Plant has summed up their performance in January-May 2021 and the results are impressive,

Belarusian Cement Plant posts almost \$700,000 (in equivalent) in net profit in May

especially for May," the company said in a statement posted on the Belarusian Cement Company Holding website. The output in actual prices in January-May was \$45m (in equivalent) — up by over 14 percent against the same period of 2020. The volume of production was almost 710,000 tonnes of cement (up by more than 7 percent), while the productivity in current prices per employee increased by 16 percent year-on-year. The revenue per average employee

rose by 11 percent.

The company reported \$2.7m (in equivalent) in sales profit in January-May 2021 (half this amount came in May). Profitability of the products sold increased by 7 percent (14 percent in May), while return on sales rose by almost 6 percent (11 percent in May). Also in May, the plant received almost \$700,000 (in equivalent) in net profit.

The Belarusian Cement Plant is part of the Belarusian

Cement Company Holding — a flagship of the Belarusian construction industry, one of the largest manufacturers of construction products. The company supplies to the domestic market and has secured a foothold in the markets of Russia and the European Union (Lithuania, Latvia, Poland). At present, it runs five branches, with the total number of employees exceeding 2,600.

Based on materials of belta.by



History of the country in stamps



The 11th National Philatelic Exhibition *Belphila-2021* has opened in the Vitebsk Regional Local Lore Museum. National philatelic exhibitions have been held in Belarus since 1999 but Vitebsk is hosting it for the first time.

By Olga Korneeva

Residents and guests of Vitebsk had the opportunity to get to know the history of Belarus and Vitebsk, the achievements of the Belarusian people in various fields of activity and world culture through philately. The exposition displays more than 100 collections from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Israel, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and the Czech Republic.

The General Director of RUE Belpochta, Svetlana



Yurkevich, noted that she was pleased to bring the exposition to ancient Vitebsk, to its historical place — the Town Hall. “Phi-

lately shows the history of our country. I hope everyone will have positive impressions after visiting the event,” she said.

Visitors to the exhibition may be interested in the collections of famous Belarusian philatelists who have received numerous awards at international and national philatelic exhibitions. The Belarusian post has prepared a wide range of postal products for the opening of the exposition. This is the thematic project, entitled the ‘11th National Philatelic Exhibition *Belphila-2021*’, consisting of an artistic marked envelope and a special commemorative postmark, as well as an artistic marked envelope ‘30th International *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk Festival of Arts*’.

The audience will also be pleased with the colourful postal edition entitled *Holidays and Rites of Belarusians*, comprising of four stamps, the first day cover, a special postmark and artistic cards. The most vivid and beloved holidays are demonstrated on the postage products: winter Kolyady, the

Christian holiday of Easter, Kupala Night and Bogach — a harvest festival, which was celebrated on the day of the autumn equinox. Viktor Chaichuk painted the postage stamps, cards, the special postmark and the first day envelope, while Yevgenia Bedonik was responsible for the design. Augmented reality technology is applied to the Kupala Night postage stamp: when you point a phone camera, with the AR MARKA BELARUS application running, at an image, a specially created script appears.

The Chairman of the Belarusian Union of Philatelists, Sergei Pilipovich, noted that he came to Vitebsk with great pleasure. “We tried to bring the best from the collections in Belarus and from what could be delivered from abroad during COVID. The exhibition covers the whole range of stamps,” added Mr. Pilipovich.

Belphila-2021 will run until August 22nd.

Pristine beauty

Nikolai Mishchenko’s *Beauty of Native Space* art exhibition launched at the Presidential Library



Nikolai Mishchenko. *Dukora*. Oil on canvas. 2015

The show, by member of the Belarusian Union of Artists and the Belarusian Union of Designers, Nikolai Mishchenko, is organised as part of the events dedicated to the Year of National Unity.

The exposition acts as a kind of declaration of love for native Belarus, its original rural towns, deep rivers and dense forests, which keep the echoes of bygone times. “Like a strong and deeply personal confession of his feelings, Nikolai Mishchenko’s works are painted in a calm and peaceful manner — facilitated by slightly muted colours and an abundance of natural landscapes that harmoniously coexist with views of recognisable Belarusian cities and exquisitely painted still lifes,” the library staff note.

Mr. Mishchenko depicts the towns and places visited by almost all Belarusians. Among them are the Neman River and its tributary Ussa, the towns of Postavy, Osipovichy, Ivenets and the agro-town of Dukora.

“The exhibition consists of many artistic ‘statements’ about Belarus and

Nikolai Mishchenko was born in Mogilev, graduated from the Art and Graphic Department of the Vitebsk State Pedagogical Institute (now Vitebsk’s P.M. Masherov State University). The painter is a participant of numerous art exhibitions, a laureate of the award of the Union of Russian Artists — ‘For the Contribution to Development of Realistic Art’. His works are kept at the National Art Museum, the Museum of Modern Art in Minsk, the Mogilev Maslennikov Art Gallery and the Pukhovichi Regional Museum of Local Lore, as well as private collections worldwide.

each of them reveals a part of the artist’s soul. Through his works, the painter asks everyone to stop for a while and enjoy the pristine beauty of the Belarusian land which has united our people from time immemorial, while inspiring hundreds and thousands of art figures to create their best works,” add the organisers of the show.

At full speed

A travel book — *Speedometer* — by the young Belarusian writer Sofia Vorsa released by the Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House

Sofia Vorsa’s new book tells its readers about roads, travels and meetings on the way. “It is published in times when many people dream of travelling. Isolation, closed borders due to COVID-19, postponed and then cancelled trips... For over a year, everyone has dreamed that this will end as soon as possible, and then life, as it seems to us, will return to normal. Our attitude to travel has changed,” those from the Publishing House note.

As stressed by the publishers, Sofia Vorsa has a special love for the road — as only a young person passionate about hitchhiking can love it. “When you travel without a ticket in your pocket and a pre-paid hotel, your emotions and impressions of meeting with the road will be completely different — stronger, fuller and more colourful. In her stories, unexpected meetings and discoveries occur, fairy tale and real-



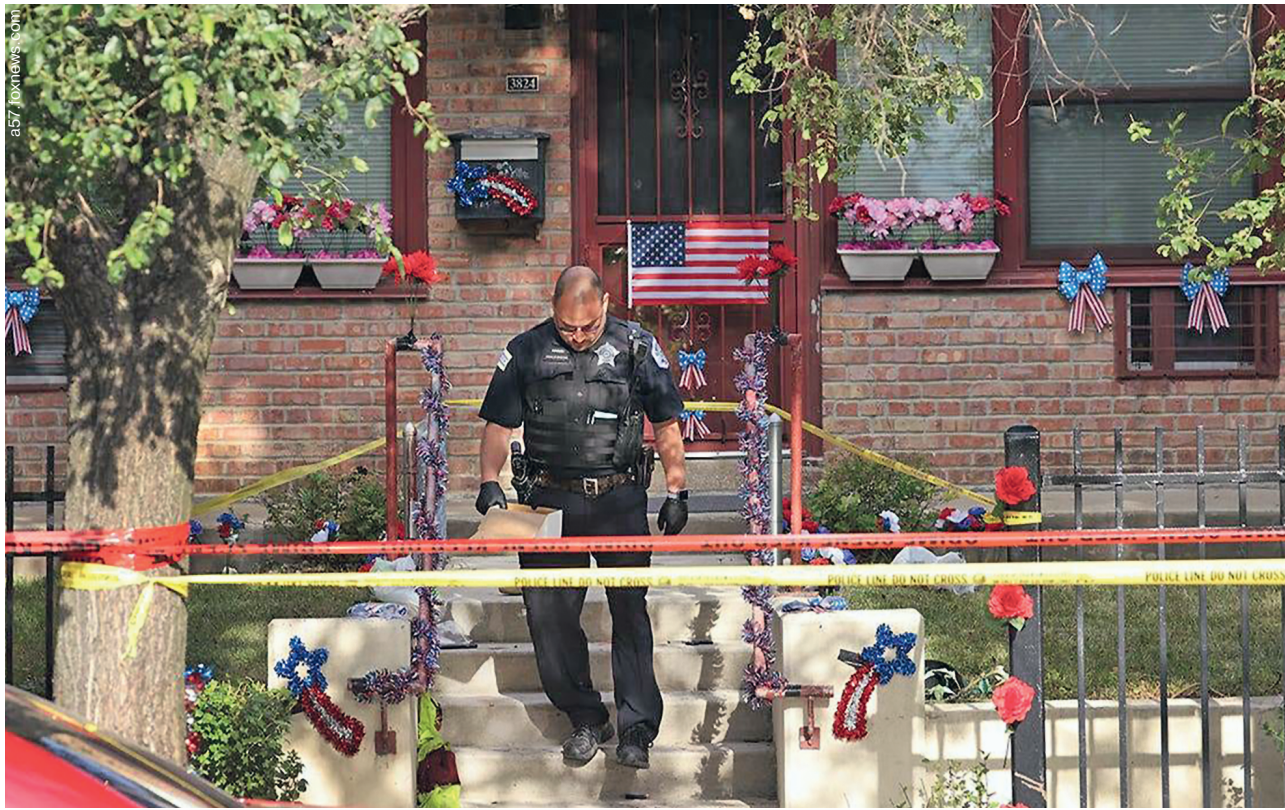
Sofia Vorsa

ity, joy and sadness are intertwined. Everything happens as in true life, though the boundaries of the routine are shifted due to a journey. The world that opens up to us in this small book is deep and interesting,” add the staff.

Speedometer addresses its readers with a request to try at least for the time of reading to forget about their plans, never-ending work, wisdom and experience and to live several hours of their life at a full speed — along with the book characters. It’s quite probable that those who are close to the author’s worldview will want to return to the stories, read them again and wait for new books by Sofia Vorsa.

Sofia Vorsa is a young Belarusian writer, a winner of many international literary competitions. Her works are known to readers in Belarus, Russia, Bulgaria, Japan, Lithuania and Poland. Belarusians are already familiar with Sofia’s *Ten Simple Stories*, *The City of Blind Intersections*, *Teacher’s Day* and *The Fish*.





Deadly gun violence

At least 150 people were fatally shot nationwide in 400 shootings over the three-day holiday weekend in the US as major cities confront a surge in homicides and shootings, according to gun violence data

The Gun Violence Archive database compiled a list of shootings and victims nationwide over the July 4th holiday weekend. The 72-hour period from Friday to Sunday saw more than 400 shootings across the country with at least 150 people killed.

There were several mass shootings, including three teenagers and a 6-year-old shot in Norfolk, Virgin-

ia, four people killed in two separate shootings in Dallas and 14 people killed and 83 injured in multiple shootings in Chicago.

President Joe Biden announced efforts on June 23rd to stem a rising tide of violent crime in the nation. The plan would primarily crack down on gun violence, including those supplying illegal firearms, but would also provide

money to cities that need more police and community support.

“Crime historically rises during the summer, and as we emerge from this pandemic, the traditional summer spike may be even more pronounced than it usually would be,” Mr. Biden said.

The President also announced several executive actions on gun control in April.

Germany calls for exit from EU and union with Russia

Co-chair of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) Party, Tino Chrupalla, in an interview with *Die Welt*, called for the country's withdrawal from the European Union and for the creation of a 'new European space', of which Russia should become a part

“Germany needs to leave the current EU, which simply cannot be reformed,” believes Mr. Chrupalla.

In his opinion, the national identity and culture of the German people was influenced by the ‘psychological warfare of the allies, especially the Americans’, which began after WWII.

As an example, he cited Washington's policy towards the Nord Stream-2 gas pipeline, calling it a ‘deliberate strategy of disinformation and manipulation of opinion’, which the United States is pursuing for ‘its own strategic interests’.



Tino Chrupalla

At the same time, another Co-chair of the AfD, Jörg Meuthen, called the idea of the country's withdrawal from the European Union ‘poorly thought out, at least from a foreign policy point of view’. In his opinion, this will become an obstacle to the activities of the party in the European Parliament.



Stars, glamour return as 74th Cannes Film Festival kicks off

The world's biggest film festival was cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this year's affair is slightly more subdued, with fewer attendees and parties over the 12-day whirlwind of film premieres

The red carpet had been trimmed and its volume had been reduced by 50 percent. Rigorous safety measures were in place. Plastic bottles were not allowed. Guests avoided kissing while greeting each other on the top of the stairs where they were received by Pierre Lescure, president and Thierry Fremaux, general delegate of the festival. Social distancing was mandatory. In the spotlight on the red carpet was the first ever black president of the jury, Spike Lee. Five women and three men of seven nationalities, coming from five continents walked beside him. They will have the privilege of discovering the 24 films featuring in the international competition of the year.

Meanwhile, plenty of stars still

graced the red carpet at Cannes' Palais des Festivals on the opening day of the event. Among them were Adam Driver and Marion Cotillard, the stars of Leos Carax's film *Annette* which opened the festival, actress Jessica Chastain, and veteran Hollywood actress and director Jodie Foster, recipient of this year's honorary Palme d'Or.

The festival was later opened by US director Spike Lee, who heads this year's festival jury, alongside Foster, Spanish director Pedro Almodovar and South Korean director Bong Joon-ho, winner of the 2019 Palme d'Or for *Parasite*. The event runs until July 17th.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Freedom... from the laws

By Varvara Morozova

Riots, fist-shaking and outright blackmail have become the new reality of the EU. The main driver of the agenda is Hungary, which dared to disobey their Brussels masters. The law, which is popularly called simply 'against paedophiles', outraged an extremely tolerant Europe. Hungary has rejected a demand from the European Commission and many EU legislators to repeal a controversial new law prohibiting schools from using materials deemed to promote homosexuality.

Simply put, the collective West has once again made it clear that democracy and freedom have a right to exist on one condition: if it is western democracy and freedom. A look — different from the European one — is punishable.

The subsequent transfer of the case to the European Court of Justice is fraught

with a fine for Budapest. Moreover, a number of Council of Europe deputies propose to deny Hungary access to the funds of a special European fund designed to help recover from the coronavirus pandemic.

However, Budapest is unlikely to be frightened by the potential sanctions facing the EU. Hungarians do not pay attention to threats to throw them out of the European Union. “We are not going to leave the EU. We want to save it from hypocrites,” noted the Minister of Justice of Hungary, Judit Varga.

Since the beginning of this year, the EU has launched its final argument: money. Funding for members was decided to be linked to how they respect shared values and norms.

Hungary runs the risk of losing payments from the EU budget and the pandemic recovery fund, but prefers the future of its children to someone else's sponsorship and does not allow the promotion of non-traditional views in pursuit of hand-outs.



Adam and Eve's Garden of Eden

The charm of the Tuganovich estate

A special aura reigns in the old Belarusian villages. A breath of the past emanates from the stone foundations of once lush mansions and palaces. One of these mysterious places is the Tuganovich park in the Baranovich District.



Adam Mickiewicz.
A miniature by L. Vivien



Marylya Vereshchaka, the first love of A. Mickiewicz

**By Marina Kuzmich,
Vladimir Likhodedov**

Centuries ago, business meetings of nobles took place here, with owners of the estate gathering their friends for hunting and noisy balls. As the world famous scientist, Ignat Domeyko, wrote: 'Tuganovich were open to the whole 'district'. We can imagine the former magnificent events, peering into the chic interiors depicted in old photographs'.

The Tuganovich landscape park of the period of romanticism belongs today to the territory of the agro-town of Karchevo, in the Baranovich District. This is the centre of the Novogrudok upland — one of the most colourful places in Belarus, with coniferous forests and numerous rivers spreading around.

Not far from the town lies Lake Svityaz, like a pearl in the emerald necklace of the forest. However, many centuries ago, Tuganovich was surrounded by impenetrable swamps, which were the protective belt of this peculiar island. This natural feature created the conditions here for the first human settlements. Scientists have established that people had settled in these places as early as the 9th-5th millennia BC.

Tuganovich was once known throughout the district. Poets, writers and musicians often came here. Moreover, Adam Mickiewicz glorified this place in his *Svityaz* poem. In a letter to Yan Chechot, he wrote: 'Tuganovich is always in the midst of paradise'. The poet stayed here in the years of 1818-1820.

The first owners of the town were the Tugan princes. This is where the name comes from. In the middle of the 18th century, the estate became the property of the Tuganovskis, yet the brightest period in the history of the area is the time when the Vereshchaki family owned the place.

The son of Anton Vereshchaka studied with Adam Mickiewicz; the latter often visited the estate. This circumstance gave rise to a romantic page in the history of Tuganovich. It's all about the poet's feelings for the daughter of the owner of the estate, Maria (Marianna Eve) Vereshchaka. The sympathy that flared up between the young people grew into great feeling. Adam and Maria — despite the fact that after a while each had their own family — carried warm feelings towards each other throughout their lives.

It is noteworthy that Adam Mickiewicz first came to Tuganovich on the day

of Maria's name day. Historians and bibliographers find a special significance in this. How else can you explain their love at first sight? After all, as the poet's friends believed, Maria (Adam Mickiewicz called her Marylya) was not particularly beautiful. Here is what a family friend Otto Sluzen wrote about this: 'Maria — although she could not be called beautiful — had facial features full of charm, and in her eyes an eloquent look of kindness and sensuality. Both in conversation and in her behaviour she was pretty and moderately cheerful, being always interesting and attractive both in liveliness and in melancholic reverie'. Here is what Vereshchaka's brother-in-law, a native of the village of Medvyadka, Novogrudok District (now Korelich District) Ignat Domeyko, wrote:

becoming more rare, with some trees dried up. It is full of life in late spring, when lilacs, acacia, and chestnuts bloom here while birch catkins are hung on the branches. By the way, it is about the birch that the locals tell a legend. Once Adam Mickiewicz expressed his doubt to Marylya that their love could be fulfilled. The girl tried to convince him otherwise. Then the poet decided that a birch tree would be the best witness to their happiness. He dug up one tree and put it in a basket full of holes. "Let it grow and become a memory that there was a time

decorated with pictures, and the image of the Mother of God. Moreover, the Vereshchaki family founded the Church of the Exaltation of the Cross with a shelter for the poor in Tuganovich, and another chapel was erected at the local cemetery.

Adam and Maria enjoyed walking along the shore of Lake Svityaz. Long conversations and romantic evenings united the souls of the young people. The platonic feelings that arose during visits by Adam Mickiewicz to Tuganovich in 1819 intensified from meeting to meeting. But soon the lovers had to endure a long separation. After graduating from university, Adam had to work out a state scholarship for six years, becoming a teacher in Kovno (Kauņas).

At this time, Marylya's parents gave her in marriage to the wealthy and educated landowner Puttkamer. Adam, learning of this, became like a hollow tree.

Maria's husband knew about her first love and was sure that his sincere concern

would be able to extinguish the once ardent feelings. And so it happened. Adam Mickiewicz, realising over time that he had lost his muse, later wrote with bitterness: 'No wonder I was constantly losing. You looked at the figures while I was looking

at your face!' Perhaps the poet hastened to conclusions. According to the legend, for four years after the wedding, Maria remained faithful to Adam and lived with her husband as with a brother. However, Adam's unfulfilled heavenly love for Maria was later embodied in an earthly family life with another woman. Literary critics say that if not for Maria, there would not have been the poet Adam Mickiewicz himself. In the poem, entitled *Towards M**** he wrote:

There, where we met during happy hours

And where we parted during sad minutes

I will always be inseparable from you
Since I will leave a part of my soul everywhere.

Tourist routes now run through these eventful places and trips to Tuganovich are included in some excursions. If you are here, be sure to take a closer look at the old trees. Among their shadows, you may notice the light figures of Adam and Maria. The poetry of their feelings lives here, as it did two hundred years ago.

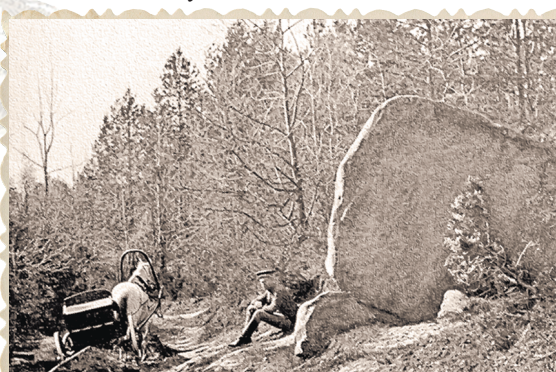
Photo from the personal collection of Vladimir Likhodedov



Tuganovich: the house where A. Mickiewicz stayed



Tuganovich. An oak summerhouse where A. Mickiewicz worked in his youth. Early 20th century.



Philarets' stone near Tuganovich. Late 19th century.



Tuganovich. Marylya Vereshchaka's house. Late 19th century.

when girls got married without love," said the poet. Marylya shed many tears that day. She wanted to pluck the birch from the basket. Later she came to water the tree. Over time, it gained strength, becoming lush and beautiful. They say that local girls today often come to the park to find the famous tree of love.

We go down the field path and go towards a huge stone — something resembling a pedestal in shape. Philarets — lovers of virtue — used to gather here to discuss plans of how to 'work for the good of the homeland, science and charity'.

The residential estate of the Vereshchaki family harmoniously fit into the landscape. Here, accompanying herself on the piano, young Maria sang romantic songs. The house was wooden and had two floors. On the first floor was a green-tiled stove. The walls were covered with coloured fabric tapestries. Bedrooms and a study room were located on the second floor. Behind the house there was a garden with a reservoir and outbuildings. Nearby was a chapel with a dome and two crosses, and next to it a belfry on three pillars with two bells. Historical sources indicate that the altar inside the chapel was decorated with flowers and fabrics. The walls were

'Maria was not beautiful in the usual sense of the word. She was short, with a rounded face, large blue eyes and blond hair, and had an unusual attractiveness in her lips and eyes... Her beauty was not in form, but in her soul'.

Maria captivated Adam with her education. The eighteen-year-old young girl knew French, Italian and German, as well as enjoying modern literature, writing poetry and plays, playing the piano and singing. Pure love for the talented Maria kindled an unquenchable flame of poetry in Mickiewicz's soul.

If you are in the Tuganovich park, pay attention to the tall trees, especially six lindens, which seem to grow from one root, creating a kind of arbour with their crowns. In the shade of these lime trees, the poet met his Marylya. The trees are more than a century old, but even today — like powerful giants — they rise above the park. The poet later recalled them more than once when he was in a foreign land.

The park has changed a lot since then,

Come to our Lake Land



A scattering of large reservoirs surrounded by centuries-old forests is a paradise for tourists. Local lakes vary in size, depth, degree of transparency and colour of water. All appeared thanks to a glacier that approached the area about twenty thousand years ago.

Lake Dolgoe

By Kristina Khilko

Finding the dragon's treasures

The deepest lake in Belarus is called Dolgoe [Long] and is located in the Glubokoe District. Its basin resembles a narrow canyon, with a width of about 400m and a length of 7km. The lake is about 56m deep and locals call it the Belarusian Baikal. Dolgoe is especially popular among divers.

Nearby is Lake Sho which is said to receive its original name from the Baltic tribes. The lake does not rival Dolgoe in its depth as it's no more than 3m deep. A legend says that, a long time ago, the choppy waters of the lake swallowed an ancient cemetery and it's now possible to find stone crosses at the bottom.

Another pearl in the list of lakes is Ginkovo. Its basin is shaped like a crescent. Ginkovo is the third deepest lake in Belarus: 43m. Local landscapes are notable for an unusual cave — the only one in the country. According to legend, there is a pangolin-tsmok hiding here, guarding a treasure chest.

Kiteboarding to Zivert music

It's no accident that Braslav is called the resort capital of Belarus. About sixty lakes are found in the area and anyone can choose a lake to their liking. The most popular ones for swimming and exploring the underwater world are Drivyaty, Strusto, Snudy, Potsekh, Nedrovo, Yuzhny [Southern] and Severny [Northern] Volos.

Those travelling with small children would definitely enjoy the city beach of Braslav as it's possible to walk for a long way, while the water is knee-deep and very warm. Tourist parking lots are located on Lake Strusto which has terraced shores and snow-white sand. To take unforgettable photos and enjoy stunning sunrises and sunsets, go to Mount Mayak, while extreme emotions are guaranteed when riding a motor boat and then swimming on the island of Chaichin.

Those who missed festivals during the pandemic, are welcome to *Viva Braslav Open Air*. At the end of July, the city beach will turn into a huge dance floor for two days. This year, guests are invited to dance until the morning to the hits of Zivert, MONATIK, MATRANG. A rich entertainment programme is also planned: kiteboarding, streetball and dragon boating.

Embrace Stonehenge for good luck

For water trophies, go to Lake Borovnok in the Ushachi District. It's a real paradise for fishermen. Bream, pike, roach, tench, redeye and

perch are found here but it's truly lucky to see a blue crayfish: this aquatic inhabitant resembles an alien creature. Even if you fail to meet an exotic 'alien', the view of the lake itself will give you no less delight. Sunsets and sunrises turn its water surface into an impressionist painting.

There are no less than sixty lakes in the Ushachi District and each has its own story. A Belarusian Stonehenge is found on the shore of Lake Yanovo. If you hug the stone artefacts and stand for a while, then your health and luck will improve.

See the heart of the island

Holidaying on the border of the Myadel and Postavy districts where the Golubye Ozera [Blue Lakes] natural complex is located is a great idea for a summer weekend. Unlike the Braslav landscapes, the place is not as popular but this is only to the tourists' advantage. They can safely walk along a shady ecological path, admire rare flowers and plants and meet a black stork if they're lucky.

Exciting 'Instagram' views open on the shores of the lakes Glublya and Glubelka, Bolduk and Bolduchitsa. Glubelka is perfect for romantics as, from a height, it resembles a heart, with an island in its centre. Along the shore, a rare Red Book plant grows: sawgrass.

A forest path leads to enigmatic Lake Mertvoe [Dead]. It looks mysterious but — despite its name — life is in full swing here: small fish splash in the water, and water lilies bloom near the shores.

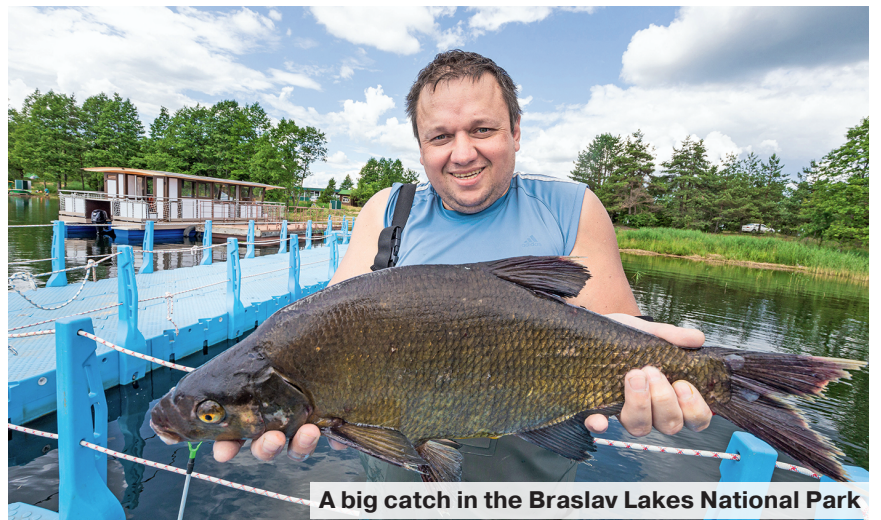
Swim out of the maze on a kayak

Among the northern beauties of the Vitebsk Region are the landscape reserves of Sinsha and Krasny Bor. The Drissa River has formed a fabulous water maze here and it's a special pleasure to explore it by kayak or canoe. Routes are available for experienced rowers and beginners.

Those who prefer a 'lazy' vacation, would definitely enjoy the Zolotye Peski [Golden Sands] beach on Lake Volobo. Local dunes, giant pine trees and the sun's rays gliding on the water create the atmosphere which is like a Baltic resort. At the same time, tourists are offered the chance to relax not in box-like hotels or mansions, but under the starry sky in tents or at farmsteads.



Lake Mertvoe in the Svetlogorsk District



A big catch in the Braslav Lakes National Park

Anton Stepanischev



Mount Mayak with an observation tower in the Braslav Lakes National Park



Without wings, but flying

Maksim Nedosekov is gaining height and looking towards the Olympic medals podium

It is necessary to be an extremely charming guy for fortune to pay attention to you. Slightly altering the classical writer, let's say that the fortune loves the young, leggy and politically literate, as well as those who are self-confident, relaxed and cheerful, purposeful and not deprived of charisma. The most promising athlete in the country, Maksim Nedosekov, boasts enough of these qualities, you might say he has them in abundance so he can, on occasion, share them if anyone needs. In a difficult time for the country, when some athletes twisted their heads like a weather vane in the wind, trying to understand and catch where the winds of change would blow, he — despite his youth — stood his ground as if rooted to the spot; he was not afraid and didn't hesitate to openly express his opinion for native Belarus, argued and took a blow. It seemed that he has survived hate well. In the character of this guy, there is generally a unique and very important trait for an athlete: not to pay attention to the surrounding bedlam. And even more than that — Maksim is surprisingly clever at being able to fill himself with the energy of the passions raging around, scooping it up like a ladle from a lake and quenching his thirst.



Maksim Nedosekov

By Sergei Kanashits

In the high jump, the main world contenders are Franklin Jacobs and Stefan Holm. The first is 173cm tall and was able to take the bar at a height of 2.32m — which is 59cm higher than his own height! Holm repeated this achievement (he is 181cm, although this is considered almost dwarf-like for jumpers), but he went further and took a height of 2.40m, becoming the world champion and winning the Olympic Games. Their jumping ability is a natural gift. However, without hard work and daily toil, such results can never be achieved. They have been talking about the talent of Maksim Nedosekov for a long time, and he regularly proves his worth not in word, but in deed. The fact that a very bright star could grow out of Maksim became clear even in his junior years; having won the European Junior Championship with a score of 2.33m four years ago, Nedosekov broke the competition record that had been held for 40 years! Then he claimed gold at the 2nd European Games in Minsk, a confident

victory in the Match Europe v USA and an offensive but encouraging fourth place at the 2019 World Cup in Doha. The point was that, at the Tokyo Olympics, Nedosekov should surpass himself, but the pandemic made its own changes, pausing the sport and postponing the Games for a year.

brought sarcastic comments from ill-wishers, but Nedosekov overcame this confidently and — as always — playfully. He knows the password and sees the goal. In March 2021, at the European Indoor Championships, hosted by the Polish Torun, Maksim staged the main show of the event in the jumping

he was 'on form': he managed to update the national record for competitions in the arena, jumping 2.34m. In Torun, he conquered 2.37m, reclaiming this height after a failure of 2.35m and brilliantly coping with the brave challenge! The hardened Italian Gianmarco Tamberi — who remained in second place

the past few months, Maksim Nedosekov has not only managed to maintain his amazing shape, but, it seems, has also improved, which is good news on the eve of the Olympics. At the World Athletics Continental Tour Gold meeting in Hungarian Szekesfehervar, which ended just the day before, Nedosekov won, setting a record for Belarus. He overcame the bar at a height of 2.37m. The same result as in March in Torun, but outdoors. Awesome!

Stability is known to be a sign of skill. These figures, firstly, are impressive (at all the latest top tournaments, including the world championships and the Olympics, these are prizes with a claim for gold), and secondly, they make us assume that they are by no means a ceiling for our athlete. Rather, they are a serious bridgehead, which he managed to reach and gain a foothold before conquering new peaks. In any case, the legendary Cuban Javier Sotomayor, with his 'eternal' record of 2.45m set back in 1993, no longer looks like an incredible alien from space. The stars have just got closer.



Maksim Nedosekov resets his national record in the high jump — improving the previous achievement of Dmitry Nabokov by one centimetre

Fortunately, the worries and doubts which the downtime caused are left behind. Maksim had a slight recession, which immediately, as if on command,

sector. He was magnificent in his artistry and unpredictability and again tore up the hall. Just a couple of weeks before the championship, Nedosekov hinted that

at the end of the championship — clapped his hand over his eyes in surprise and threw up his hands, powerless.

And here's a new twist: over

ARENA

● Arina Sobolenko becomes the number three in the world for the first time

For the first time in her career, Belarusian Arina Sobolenko climbed to third place in the ranking of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).

Before the start of the Wimbledon tournament, Arina Sobolenko was fourth, and after reaching its semi-finals, she improved one position. Now she boasts 6,965 points.

Arina Sobolenko lost in the semi-final match to Czech Karolina Pliskova — 7:5, 4:6, 4:6. Prior to this defeat, the best Belarusian tennis player alternately defeated Romanian Monica Niculescu (ranked 191st) — 6:1, 6:4, Briton Katie Boulter (positioned 219th) — 4:6, 6:3, 6:3, Colombian María Camila Osorio Serrano (placed 94th) — 6:0, 6:3, Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina (20th) — 6:3, 4:6, 6:3, and Tunisia's Ons Jabeur (24th) — 6:4, 6:3.

The winner of the women's singles category was the world number one — Australian tennis player, Ashleigh Barty, who beat Czech Karolina Pliskova (13th number in the WTA rating) in the



finals — 6:3, 6:7 (4:7), 6:3.

Serbian tennis player Novak Djokovic has won the Wimbledon men's singles title for the sixth time. This is Novak Djokovic's 20th Grand Slam title. He continues to top the ranking of the Association of Professional Tennis Players (ATP).

● Italian footballers become European champions for the second time

In the final match of Euro-2020, the Italians defeated England in a penalty shootout — 3:2 (playing time — 1:1).

The decisive match of the 16th European Championship began with the hosts' attacks, and in the second minute, defender Luke Shaw took advantage of an excellent pass from Kieran Trippier and hit the goal of Gianluigi Donnarumma. Having come out ahead, the British did not play to

keep the score, but tried to increase their advantage, yet failed to succeed. Closer to the break, the Italians seized the initiative, carried out several sharp attacks, but they were unsuccessful.

In the second half of the match, Roberto Mancini's trainees continued to dominate, and in the 67th minute of the game, Leonardo Bonucci restored the balance in the score — 1:1. After that, the Italians could have taken the lead more than once, but the English goalkeeper Jordan Pickford was on the alert. As a result, the match went to extra time. In overtime, the result didn't change, but in the penalty shootout, success was on the side of Italy — 3:2.

The England squad made their way to the UEFA European Championship for the first time in history, beating the Danes — 2:1 — in the semi-finals in extra time. At the group stage, Gareth Southgate's trainees defeated the teams of Croatia and the Czech Republic with the same result — 1:0, while playing a draw with the Scots — 0:0. In the next round, the German national team was defeated — 2:0, and in the quarter-finals, the Ukrainians were beaten — 4:0.

The Italian footballers defeated the

Spanish team in the penalty shootout in the semi-finals — 4:2 (playing time — 1:1). In preliminary group A, Roberto Mancini's team smashed the squads of Turkey and Switzerland with a large score of 3:0, while beating the Welsh national team with a small margin of 1:0. In the next round, the Italians prevailed over the Austrians — 2:1 (in extra time), and in the



quarter-finals they celebrated victory over the Belgians with the same result.

The top scorers of Euro-2020 were Portuguese Cristiano Ronaldo and Czech Patrik Schick, who scored five goals each.

Italy's goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma has been named the best footballer in the European Championship, becoming the first goalkeeper recognised as the best player in UEFA Euro-2020.

Photo of the week



Riding a wakeboard

BELTA

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On July 15th, 1876, Belarusian poetess Tetka (present name Aloiza Pashkevich) was born in the Shchuchin District of Grodno. She is considered to be one of the founders of the Belarusian socialist

community and the organiser of revolutionary circles of workers. She performed with the I. Buinitsky Theatre in Belarus and also organised secret Belarusian schools in Vilno, Novo-Vileika, and Lida. In 1914, she founded the *Luchynka* magazine and carried out agitation work among workers. Moreover, she is the author of the collections of poems *Baptism of Freedom* and *Belarusian Violin* and the book *First Reading for Belarusian Children*. She also researched the history of the Belarusian theatre and acted as a publicist. She died in 1916.



On July 15th, 1606, Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn was born (1606-1669) — a Dutch painter, draftsman and etcher, great master of chiaroscuro, the largest representative of the golden age of Dutch painting. Rembrandt's works

— extremely diverse in genre — open to the viewer the timeless spiritual world of human experiences and feelings. His most famous canvases are *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, *The Night Watch*, *Danae*, *The Holy Family*.



On July 15th, 1916, in Seattle (Washington, USA), the American

industrialist William Boeing registered an aircraft building company called Pacific AeroProducts. Since 1917, Boeing Airplanes are one of the world's largest manufacturers of aviation and space technology.

On July 16th, 1941, Polotsk was captured (the occupation lasted until July 4th, 1944).



The government of Belarus relocated from Liozno to Gomel. In Gomel, the publication of an agitation poster, entitled *Razdavim Fashistskuyu Gadiny (Let's Crush the Fascist Beast)* began (from April 14th, 1942, a newspaper-poster published until June 1944).



On July 16th, 1661, the Swedish Stockholm Bank issued the first European paper money in the form of banknotes (deposit receipts). Over the past centuries, paper

notes have become the main type of money in the world economy.

On July 17th, 1846, Nikolai Miklukho-Maklai was born (1846-1888) — a Russian

scientist-ethnographer and anthropologist, traveller. He travelled to the Canary Islands, Morocco, the Red Sea coast, New Guinea, the Philippines, the Malay Archipelago and Australia. For several years he lived among the indigenous population, studied their way of life and culture and collected various collections. On the basis of the collected material, he proved the species unity and kinship of all races. A coast in New Guinea and a bay in Antarctica are named after him.



On July 17th, 1861, the Grodno provincial government examined the request of the merchant Abram Gordon and Leiba Shereshevsky for permission to open a



tobacco factory in Grodno. This day can be considered the date of the establishment of the Shereshevskys' tobacco factory (now Grodno Tobacco Factory Neman).

July 18th is Metallurgist Day in the Republic of Belarus. After the collapse of the USSR, Metallurgist Day remained as a holiday in all CIS countries, where metallurgy plays an important role in the country's economy.



Pipes, wires and cables, metal structures: Belarusian products are known far beyond the borders of the country. Every year, about 80 percent of the materials produced are exported by the Belarusian Steel Works (BMZ) — one of the largest enterprises of this field in Europe.



July 20th is World Chess Day, celebrated on the day the International

Chess Federation (FIDE) was founded in Paris (1924). It is believed that playing chess promotes the development of memory, mental abilities, creative and logical thinking. According to FIDE, today chess is recognised as a sport in 107 countries of the world.

On July 22nd, 1596, Mikhail Romanov was born (1596-1645) — the Russian tsar, the first of the Romanov dynasty. The first years of his reign were marked by diplomatic success: he, albeit with great difficulty, managed to conclude a peace treaty with Sweden and Poland, which provided the Russian people with a temporary respite in continuous territorial wars. Under him, Zemsky Councils were convened, but the tsar decided the main political issues together with the Duma. He ruled from 1613 to 1645.

