



How the development of the Belarusian drug vaccine is progressing today

4



The Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus presented the brightest premiere of autumn

9

INTERNATIONAL

# The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 42 (904) ● THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2021 ● WWW.SB.BY



During the opening of the museum exposition in the Old Castle after reconstruction in Grodno

BELTA

## Gifts for the country

The anniversary of the October Revolution, as in Soviet times, is marked in red on the calendar in independent Belarus. However, this holiday is filled with new meaning. On this day, it is customary to give socially significant objects to cities and towns. This is a celebration of new buildings and labour exploits. There are countless important objects that builders annually hand over by this date. Moreover, the country has received many of them, as they say, from the hands of the Head of State. Residential neighbourhoods, family houses, schools and kindergartens, hospitals and clinics, sports complexes, metro stations, bridges... We will tell you what gifts have been prepared this year. → 3



# Unique integration model

A videoconference meeting of Supreme State Council of the Union State has been held under chairmanship of Belarus' President Aleksandr Lukashenko

By Yevgeny Kononovich

Opening the event, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that various challenges and threats to Belarus and Russia, multiplied by the ongoing global pandemic, have disrupted the schedule of regular meetings of the two states' heads.

The President stressed that the Union State is a top priority for Belarus, "We have jointly created a unique integration model, thanks to which the equal rights of Belarusians and Russians are ensured and economic co-operation is strengthening. We are actively liaising in various areas and aim to further expand Union State integration, while protecting the historical and moral values that our brotherly nations share. All of us are more or less aware of the need to continue moving forward on the path of Union State building — thus ensuring protection of interests of Belarus and Russia in the global space."

In 2019, the leaders of Belarus and Russia set a task for the governments to assess the results of Union State integration and determine further steps for its enhancement. Draft Guidelines to Implement the Union State Treaty in 2021-2023 have been developed as a result. After their approval by the Supreme State Council, the governments will further need to take measures to implement

a range of conceptual solutions within two years. "In fact, we are about to reset our joint economic space. It envisages the introduction of modern technologies, styles and methods of decision-making," Aleksandr Lukashenko said. According to the President of Belarus, the formation of a qualitatively new environment for trade of goods and services, the creation of joint industry markets, implementation of unified financial, tax, credit, industrial and other policies will be the result of this work.

The President of Russia stressed that Belarus is not just a good neighbour and closest ally for Russia. "This is a truly

fraternal republic, our fraternal people. We strive to do everything so that it will always be so," he said.

The President of Russia recalled the proposal made by Belarus on the possible inclusion of a Belarusian cosmonaut in the International Space Station crew, "We are ready to support this proposal and implement it in the near future."

At the meeting, Aleksandr Lukashenko signed the ordinance of the Supreme State Council: 'On Guidelines to Implement the Union State Treaty in 2021-2023'. Since the event was held via videoconference, the document had been previously signed by the President of Russia.

gence of approaches in the field of macroeconomics, tax and customs regulation and monetary policy in general. In addition, the Union State programmes relate to the transport market, labelling of goods, payment systems, veterinary and phytosanitary control, consumer protection and the unification of legislation in the social and labour sphere.

Trade and economic collaboration between Belarus and Russia was discussed in detail at the meeting. Despite the pandemic, it is successfully developing and mutual trade turnover is growing.

The presidents approved the Military Doctrine of the Union State, which



## ACCENT

After the Supreme State Council meeting, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin talked on the phone for another hour and a half. On the whole, the presidents talked to each other three times that day.

Before the meeting, they discussed a number of matters and problems relating to Union State construction over the phone. Vladimir Putin informed his Belarusian counterpart about the overall situation in Crimea.

Then the Supreme State Council meeting was held — as planned.

Afterwards they continued discussing topical items on the international agenda and the domestic one over the phone. They spoke at length about the situation at the Polish border.

There were six issues on the agenda, of which the Guidelines to Implement the Union State Treaty in 2021-2023 were key. These are actually a list of areas of integration with the assignment of responsible officials. A package of 28 Union State programmes has been prepared to develop the areas outlined in the project. They determine a trajectory of joint work in almost all areas of joint activity — industry, energy, finance and the agro-industrial complex. It also envisages the conver-

is very relevant in connection with the situation on our western borders. The concept of the Union State's migration policy was also the focus of attention.

Following the results of the meeting, a decision was made to award the Union State prize in science and technology in 2021 to Russian and Belarusian scientists and specialists for outstanding results in the joint scientific research and development of samples of new equipment and advanced technologies.

# In expectation of the new Constitution

The President of Belarus met with the working group on finalising the draft Basic Law of the country

By Svetlana Isaenok,  
Dmitry Umpirovich

Senior officials and lawyers are currently working on details of the project. The first results have been reported to the Head of State. The document is already at a degree of its readiness but there are also some controversial points. Moreover, experts have not supported some initiatives of the Constitutional Commission. Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to this at the meeting,

**"It is good to have different points of view. When there is competition, when several legitimate points of view clash, this helps develop reasonable constitutional provisions. I believe that this is the only way to arrive at a decent Constitution draft that people are looking forward to."**

The President has already familiarised himself with the

latest version of the Constitution which takes into account the agreements reached during the recent meeting with the working group. He recalled that its members were tasked with working out fundamental issues related to the preparation of constitutional amendments, "Among the most important of them are formalisation of the role of the Belarusian People's Congress, redistribution of powers between government agencies, preservation of the balance of power and others. At the same time, in no case should we destroy the harmonious system of power that exists in Belarus now."

The President drew the attention of the meeting participants to the fact that citizens are waiting for a new draft of the Basic Law,

**"We have already given expectations, and people are waiting for a new Constitution. Although there are,**

**of course, those people who proposed and demanded changes, but today — as I understand it — they no longer want these changes and the Constitution. Actually, we are working on this not for them — but for the vast majority of our population. All citizens of Belarus, and those who will come to Belarus, shall have to live according to this Basic Law. Law is law."**

## Project almost ready

The members of the working group discussed the new draft Constitution with the President for 2.5 hours. Following the results, the Head of the Belarus President Administration, Igor Sergeyenko, shared some details, "The Head of State set tasks for finalising certain areas and refining them — including legal terms, and, in fact, specific articles of the Constitution."

Mr. Sergeyenko noted that

the working group had approached the draft Basic Law of the country which will be submitted for public discussion. According to him, at the meeting with the President, the main emphasis was placed on the Belarusian People's Congress which was proposed to be given constitutional status.

Natalya Kochanova, the Chairperson of the Council of the Republic, called this decision correct since these are people who should determine Belarus' development strategy, "It will become the country's supreme representative body which should be integrated into the existing well-structured state power."

One of the innovations of the draft Constitution is redistribution of powers between the authorities. Svetlana Lyubetskaya, the Chairperson of the Standing Commission on Law of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of

the Republic of Belarus, and a member of the working group on finalising the draft Constitution, stressed the importance of this topic, "This is necessary to maintain the balance of these institutions of state power. There are already positions with which the members of the working group have agreed. This also applies to formation of judicial power bodies since this is directly related to the guarantee of its independence. The judicial system, the Constitutional Court for example — endowed with such broad powers — should fully implement its functions. Therefore, the Constitutional Court's work has also been discussed."

The working group on finalising the draft Constitution will continue its work. After its completion, the document will be presented to the members of the Constitutional Commission, and then published for public discussion.

# Life hacks for health

New meaning of the tradition of celebrating November 7th, gifts to the country and its residents, the formula of health from the President. Details of the visit of the Head of State to Mogilev.

By Dmitry Umpirovich,  
Svetlana Isaenok, Olga Kislyak,  
Lyubov Solovieva

The anniversary of the October Revolution, as in Soviet times, is marked in red on the calendar in independent Belarus. However, this celebration is filled with new meaning. On this day, it is customary to give socially significant objects to cities and towns. In Mogilev, the President officially opened a cardiac centre in the regional clinical hospital and a fitness and health centre in the Fatina micro-district. Aleksandr Lukashenko noted,

*“By virtue of our capabilities, we will develop and create better living conditions for people.”*

The newest equipment, modern operating rooms, intensive care, transplantation departments, intensive care wards, a consultation block for patients... With the appearance of new cardio-therapeutic and cardiac surgery buildings in the Mogilev Regional Hospital, high-tech types of medical care have become more accessible to residents of the region with heart problems. It is now possible to perform operations there not only on the heart, but also on



the blood vessels, the aorta, and the arteries of the head.

The appearance of the latest equipment — a computed tomograph, X-ray and ultrasound machines, consoles for intensive care units, an angiograph — has significantly expanded the possibilities of functional diagnostics. And these are not the only advantages.

“The waiting list for open heart surgery will significantly decrease: from 18 months to 3-4 months. But the number at the hospital will increase: earlier, we performed 270 operations annually while now we

can do up to 500,” said the hospital’s chief physician Anatoly Kulik, listing the advantages of the new cardiology centre. “From now on, the possibilities of receiving a consultative polyclinic have also increased: from 500 to 700 patients per day. In future, we plan to master not only kidneys, but also liver operations in the transplantation department.”

### World class pool

No matter how professional doctors are, any disease is always easier to prevent than to cure. The best way to do this is to take care of your health ahead of time. That is why the second gift from the President for November 7th was the opening of a multifunctional fitness and health complex with swimming pools in the Fatina micro-district of Mogilev. It also has halls for wrestling, boxing, table tennis, fitness, a gym, an archery range, a Russian bathhouse and a cafe.

The main building of the fitness and health centre is attached to the building where the swimming pools are located. The largest of them will enable Mogilev to host international

swimming competitions. It has ten 50m-long tracks. There is also a mobile platform for dividing the pool into 2 parts, a system for recording the results with overhead panels and scoreboards, as well as a tribune for the pool for 500 people. The second swimming pool (25m long and 7m wide) was built taking into account the specifics of conducting educational and training sessions for children. It is noteworthy that the building also houses gyms for water sports.

Communicating with the residents of Mogilev near the new fitness and health centre, Aleksandr Lukashenko also focused on swimming in the context of the importance of taking care of one’s health. He

### About coronavirus

A topic that continues to be heard is coronavirus. This time the residents of Mogilev could hear news about how the epidemic is developing now directly from the mouth of the Head of State, “Belarus COVID cases have already dipped from the latest peak (especially for hospitalisation from pneumonia). Many regional and other hospitals are already reducing the number of beds for COVID-19 patients. We have begun to provide routine care at full capacity.”

However, this is not a reason to relax. So Aleksandr Lukashenko once again reminded people that they are, as he put it, ‘the creators of their own health’, “Take care of yourself. Everything depends on



Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Care at the Mogilev Regional Hospital

also urged people to enjoy sport in the fresh air every day for at least half an hour.

And a few more ‘healthy life hacks’. The President is sure that preference should be given to products grown in our country, “You need to eat your own food and play sports. Get out, run, and train! Teach your children to do this. Because you have to breathe where you were born, and eat what is produced on our land, where you were born.”

you. Masks are your business... We will not force anyone. We will explain and convince you to use means of protection.”

By the way, people do listen to this. The President, for example, spoke about the indicative results of the meeting on the epidemiological situation and measures taken to counter the spread of coronavirus infection, which took place at the Palace of Independence on October 19th,

*“Vaccination in the country has increased 3-5 times.”*



Boxing hall in a new fitness and health centre in Mogilev

## What presents are prepared for this year

### BREST REGION

- Ivanovo: opening of the Impulse sports complex
- Kobrin: opening of traffic across the road bridge on Sovetskaya Street



### VITEBSK REGION

- Vitebsk: launch of the CT scan in the Vitebsk Regional Hospital
- Orsha District: opening of a fitness and health centre in Babinichi agro-town
- Orsha: sports complex



### GOMEL REGION

- Opening of iron removal stations in Lelchitsy and the village of Nemki, Vetka District



### GRODNO REGION

- Grodno: opening of the museum exposition at the Old Castle after reconstruction
- Grodno: opening of the administrative building of the Technolab Scientific and Production Centre after reconstruction



### MINSK REGION

- Maryina Gorka: opening of a hostel for military personnel
- Molodechno: opening of a kindergarten-school
- Section of the R-23 road from Slutsk to Soligorsk



### MOGILEV REGION

- Mogilev: opening of the cardiac surgery and cardio-therapeutic buildings at the Mogilev Regional Clinical Hospital
- Mogilev: opening of a fitness and health centre in the Fatina micro-district
- Klimovichi: commissioning of a 40-apartment building
- Klichev: opening of a residential building for young professionals
- Kirovsk: commissioning of the 3rd stage of a 40-apartment building for large families



- Mstislavl District, Mushino agro-town: renovated playground and mini-stadium
- Chausy District, Kamenka and Radomlya: new iron removal stations



### MINSK

- Opening of the building of the Children’s Infectious Disease Clinical Hospital after reconstruction
- Opening of nursery-kindergarten No. 578 in the Minsk-Mir micro-district
- Opening of the Victoria Centre for Continuing Education for Children and Youth



# People's health comes first

The Head of State ordered the allocation of additional funds to the Healthcare Ministry from the reserve fund of the President in the amount of Br140m (more than \$56m). Moreover, Aleksandr Lukashenko signed a decree on the implementation of an investment project to organise the production of a domestic vaccine against COVID-19 at the premises of BelVitonipharm JSC in 2021-2023. We learned from the experts what the money will be spent on and how the development of the Belarusian drug is progressing today.

By **Khristina Glushko**

## Vaccine, drugs, and a focus on routine care

The press service of the President stressed that Br140m (more than \$56m) will be spent on the purchase of vaccines against coronavirus, as well as various drugs: anticancer, anti-tuberculosis, heart and others. All this will ensure the high-quality provision of medical care, including planned and uninterrupted supply of medicines and vaccines to healthcare organisations.

## New trends in the development of pharmacology

We all remember how, in mid-August, the President visited an enterprise near Vitebsk, where it is planned to



**Chemist Alina Yablochkina in the quality control department of the physical and chemical control laboratory at BelVitonipharm JSC**

produce a Belarusian vaccine against COVID-19. The Head of State emphasised that we need to look to the future: after COVID, a new problem will come and we need to be ready for it. How? To develop other vaccines as well. It is necessary to be independent in this issue because whoever has a life-saving drug will dictate their own conditions on the market. The rest have no chance of an opinion: they have to 'obey': this was demonstrated to us by the situation with the pandemic.

The vaccine race began just a couple of months after the start of the pandemic: almost every country with large pharmaceutical industries sought to quickly release a drug that would save humanity from the epidemic. The rivalry continues to this day and the competition is intensifying. In addition to vaccines, which are already well known, other drugs are being developed. And not only in the form of vaccination, but also a pill or spray. This topic will definitely not lose its relevance in the coming years, so Belarus should not lag behind. Of course, vaccine production is a complex and high-tech process, but our scientists have an advantage. They have the opportunity to analyse dozens of strains and select the most relevant virus variants for a domestic drug. Scientists promise that our vaccine will be effective and safe.

The new presidential decree states that the investment project provides for the construction of a vaccine production plant in the village of Dolzha, Vitebsk Region (with the reconstruction of the existing facility). The production base of BelVitonipharm JSC is determined by the Government as the most promising site for

the pilot industrial production of vaccines, based on the degree of readiness of the infrastructure, the availability of trained specialists, as well as the possibility of further development of the biotechnological cluster. The development of a domestic vaccine is being carried out by organisations subordinate to the Healthcare Ministry and the National Academy of Sciences: a series of prototype versions of the drug has now been prepared.

The decree provides for the exemption of technological equipment, raw materials and materials imported into the country for the implementation of an investment project from the imposition of import customs duties and value added tax.

## COMMENT ON THE TOPIC

### Sergei Belyaev, General Director of RUE Belmedpreparaty:

Together with BelVitonipharm, we have created an enterprise whose main goal is to create a Belarusian vaccine against coronavirus. At the first stage, this process will consist of two parts: we plan to produce the active component at BelVitonipharm and the finished vaccine at the Belmedpreparaty facilities. In parallel, the design and construction of a production complex will be carried out, which will make it possible to make the vaccine in a full cycle: this is planned for 2023-2024. We are launching the first stage next year: the vaccine will go to preclinical and clinical trials so that we can prove its safety and evaluate its effectiveness. Most likely, the Belarusian vaccine will be a two-dose one-component where a single component is injected twice.

## DIRECT SPEECH

### Margarita Dosina, Head of the Science Department of the Healthcare Ministry:

A prototype has already been received, the strains that will be included in the vaccine have been worked out and its effectiveness is being tested. According to the plan, by the end of 2023, the drug should be released into use. A pilot batch should appear by the end of June 2022. There are many vaccines on the market today, but we will produce our own analogue, which will be the same in terms of effectiveness but the price, of course, will be cheaper. This will make it possible to vaccinate more patients. In addition, we will carry out the volume of tests that will allow us to export it. However, first of all, we will certainly satisfy the needs of Belarusians.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### The Puslovskys' larch trees in Kosovo recognised as natural monument



The decision of the Ivatsevichi District Executive Committee to declare the Puslovskys' larch trees on the site of the Kosovo palace and park estate a natural monument of local importance has been published on the National Legal Internet Portal.

Two European larch trees grow in the Merechevshchina area. They were planted in the first third of the 19th century, and they are still actively bearing fruit. The height of the first larch is 30m, and its trunk diameter is 1.5m. The second is lower and thinner. These trees were part of the palace park, which was home to about 150 species of exotic trees and shrubs brought from abroad. From it there were only hawthorn bushes, an old linden and three larches.

### Day of Minsk held at EXPO-2020

On November 3rd, the pavilion of the Republic of Belarus hosted a presentation of the economic, investment and tourism potential of the capital — Minsk City Day — at the World EXPO-2020.

The delegation from Minsk was headed by the First Deputy Chairman of the



Minsk City Executive Committee, Dmitry Mikulenok. Representatives of the leading enterprises of Minsk in the fields of construction, food industry, medicine, information technology also took part in the event from the Belarusian side.

The event aroused significant interest among exhibitors and foreign businessmen. Bilateral negotiations were held between representatives of Belarusian enterprises and Emirati business circles. A contract was signed on the supply of confectionery products to the United Arab Emirates between Kommunarka JSC and Mirawell General Trading (UAE).

### Marc Chagall Museum in Vitebsk turns 30

The museum includes a memorial house-museum and an art centre.

The Marc Chagall House-Museum is located on Pokrovskaya Street in a house that was built by the artist's father in the early 1900s and where Marc Chagall spent his youth. The museum displays 19th-20th century household items, archival documents and the artist's first works, in addition to personal belongings of the artist and his family.



The art centre, which was established in a 19th century building depicted on the world famous canvas *Above the City*, hosts exhibitions of graphic works by Marc Chagall (lithographs, wood engravings, etchings and aquatints). The collection contains a series of illustrations for Nikolai Gogol's *Dead Souls*, a series of coloured lithographs and other works by Marc Chagall.

### Fascinating world of Belarus in UNESCO

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Belarus has distributed a video about our country in the life of UNESCO on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the organisation. The UNESCO Secretariat launched the *What's the Difference?* information campaign whose main goal is to visually demonstrate the role of UNESCO in the life of the member states of the organisation.

"In our video, we open the fascinating world of Belarus at UNESCO, talk about sites included in the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List, traditional rituals that have become part of



the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List and associated schools," noted the Foreign Ministry.

The initiative is timed to coincide with the entry of the organisation's constitution into force on November 4th, 1946.

— Mr. Fallico, the 14th Eurasian Economic Forum brought together prominent politicians, well-known scientists, businessmen and public figures from many countries in a face-to-face format. One of the key issues of the meeting was overcoming the dividing lines between East and West. Has the forum become a necessary brick in building a bridge of trust between the leading players in the world?

— Honestly speaking, I did not expect to see so many forum participants this year. We had an increase in attendance in absolute figures even compared to 2019. Actually, figures are not an important indicator. It is much more important that we had very interesting discussions and panel sessions. We held a special session: ‘Structural Changes in the Economy and Future of Energy’. It featured the largest companies from Russia, the USA, the UK and elsewhere. Key figures of the oil and gas industry delivered speeches.

**The main conclusion (I agree with it) is that it is necessary to deal with the energy transition in a balanced way, taking into account different interests and with a rational approach to the problem.**

The second important block is financial. The forum participants said that it is now no longer possible to finance the coal industry and in general all those technological and industrial procedures that pollute the environment. Financial structures should be active and carefully look at each individual project, assessing where advanced technologies are used, which of them pollute our nature less, and which ones pollute more.

— The energy crisis that has engulfed Europe was discussed at the forum. What do you see as the reasons for the jump in gas prices in the EU countries? What should be the energy strategy today?

— Getting acquainted with the statistics, I noticed that, in 2018, \$37.4 trillion was invested in so-called sustainable finance. In 2020, \$1 trillion worth of so-called green bonds were issued. All this is good, but at the same time there was a disinvestment in traditional energy, in construction of pipelines and other elements that make up traditional energy. This is a too radical and abrupt move.

**If the money went only to solar panels and wind turbines, then we understand why the Europeans have found themselves in the present position. This is because wind, solar, and other types of alternative energy are unstable. They are available now but might disappear tomorrow. To ensure constant generation and supply of energy, appropriate conditions should be created.**

In our situation, natural gas reserves in underground storage have fallen, and prices have skyrocketed. Therefore, I would like



# Verona forum invites Belarusian business

The SB. Belarus Segodnya journalist has asked the President of Conoscere Eurasia and Chairman of Banca Intesa, Professor Antonio Fallico, of who is lobbying for the introduction of sanctions, about the ticking time bomb and which Belarusian projects may interest Italian business — among other issues



Antonio Fallico

to note once again that the financial sector is becoming more attentive and active when evaluating various projects.

— Europe is facing another big problem: migration...

— This is a global problem. You should always look for the reason. We need to think about how to eliminate these causes, how to develop a strategy of action, on the one hand, and tactics — on the other.

**This is a time bomb that will explode sooner or later. No walls will be able to hold anything back. If we fail to create a normal economic system, ensure development and a decent standard of living for people in their own countries, but rather bring them war, then what do we want after that?**

There is no need to give these countries any gifts, but it is necessary

— Healthcare is becoming a very important industry for investment. It is turning into a driver of the world economy. At the same time, it is necessary



After twenty years of American presence in Afghanistan, what do we have? A huge number of people are looking for somewhere to escape to just live normally. The same can be said about Libya, and Syria to a certain extent. Many countries have been viewed through the colonial prism for a long time. After colonialism formally ended, we decided that we were so clever to continue to govern these countries ourselves. What we consider democracy should be the same democracy with them. This is a serious structural problem that cannot be solved in two days.

essary to ensure a policy of independent development that could lead to good results. This means that we need to recognise their sovereignty and ensure non-interference in their affairs.

Of course, we must also think about investments with the help of financial institutions that are available, for example, in the UN system, and try not to speculate on existing problems.

— During the pandemic, medicine and pharmaceuticals are areas in which new opportunities for international co-operation are opening up. What transformations are taking place there?

that constant work is carried out, designed for a long period, to change the economic model.

It is important to solve the problem of freedom of movement of people (which, by the way, I also lack), the recognition of vaccines. Recently I visited a European country and had to take a PCR test three times in six days. This is absurd.

I was vaccinated with ‘Sputnik V’, everyone recognises that this is an excellent vaccination. However, as far as I know from my sources, the recognition of ‘Sputnik V’ in the European Union will not happen soon. Some formal admin-

istrative issues are put forward, requirements are formulated in different ways. Representatives of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) believe that they need to visit all the sites where ‘Sputnik V’ is produced. There are also questions about the unified standard of QR codes.

— Authoritative speakers spoke about the need to get rid of such a rudiment as sanctions during the forum. Why are such pressure tools still used?

— The neoliberal system has led to the emergence of a structure of society, which we call post-democratic. That is, formal democracy exists, but as the crisis unfolded, this whole system became a prisoner of various lobbying groups. Simplifying (though not quite accurately), we can call this lobby Atlantic.

It may seem that western politicians determine the rules of the game. However, in fact, various lobbying groups in the Atlantic segment develop decisions and then put politicians in such a position that they are forced to accept them. In fact, this is aimed at eliminating competition. It is these lobbying groups, which have

gained a foothold in the Atlantic system, that are the source of those sanctions with which they want to weaken both Russia and Belarus.

— How did co-operation between Italy and the EAEU countries develop in 2021? Which Belarusian companies could show themselves at the Verona platform in the future?

— Trade relations and business co-operation with the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union have grown, but, unfortunately, not as much as we would like. We hope that, next year, we will return to the usual full-scale work without restrictions.

**I would like to urge Belarusian business to take a closer look at the Verona forum. During the next anniversary forum, we would like to see a more active and broad representation of Belarus — including authorities, government, and ministries.**

Belarus could present its possibilities here. I think projects in the field of infrastructure development and agriculture would be very interesting for European businesses. Banca Intesa could finance implementation of such projects, not only from Italy, but also from Russia, if there are requests from Belarusian companies.

We have a co-operation agreement with the Belarusian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. During the seminars in Rome, we held a special session dedicated to collaboration with Belarus. Belarusian enterprises were present there and we’d wish this business conversation to continue.

# Matrix

The immersion of extra people in the Metaverse makes it possible to solve a number of key social and economic problems. Who benefits from this?

More recently, Facebook, Microsoft and Epic have announced the creation of the Metaverse — a digital virtual world that can immerse people and where they can use special technologies. For these purposes, Facebook announced its readiness to hire about 10,000 new specialists in European countries over the next five years. However, the idea of creating artificial worlds and immersing people in their desired existence and other reality is not new. Modern social media, public pages and communities are already evaluated by experts as an effective means of immersing users in a world of illusions, where they — among other things — can act as pseudo-heroes and fight against the hated state. Belarus experienced all this in 2020-2021...

By Aleksei Avdonin, analyst of BISS

## Illusory world

According to Mark Zuckerberg's idea, in the Facebook Metaverse, users will not only view content, but will stay in it. They will be able to sense the presence of other people as if they were in different places, experiencing inaccessible sensations using 2D applications or web pages. The Metaverse will be able to engage all five of a person's senses, giving them a sense of complete presence.

*The founding father of philosophical models of human immersion in the unreal world is the famous Frenchman, Jean Baudrillard. It was he who, in his 1981 treatise 'Simulacra and Simulations', described the relationship between reality, symbols and society. The creation of illusory pictures (simulacrum — copies) makes it possible to replace the real world in the creation of a public with virtual (inanimate) worlds.*

Subsequently, based on the key philosophical approaches of Jean Baudrillard, the script for the cult film *The Matrix* was written. At the same time, at present, all the work of the western media is based on the models of Jean Baudrillard, which provide for the creation of illusory (fake) representations in the creation of the public.

## Extra people effect

Nevertheless, another goal of the Metaverse and existing social networks is more interesting to consider — it is to create conditions for the occupation of the so-called extra people.

The concept of 'extra people' was introduced back in 1798 by the British scientist Thomas Malthus — now highly revered among the foreign establishment. Malthus called 'extra people' those who consume resources with minimal returns. It was he who came up with the idea that uncontrolled population growth can lead to a decrease in well-being and massive hunger and recommended artificial population reduction in advance.

*The western economy faced the effect of extra people during the period of the industrial revolution, when the intensive introduc-*



*tion of machine labour led to the displacement of manual and mass unemployment. Machines began to produce more goods, but there was no one to consume it, and the world realised the most important problem of capitalist society: overproduction. Unemployed and useless people turned out to be surplus...*

## THE MT REFERENCE

Technologies that Mark Zuckerberg's Metaverse will run on:

- Virtual reality (VR) — a fictional world (example, computer games).
- Augmented reality (AR) — input of any images (objects, information) over the existing reality using programmes or devices.
- Mixed reality (MR) — a further development of AR, where objects of the virtual world interact with objects of the real world to a limited extent.
- Extended Reality (XR) — the conditional interaction of virtual and real space.

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, the western establishment has come up with different answers to the main question: what to do with these extra resources. There were few options: either a war, or an epidemic, or the use of weapons of mass destruction. This is exactly what we observed in the 20th century: two world wars, the nuclear bombing of Japan, chemical and bacteriological attacks, a series of epidemics of previously unknown diseases, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

## New meanings

In the wake of the so-called western pseudo-humanism of the early 21st century, the above-described harsh methods of population reduction began to be actively replaced by lighter tools: the popularisation of abortion and family models 2+1, 1+1 (two parents one child, families without children), propaganda of LGBT movements, feminism and narcissism.

At the same time, in order to reduce the likelihood of outbreaks of food riots and the spread of socialist / communist ideas, western ideologists began to actively promote projects to provide extra people with a socially guaranteed income — or so-called 'helicopter money' for spending on food, household chemicals, contraceptives and cheap leisure.

*But the socially guaranteed income destroys the personality: a person does not strive for anything, degrades themselves without education and work, becomes dependent on benefits and gets*

*nervous — he cannot be calmed by just food. He needs new motives, incentives and goals or a new reality, where he could acquire new meanings and feel his significance, to join the 'Great idea / mission / community / brotherhood'.*

It reminds us of the essence of gambling addiction and the need for virtual worlds among many representatives of the modern generation.

In this regard, it's no coincidence that the Metaverse project is now announced by the largest corporations Facebook and Microsoft, whose owners have repeatedly openly advocated the need to curb the growth of the world's population in order to solve environmental problems.

The immersion of extra people in the Metaverse makes it possible to solve a number of key social and economic problems: it gives extra people new meanings, creates a new reality for them — better than their environment, family, place of work, state, nation, does not allow communicating in reality, receiving vivid emotions, to have families, children.... As a result, all this will provide an opportunity to reduce the 'population' of extra people. An ideal model of a new world for those in power, isn't it?

The choice is for everyone. In order not to become an extra person, one must constantly improve oneself, improve one's education, one's own competencies and integrate into the world of new economic relations. It is certainly difficult, but the other way is only to the notorious Matrix.

# White and fluffy

## More than 90 percent of fur goods are exported annually: how they are produced in the country

**The cold is coming closer: natural fur coats, which have been successfully established in our country, help to survive the winter frosts. Recently, in accordance with a presidential decree, loans were allocated against the Government's guarantees for the rehabilitation of fur farms. "The fur industry should not ask for budget money, but bring in a stable income," Aleksandr Lukashenko said at a general meeting of representatives of the Belarusian Republican Union of Consumer Societies. Our reporter tried to understand how the natural fur market is developing in our country as a whole.**

By Sergei Grudnitsky

### A fur coat starts with an idea

At the moment, all conditions have been created in our country to make a product from natural fur from scratch: these are animal farms, design centres and highly qualified professionals. And if, for example, 15 million mink were destroyed in Denmark (soon after these ill-considered actions, the local authorities admitted that it was not worth getting rid of all the livestock and the decision on mass culling was wrong), the Belarusian industry is gaining momentum.

To see how the production of fur products is organised, we visited the GNL Design Centre of Belkoopvneshtorg at Belkoopsoyuz trade unitary enterprise, which employs 22 people.

If the theatre begins with a hanger, then a fur coat begins with an idea: the design is being developed by the pattern designer, Svetlana Ivanova.

Like a fairy magician, she uses pencils to transfer model ideas to paper. "The artist works in two areas," says the fashion designer. "Firstly, preparation for the season begins with updating and adjusting the classic style outerwear model. Secondly, within the walls of the GNL design centre, a new designer collection is annually developed, which meets the latest fashion trends. Such designer fur products are produced in limited quantities and are quickly sold out, because these things are exclusive and are produced in a single copy only."

Other employees also join the creative process. Production manager, technologist, designers and pattern makers — the word of each specialist has its own weight. After the approval of the sketches, they go to the table for the designers, who create paper patterns for the future product. Then the patterns must be checked. And only then, on proven patterns, is a fur product made. Later, the artistic and technical council approves new models of outerwear for launching into mass production.



Fashion designers create paper patterns for items in progress



Pattern designer Svetlana Ivanova is developing sketches for future fur coats

The design centre receives fully finished mink skins — ready for work. Their primary dressing is carried out at the enterprise in Molodechno, secondary — in Vitebsk or in Labinsk (Russia). Only after processing does the skin become soft, elastic and suitable for sewing outerwear.

### Handmade in Belarusian style

Fur coming from animal farms is sorted. Thanks to their experienced gaze and knowledge, the technologist selects the most identical skins. And this is despite the fact that there are about ten natural colours of fur. But it is worth considering also shades and other selection criteria!

"This work is one hundred percent handmade, this production is not subject to any automation," says Irina Kozyreva, who heads the production of goods from natural fur and leather. "It's impossible to entrust this to a computer. Only a human can notice the smallest nuances."

When the skins are checked and prepared, they begin the stretching process. The fur skins are moistened to soften the skin tissue, slightly straightened by hand and stretched with a special stapler gun onto the surface of the table to a given length. Such an operation enables the skins to be formed so that they fit well to the patterns and are suitable for cutting. Then follows the laying out according to patterns and cutting.

The tailor is engaged in the assembly of the main parts, and the fur dresser is engaged in adjustments: he cuts out the final common canvas according to the patterns. This blank from the furrier's shop is transferred to the tailoring shop. The tailor re-



ceives a set of parts. In his hands, this 'constructor kit' takes on a finished look: it is assembled, sewn, lining and applied materials such as pockets are added to it. To give the product softness and elasticity, the cut of the finished product is placed in a specialised drum, thanks to which the skin becomes soft and elastic. Our fur diamond is ready!

### Final QR chord

The final touch is the marking of the fur coat. Belarus became the first in the entire Eurasian space to introduce an electronic product passport. Hovering over the QR code on the tag, you can find out all the data about the fur coat: its manufacturer, photos of the product and all its characteristics. This enables us to fight the black market. This initialisation increases the cost of the product by only about \$2. But the person understands that he has bought the original thing. The programme was developed jointly with the staff of the Academy of Sciences.

### COMPETENTLY

#### Dmitry Bondich, First Deputy General Director of the Belkoopmekh unitary enterprise of Belkoopsoyuz:

*In the post-Soviet space, only the consumer co-operatives of our country have preserved the animal husbandry industry. At the same time, Belkoopsoyuz carried out purposeful work to develop it and maintain its competitive position in the world fur market. The industry is export-oriented, as more than 90 percent of the produced fur is exported annually.*

*Over the first nine months of this year, 430,600 skins were sold for \$7.6m, the cost of one skin was \$17.50, while the selling price of one skin in 2020 was \$13.05, the price growth is 134.1 percent.*



Thanks to their experienced gaze and knowledge, experts select the most identical skins



In Belarus, a Scandinavian breed of mink is bred, the fur of which is highly valued all over the world

### Fur is a success

The process of making one fur coat involves about five people. It takes about a week for a mass-produced product while a month and a half is required for a tailor-made item. At the moment, the design centre produces about 40 items per month. The production manager admits that they could do more if there are more orders. Anyway, they don't chase the quantity; after all, it is manual labour, which requires a reverent attitude and does not tolerate haste.

The design centre is engaged not only in sewing fur products. Its employees also develop fur technologies. For example, they figure out how to work with fur so that it takes on a different meaning.

"Fur can be put on an elastic band, embroidered with lace, sewn on fabric,"

Svetlana Ivanova tells us. "We are developing, adopting world experience while improving. We use fur leftovers efficiently: we make accessories, key rings and talismans from them for the New Year. Thanks to this, the range of fur products has been expanded, some of which can be worn in autumn. There are also male designs with fur inside."

The Belarusian production of sewing products from natural fur occupies a good position at the international level. Thus, fur products by Belarusian fashion designers from Belkoopsoyuz, presented at the most prestigious International *Remix* Competition, entered the top ten strongest in the world. Two years ago, Italian *Vogue* recognised the products of our manufacturer as one of the best. Our producer joined the top-10 winners, finishing fourth and leaving behind factories in countries such as the United States, Canada, Germany and France.



# Complex transport crisis

The Baltic States face lost transit, driver shortages and strikes

The Latvian Railways announced another massive staff layoff. The Lithuanian Railways also have serious problems. In parallel with these processes, the Baltic 'sisters' may be left without passenger road transport: there are not enough bus drivers in Latvia and Lithuania, and those that do exist are threatening to start a strike. The Baltic States are facing a complex transport crisis, writes the analytical portal RuBaltic.Ru.

The Latvian Railways have notified the State Employment Service of plans to fire 864 people by the end of the year. This is the third major cut in recent years. In August, Latvian Railways cut about

700 employees, and at the beginning of the year announced plans to lay off every sixth employee: 1,500 people. Over the past three years, the staff of the Latvian Railways has decreased by almost a third: from 10 to 7 thousand employees. And this is not the limit, because the clients-freight carriers are still leaving, the freight turnover of the Latvian Railways continues to decrease, therefore, the reductions on the railway will continue.

The situation is moving in the same direction in neighbouring Lithuania, which at the beginning of the year already lost the Belarusian oil transit, and by the end of the year it is expected to

lose the transit of Belarusian potassium. Cargoes from Belarus account for about a third of the freight traffic of the Lithuanian railway — their loss guarantees it the same processes that have been going on in Latvia for several years.

In fact, these processes have already been launched in Lithuania. The renovation and development of infrastructure is being stopped. Massive cuts are a matter of time, as well as the sale of equipment, rails, sleepers and wagons on the model of Latvian neighbours.

Thus, the Baltics are on the verge of a complex transport crisis. It can simultaneously cover both rail and road transport.

# Company that managed Pfizer vaccine trial sites 'falsified data'

Researcher blows the whistle on data integrity issues in Pfizer's vaccine trial, according to *The British Medical Journal*

Revelations of poor practices at a contract research company helping to carry out Pfizer's pivotal COVID-19 vaccine trial raise questions about data integrity and regulatory oversight.

*The BMJ* carried out this investigation after Brook Jackson, the regional director of the Ventavia Research Group, which helped Pfizer conduct the clinical trials, contacted the editorial office of the publication. Jackson said she was fired in September 2020 after repeatedly reporting massive clinical trial violations to the company's head office.



The fired employee gave *The BMJ* dozens of internal company documents, photos, video and audio recordings, which convinced the editors that her statements were true. While verifying the information, the British publication received more evidence confirming that the vaccine trials did not meet the standards declared by Pfizer.



# Driving America toward economic doomsday

US Republican Senator Rick Scott said that Joe Biden's actions as head of state were an absolute disaster for the United States, reports RT

So, referring to the documents of the US Department of Commerce, Rick Scott recalled that in the third quarter of 2021, the US GDP fell to a 2 percent annualised rate of growth in the third quarter 'amid President Biden's growing supply chain and inflation crises'.

"Joe Biden has been an absolute disaster for our country. By embracing radical socialist policies over what's truly in the best interest of American families, he has brought America to a dangerous low after just nine months in office," added the senator.

As the politician noted, the president's wrong decisions in a number of areas also led to an increase in prices for 'almost everything'.

"Under Joe Biden, Americans can no longer make ends meet. It's time for the president to wake up and listen before the US comes to a complete economic collapse," concluded Rick Scott.

Meanwhile, Joe Biden's approval rating has sunk to a new low of 37.8 percent, according to the poll, conducted by *USA Today* and Suffolk University.

# Russian royal jewels on Geneva auction block

Russian royal jewels smuggled out of the country during the 1917 revolution, alongside rare coloured diamonds, are on offer at auction in Geneva, looking for deep-pocketed collectors emerging from the pandemic

An orange-pink diamond weighing 25.62 carats, estimated at \$3.9m to \$5.9m, set in a ring, is the star lot at auction house Sotheby's semi-annual jewellery sale in the Swiss city.

"A beautiful crystal, it's a fantastic colour with a little bit of orange but not too much, so it's a very subtle colour," Olivier Wagner, head of sale and jewellery expert at Sotheby's Geneva, said. "The market is currently very dynamic and after the pandemic people are very keen to buy jewellery today and to buy something tangible they can enjoy."

For collectors of historic gems, a large oval sapphire and diamond brooch and matching ear-clips from the jewellery box of Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, the aunt of the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II, is back on the block. She escaped from revolutionary Russia and died in France in 1920.

The royal set, entrusted to her friend the British diplomat Albert Henry Stopford, who took them to London for safekeeping along with other jewels, is estimated at 280,000-480,000 Swiss Francs, the auction house said.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



# For adults and children



By Yuliana Leonovich

**The chief choreographer of the Bolshoi Theatre, People's Artist of Belarus Yuri Troyan, did not react at all like a child to the big premiere: the children's play *The Little Humpbacked Horse*. The choreographer not only authored the libretto, rethinking the most famous work by Piotr Yershov, but also treated the musical material carefully. Moreover, preserving the fairy-tale plot, Troyan simultaneously made it completely different: both modern and eternal, and dashing in a ballet manner. This means that the theatre managed to create a performance that will appeal to both children and adults.**

## A fairy-tale for big and small

An interesting fact: the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus has taken up the famous fairy-tale with its considerable educational potential for the first time. Although the stage directors could have had their fantasy much earlier because the ballet was inspired by ... Belarus. It is known that the composer Rodion Shchedrin wrote the music for *The Little Humpbacked Horse* after a trip to the Belarusian wilderness back in late 1950s. There, in nature, far from civilisation, he listened to folk songs, which later acquired new musical meanings in his ballet. Shchedrin himself, thanks to *The Little Humpbacked Horse*, found his Tsar Maiden: the composer's acquaintance with Maya Plisetskaya (a young, but by that time already well-known ballerina) took place at the very first rehearsals of the play. Shchedrin later dedicated the score to her.

Over the years, the music has successfully stood the test of time, without losing its enthusiasm and relevance.

There is no point in retelling the plot of Yershov's fairy-tale as everyone knows it well. In the ballet version, each viewer,

## At the end of October, the Bolshoi Theatre of Belarus presented the brightest premiere of autumn: *The Little Humpbacked Horse* ballet to music by Rodion Shchedrin



as conceived by the directors, will see something of their own: adults will see a story not devoid of topicality while children will see wonderful transformations and a colourful picture.

In addition, especially for the new premiere, costume designer Yekaterina Bulgakova created three hundred (!) sketches. She tried to penetrate into the world of fairy-tales by studying dozens of paintings: from the works of the most famous Russian illustrator Ivan Bilibin to our own Leon Bakst. According to Yekaterina, two worlds coexist in the play: the world of people and fairy-tale creatures, which in the end will help the main characters find their happiness. Therefore, all the fairy-tale characters are invented as only a child can imagine them: in funny outfits, bright as a child's colouring.

The scenography equals the costume in scale. The scenery in the play is like one big construction. A team of specialists headed by artist Lyubov Sidelnikova is responsible for the dashing grace and wonderful transformations on the stage, "First of all, I was inspired by the music of Rodion Shchedrin. It was

necessary to find harmony so that the design of the performance would be combined with the music. Therefore, I tried to create not only folk history. I was looking for some motives in Russian Art Nouveau, drawing ideas from Vrubel's majolica."

The author of the libretto, choreographer-director of the play, Yuri Troyan, meanwhile, draws attention to the fact that *The Little Humpbacked Horse* surprises the audience with

its imagery and multi-layered meanings, "At the same time, the main thing for us is to preserve the peace, atmosphere, and spirit of the Russian folk tale. I'll tell you a secret: the whole story will start from ... the stove. In a Russian fairy-tale, this is perhaps one of the most important symbols, behind which many signs and meanings are hidden."

## Maidens and beauties

The best ballet forces of

the theatre joined the exciting adventures of Ivan and his Little Humpbacked Horse with pleasure (and it can be seen!). People's Artist of Belarus, prima ballerina Irina Yeromkina (who appears in the title role of the Tsar Maiden in one of the casts) does not hide her feelings, "The repertoire has long lacked such a bright and light ballet, on which not only the audience, but also we, the artists, have a rest with our souls. The play boasts humour and riddles. There is science for adults as well — as in any fairy-tale."

Another performer of the role of the Tsar Maiden, Honoured Artiste of Belarus Lyudmila Khitrova, already calls *The Little Humpbacked Horse* a great personal, creative and theatrical success, "The performance turned out to be truly fabulous, magical. And this is what we all sometimes lack so much in life. And it also seems to me that for the first acquaintance of children with such a serious genre as ballet, there is no better production. The plot is as close as possible to the original source, small viewers will easily understand it."

A long and happy life on stage is predicted for the fresh premiere at the Bolshoi.

And if you add to this the wonderful training of the Belarusian ballet and the skill and inspiration of the soloists, you get that beauty and celebration that the audience applauded in the last October days.

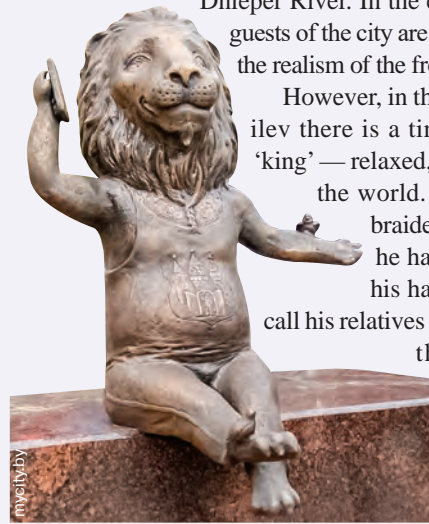


# Unusual sculptures of Belarus

By Sofia Arsenyeva

## Lion on the line

There is a beaver in Bobruisk, a wolf in Volkovysk and lions in Mogilev. Moreover, there are lions in several bronze variations from one author: sculptor Andrei Vorobyov. These proud 'kings of the beasts' adorn the Pushkin Bridge: manes in the wind, their eyes are focused and it seems that they will jump from the high bank into the fast waters of the Dnieper River. In the evening twilight, guests of the city are often horrified by the realism of the frozen predators.



However, in the centre of Mogilev there is a tiny good-natured 'king' — relaxed, smiling, open to the world. A thick beard is braided in a pigtail, and he has a cell phone in his hands. "In order to call his relatives in Africa and tell them about the wonderful life in Belarus," smiles Andrei Vorobyov.

Not just Lenin alone. It is generally accepted that our blue-eyed Belarus is the country with the largest concentration of monuments to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin per square kilometre. However, there are also more original sculptural forms here.

## Guest from the past

Dragons have not died out in Belarus. Don't believe me? You have a direct road to Lepel, where a real 'Tsmok' (dragon in Belarusian) lurks on the shore of the lake in the city park. It is bronze, single-headed and not dangerous at all. It was Lepel land that was considered the birthplace of Belarusian dragons thanks to the novel by Vladimir Korotkevich *Christ Has Landed in Grodno*. The eminent writer, based on legends, not only gave a residence permit to a mythical monster, but also gave an interesting portrait of an animal: grey, glossy, with a thin long neck. '...God knows, that head laughed. Maybe it just bared its teeth, or maybe it made fun of our troubles. And the teeth were the size of a horse's, but sharp, and there were many of them for such a small head, too many.'



## Fine fellow cucumber

Two Belarusian townships at once claim the title of the cucumber capital: Shklov and Olshany. In the first, the inhabitants rely on history. They say their cucumbers were delivered to the table of Yekaterina II. The residents of Olshany have their own truth: their crispy vegetables are so good that they go in tonnes to Moscow, St. Petersburg and other megacities. In the rivalry for the title of the cucumber capital, monuments to cucumbers were erected in both places. In Shklov, the cucumber is depicted as a real hard worker, having a basket in its hands and boasting a working-romantic attitude. Meanwhile, in Olshany, the cucumber is cunning, inviting others to work in the greenhouses.



## Instagram lady

The most advanced sculpture in Belarus is the legendary Baba Raya from the Komarovsky market in Minsk. The colourful seed seller loves to be photographed, so she often flashes up on the social networks of Minsk residents and guests of the Belarusian capital. Yes, she herself has an Instagram profile and a whole army of 65,000 subscribers! The content of Baba Raya at the Komarovsky market is updated daily. She also gives out advice to guests: where to buy the most delicious bacon, milk and cheese. And a few years ago, a detective story was played out. The scammers hacked into the account and demanded a ransom: Br500,000, threatening to delete all the pictures. Komarovsky market employees tried to resolve the conflict peacefully. They offered to meet with the offenders, set the table for them and thank them for the



lesson. But the hackers turned out to be relentless: ransom or death online! As a result, the support service of the social network stood up to protect Baba Raya, and the criminals were left with nothing.

## The sudden arrival of a magician

In Vitebsk, one of the most beloved wizards of Soviet children — Hassan Abdurrahman ibn Khottab, aka Old Man Khotabych — is 'hovering' on a flying carpet with his bushy beard opposite the entrance to the puppet theatre. The most attentive can find at the feet of the genie, the very copper jug that will help fulfil cherished desires. All you need to do is rub it well.

The legendary old man didn't appear in the city above the Dvina River by chance. Here, in 1903, Lazar Ginzburg was born — the author of a book about a wizard.



# Living the dream



Alina Harnasko

## The national rhythmic gymnastics team of Belarus showed the best result in its history at the World Championships in Kitakyushu

By Sergei Kanashits

It's nice, whatever you say, to realise that in Belarus girls are not only the most beautiful, slender and graceful, but also talented, hardworking and diligent. The recent world championship, which ended in Japan, confirmed these maxims and added a couple more. Our excellent rhythmic gymnastics team returned home with a suitcase weighed down with medals (only the Russians won more), and the satisfaction of having had a brilliant season. They confidently expect that the coming year will be even better.



Extract of performances by Belarusian athletes in the group exercises

Gold, two silver and two bronze awards in individual exercises, third place in the group all-around and in the team event: a total of seven medals — a catch that cannot be called modest. In all the personal programmes, the Belarusians climbed the pedestal and the result would have been even higher if the stability of the group members had not been let down; the girls managed to win medals in the exercises with the balls, as well as with hoops and clubs. It's a shame not to have a full winning house but now it's clear what needs to be worked on next and our coaches are excellent at working on mistakes!

Rhythmic gymnastics is a specific sport. It is for connoisseurs. This is a kind of sports opera with ballet, a theatrical performance in the 'ultra' category with such aerobics that it will take your breath away. This kind of sport can be misunderstood, but it is impossible not to accept it as it caresses

the eye, like any high art. The performers flourish at an unusually young age; champions, as a rule, manage to compress and fit their rich careers into two Olympic cycles, after which they leave the big carpet at an age when everything is just beginning in other sports. The Averina twins are now 23 years old, Yevgenia Kanaeva won her two Olympic golds at 18 and 22, Margarita Mamun — at 21, Alina Kabaeva was shining from 16 to 23... Alina Harnasko of Belarus turned 20 in August while Anastasiia Salos is now 19. Harnasko burst into the pool of elite gymnasts in a whirlwind this season, winning bronze in Tokyo 2020 and claiming four world championship awards: silver in the all-around, as well as gold, silver and bronze in individual events — the result is amazing! If injuries and disruptions are avoided, then by Paris-2024 Alina may well aim at the result of her personal trainer Marina Lobach, who

won the 1988 Seoul Olympics in a stunning style, which has not yet been surpassed in Belarus. But at the same time, Salos cannot be discounted in any case — she is a no less talented and hardworking girl than her teammate, although she has been temporarily moved to reserve positions. Do not forget that it was Salos who won the national championship in 2020 and was considered the number one in the team. So Nastya, no doubt, will take her own, and in the conditions of such a wonderful competition, the skill of the girls simply cannot but grow.

The success of Belarusian rhythmic gymnastics, which continues to maintain its reputation and remain a world proven brand for years (unlike the Ukrainians, for example, who have managed to all but destroy their outstanding school), is not accidental. Its basis is clearly and professionally structured work at all levels, from kids to professionals. A separate

cohort, of course, is the top echelon, the professorial coaching school, where the maestros include Irina Leparskaya, Marina Lobach, Lyubov Cherkashina... And all of them are surprisingly well-integrated into the policy of state support for sports, without which it would be impossible to stay afloat and show such stable and high-quality results. An example that confirms better than any words that the scheme works like a clock is the Rhythmic Gymnastics Palace, which opened its doors three years ago, located in a picturesque district of Minsk. "We have been waiting for this for a very long time," Irina Leparskaya said then. "I myself drew all this and have already seen it a hundred times in a dream. We entered here with positive thoughts and a good mood. I am very grateful to the Presi-

dent for his support, everything here is at the highest level. And everything is Belarusian, except for the carpets. We take good care of our homes and teach our children to do this. They understand and appreciate everything. There is no exaggeration in the fact that you can live here. This is our real home. At the same time, all children's schools will remain in their places, we select only the best, most promising ones and we will wait for replenishment from schools every year. We look for talents and raise incredible sportsmen and women from them, we will do our best and a little more."

As you can see, the words of the head coach emphasised the case. "Each of our girls has a dream of her own," added Irina Yurievna. "And we live and work for the sake of every pupils' dreams."



Anastasiia Salos

Alina Harnasko and Anastasiia Salos have already begun to fulfil their dreams. However, the halls and other premises of the Palace of Gymnastics are not empty, and work is in full swing here every day and competitors are rapidly growing behind the backs of the elite gymnasts. Darya Tkacheva, Anna Kamenshchikova, Aryna Krasnarutskaya... These and other girls, too, will soon be ready to really surprise. The main thing is to work, to believe and, of course, to dream.

## ARENA

### ● NOC President congratulated the national boxing team on their success at the World Cup

Viktor Lukashenko congratulated the national boxing team on their successful performance at the 2021 AIBA World Boxing Championships in Belgrade.

"You showed skill and character in spectacular and stubborn fights in the ring. Having won silver and bronze medals, Aliaksei and Yauheni presented the Belarusian fans with a real gift, which is one of the greatest achievements of domestic boxing in the sovereign history of our country," the message of congratulations says.

At the 2021 World Championships, Belarusian boxers Yauheni Karmilchik and Aliaksei Alfiorau claimed bronze

and silver medals, respectively.

They repeated the achievement of the domestic boxers at the 2003 world forum. Then in Bangkok (Thailand) Magomed Aripgadzhiev (silver) and Viktor Zuev (bronze) achieved a similar result.

### ● Short course medals



At the 2021 European Short Course Swimming Championships in Kazan, Belarusian Ilya Shymanovich shone. In the 100m breaststroke, Ilya finished second and then twice climbed to the highest step of the podium, winning both 50m and 200m swims!

The victorious time of the Minsker in 50m breaststroke was 25.25 sec. This is a

repetition of the world record set by South African athlete Cameron van der Burg in November 2009.

Also in Kazan, the Belarusian Anastasiya Shkurdaï distinguished herself by winning silver in the 100m butterfly.

### ● Belarusian athlete Vyacheslav Khoroneko set another world record

During the Belarusian Kettlebell Lifting Championship, the multiple world champion and Guinness World Record holder exceeded his achievement in the bench press with one hand, lifting a 24kg kettlebell 181 times in 170 seconds.



### ● Representative of Belarus Nellie Kim elected Vice President of FIG

The elections were held within the framework of the 83rd FIG Congress in Antalya (Turkey). In addition to Nellie Kim, the Qatari Ali Al-Hitmi and the Turk Suat Chelen were elected vice presidents of the FIG.

Previously, 62-year-old Japanese Morinari Watanabe was re-elected to the post of FIG president, defeating Farid Gayibov of Azerbaijan.

We should also note the election of the 2012 Games bronze medallist Lyubov Cherkashina, who previously headed the FIG Athletes' Commission, to the FIG Rhythmic Gymnastics Technical Committee.

Pavel Bogush

## Photo of the week



An owl in the Vygonoshchansky nature reserve, Brest Region

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



**On November 11th, 1821,** Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) was born — a Russian writer, a classic of world literature, one of the most widely read writers in the world. Dostoevsky's parents are of Belarusian origin. Dostoevsky's works influenced world literature, including the works of Belarusian writers. The novel *Poor Folk*, the story *White Nights* and the story *Polzunkov* have been translated into Belarusian. Performances have been staged in Belarusian theatres based on Dostoevsky's works *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, *The Humiliated and Insulted*, *Uncle's Dream*.

**November 11th** is World Quality Day, initiated by the European Organisation for Quality (EOQ) with the support of the United Nations. The aim of World Quality Day is to increase the importance of high quality products and services, as well as to intensify activities that are aimed at drawing attention to quality issues.



**November 12th** is World Pneumonia Day. It has been held since 2009 under the auspices of the World Health Organisation. Pneumonia is an infectious lung disease that most commonly affects children, the elderly and people with weakened immune systems. Various types of microorganisms can cause pneumonia.



**November 13th** is International Day of the Blind. It is celebrated on the birthday of teacher Valentin Haüy (1745-1822), a famous French teacher who founded the world's first boarding school for the blind in 1784 in Paris, and later several schools and enterprises for the blind in Paris and St. Petersburg. The main goal of the day is to draw the attention of the general public to those who have permanently lost their sight and found themselves in a difficult life situation.

**On November 14th, 1916,** Grigory Lyul'kov was born — a participant in the liberation of Belarus from the Nazi invaders during the Great Patriotic War. He fought on the Western and 1st Belorussian fronts as a battalion commander, assistant commander and regiment commander. On June 24th, 1944, the regiment under his command made a roundabout manoeuvre in a wooded and swampy area near the village of Chernin, Parichi District and broke through the enemy's defences, which ensured a forced offensive by the Soviet troops. On June 27th, 1944, the regiment under his command crossed the Sinyaya River on self-propelled guns and successfully carried out the operation to liberate Osipovichi. He died in 1983.



**On November 14th, 1896,** the branch Minsk City Telephone Network of RUE Beltelecom was founded. On this day, a telephone exchange of the Erickson system for 100 numbers was put into operation. It was installed in the building of the postal and telegraph office on Gubernatorskaya Street (now Lenin Street). This day is considered the birthday of the Minsk city telephone network.

**On November 15th, 1991,** the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus was founded — the highest constitutional collegial coordination-political body — which was created in order to implement the powers of the President of the Republic of Belarus in the field of ensuring the national security of the state.



**November 15th** is the Recycling Day. The main tasks of secondary processing are to solve the problem of limited resources, to reduce the cost of finished products through the use of cheaper raw materials and to combat environmental pollution. Garbage needs to be properly disposed of, and even better — recycled, giving the already used raw materials a second life.



**On November 15th, 1951,** Viktor Skorobogatov was born — a Belarusian singer, teacher, musical figure and Honoured Artist of Belarus. He graduated from the Belarusian Conservatory. In 1977-2005, he was a soloist of the National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of Belarus, from 1992, — artistic director of the Belarusian Capella (founded by him). He is also a laureate of the State Prize of Belarus.



**November 17th** is International Students' Day, established in 1946 at the World Congress of Students, held in Prague, in memory of Czech patriotic students who were shot by the Nazi invaders in 1939.

**On November 18th, 1936,** the House of the Red Army was opened in Minsk (from 1946 — the House of Officers, from 1992 — the Central House of Officers of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus). For pre-war Minsk, the building was simply unique: four above-ground and four underground floors, 100 rooms and halls, with a total area equal to three football fields, the best-equipped stage in the Republic, the first indoor swimming pool. The building miraculously survived in Minsk during the war. In 1974, it was rebuilt and acquired its present appearance.

