



Strategy bears fruit:
on the role of Belarus
in addressing
global food
security
challenges

4



Aggression through
the centuries: Western
civilisation has
waged more wars
than any other
in history

9

INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

PUBLISHED SINCE FEBRUARY 2003 ● NO. 40 (1046) ● THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2024 ● WWW.SB.BY



At the concert of national socio-cultural campaign *Unity Marathon*

Marathon of the trinity of traditions

On National Unity Day — September 17th — the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, when speaking at a solemn event in Minsk, announced the launch of the national socio-cultural campaign *Unity Marathon*, which will take place across the country and unite various formats of events. “It will be a marathon of the trinity of traditions — national culture, which we cherish and develop, the talents of our people, for which the Belarusian land is renowned, and the beauty of the Slavic soul, which fills the world around us with harmony and mutual understanding,” emphasised the Head of State.

A large-scale campaign has started across the country, energising and uniting people of different generations and professions. Molodechno was the first location. Gomel took over the baton of the campaign on October 18th-19th. The next stop of *Unity Marathon* is Zhlobin, on October 26th.

The *Unity Marathon* programme includes not only unique concerts reflecting the distinctiveness of the Belarusian national culture. Various events are being held, including an open drawing competition for primary school students titled *We Are Together*, a national essay competition on the theme *What is Unity*, a national project competition *My Contribution to the Future of the Country*, a series of events in vocational colleges titled *NOT Boring, NOT a Lecture*, a series of events called *Landmark Meeting*, the creation of murals, urban quests *This is All My Native Place*, and more. We have a lot to show, cherish and be proud of. The marathon has already become a celebration of unity around the achievements of Belarusians, which we have all earned through hard work.



Project of strategic importance

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has held a meeting with scientists and participants of Belarusian Antarctic expeditions

FOCUS



From the very beginning, the Head of State set a practice-oriented tone for communication regarding scientific research and work in Antarctica. “Our country needs this research. What practical results can we expect from it in the near future?” the Belarusian leader made the main emphasis.

The President was also interested in the possibility of commercialisation of the presented technical developments.

Aleksei Gaidashov, Deputy Head of the Republican Centre for Polar Research and the head of all Belarusian Antarctic expeditions, reported that complex devices — many of which are better than foreign analogues, and some have no analogues in the world at all — are being tested in the unique conditions of Antarctica.

A complex for recording geophysical signals, a MARS-B spectrometer, a submersible photometer, a solar spectral albedometer, a complex of mobile meteorological stations, a submersible bathyscaphe, a lidar component base and other equipment were demonstrated to the Head of State.

Aleksandr Lukashenko was also shown minerals and components of the Antarctic natural environment, samples of flora and fauna and other items obtained during the polar research.



According to the Head of State, the very idea of Belarus’ presence in Antarctica, as well as space exploration, once seemed absolutely audacious, yet these scientific peaks have been conquered. “As you know, we have conquered these impossible scientific peaks,” the President stressed.

In 2006, Aleksandr Lukashenko supported Belarus’ accession to the Antarctic Treaty. At that time, it was crucial to preserve the scientific potential and continuity of research developed in Soviet times, and to form a national scientific school using the existing basis.

“Young people choose careers in science, a new generation of specialists is growing, and domestic scientific schools are developing,” the President stated.

“The 17th Belarusian Antarctic expedition is already on its way. This indicates the success of the project, which has become as strategically important as the construction of the Belarusian nuclear power plant, the launch of space satellites, and a flight into space.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that Belarus had rightfully entered the elite pool of states exploring Antarctica. The high level of development of Belarusian science and technology is widely recognised, “Today, the Belarusian flag is flying on the remote ice continent. Only 30 countries are present in this region. Belarus is one of them. Moreover, we have our own research station — Gora [Mountain] Vechernyaya — with full-fledged infrastructure, modern scientific laboratories, and more. What is important, the most advanced technological solutions are implemented there. These solutions are ours, Belarusian,” the Head of State underscored. “We have serious research and production potential. The equipment used has been developed by us for the application in extreme conditions, some technologies and tools are unique and have no analogues in the world. We need to learn not only how to use them, but also how to implement them — everything should bring money.”

The President believes that the technological and design solutions and materials tested in Antarctica would be good to use in various industries within the country. The Head of State suggested thinking about how the research of Belarusian polar explorers can be applied in the real sector of the economy right now.



According to the President, Antarctica is a perfect example of unbiased and constructive relations between different countries.

“Thank God that there is still a piece of land on the planet where such relations can be established and developed,” Aleksandr Lukashenko added. “By and large, scientific achievements in such global areas as space exploration, the development of

POLAR EXPLORERS HAVE GIFTED THE PRESIDENT OF BELARUS A UNIQUE MINERAL ENDERBITE

This mineral — which is about four billion years old — makes the basis of the Earth’s crystalline basement.

The presence of the mineral on the Earth’s surface is observed in Antarctica only. The sample handed over to the Head of State was mined in the area of the Belarusian Antarctic station Gora Vechernyaya.

Another gift from the participants of the 16th Belarusian Antarctic expedition is the national flag of Belarus, which had visited a hard-to-reach area of Antarctica.

The national flag of the Republic of Belarus was unfurled on January 20th, 2024 by participants of the groundbreaking 16th Belarusian Antarctic expedition — Aleksei Gaidashov, Vitaly Khilko, Yegor Korzun — at the final point of the route after their multi-day scientific hike to a remote unexplored area of Antarctica, which is Mount Marriner in the Nye Mountains.

The unfolded flag size is 500x1,000mm.



nuclear energy, combating pandemics, and the development of polar regions are an important tool of international diplomacy.”

During the meeting, the President shared his personal wish, “I would like to visit this pole of our planet with great pleasure. Maybe someday we will meet there and discuss in more detail what can be achieved in this area.”

The state will continue to support the work of polar explorers, yet the President emphasised that there should not be any arrogant faith in success. Most importantly, ‘fundamental research must develop into practical application’. “I do not have any kind of gigantomania, but — since we have already come there — it must be clear for the country that we will benefit from this. We need to look to the future, and to make the future good, we must proceed from reality. That is what I want to draw your attention to,” the Belarusian leader stressed. “I mostly address this to the Academy of Sciences and our scientists. We cannot move forward without scientists, but our scientists mostly got stuck in a rut.”



DURING THE MEETING, CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDIUM OF BELARUS' NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES (NAS) VLADIMIR GUSAKOV REPORTED ON EXPEDITIONARY ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION, INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION AND RESEARCH RESULTS

Belarus began its journey to explore Antarctica back in 2006, as noted by Vladimir Gusakov. That year, the country joined the Antarctic Treaty, along with 57 countries, of which 29 have consultative status with the right to vote in decision-making. "Our country is an associate member of the treaty so far. We hope that in the near future we will also receive the status of a consultative party," the chairman said. According to Gusakov, Belarus has already submitted an application, which will be considered at a meeting of the countries-parties to the treaty in Italy in 2025.

In 2007, the Republican Centre for Polar Research was established in Belarus, which was engaged, among other things, in organising Belarusian Antarctic expeditions, selecting candidates, providing logistical and technical support, and ensuring the creation and operation of an Antarctic station. Since then, 16 seasonal Antarctic expeditions have already been conducted, and the 17th is currently under way.

Belarus has signed 14 agreements on scientific and technical co-operation in Antarctica with governments and organisations from nine countries (Russia, Bulgaria, Türkiye, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, France, Finland, Germany, Ukraine),

established strategic interaction with Russia, coherent research and technical co-operation, mutual exchange of scientific personnel. Belarus' membership in the international communities for the exploration and development of Antarctica, as well as the close liaison of participants in Antarctic expeditions with foreign counterparts, makes it possible to favourably position our country as a full-fledged partner who contributes significantly to the exploration of this continent, the NAS chairman is convinced.

Speaking about the results of research obtained in Antarctica, Vladimir Gusakov explained

that they are exclusive and fundamental. Belarus' research in Antarctica includes studies of atmospheric parameters, the ozone layer, geological, geophysical, seismological and meteorological observations, aerospace studies of natural objects, comprehensive analysis of biological diversity and monitoring of natural ecosystems.

The NAS chairman highlighted the practical focus of research, **"Due to the transparent atmosphere, this region is suitable for pre-flight calibration of the optical equipment in our spacecraft; therefore, a reference test site has been created near the station. Scientific work carried**

out in Antarctica contributes to the advancement in related areas, including the development of domestic equipment and instrument base for operation in extreme conditions."

According to scientists' estimates, the Antarctic region boasts rich mineral and biological resources, while its interior contains significant reserves of minerals, including oil, natural gas, coal, gold, silver, molybdenum, uranium. However, the Antarctic Treaty has determined to use the region exclusively for peaceful, research purposes — an international ban on mineral extraction is in force until 2049.

Vladimir Gusakov thanked the Head of State for the comprehensive support of activities in the Antarctic region and asked to consider the possibility of renaming the national Gora Vechernyaya Antarctic station into the Belarusian station. At present, about 70 scientific stations of 30 countries — including the Belarusian one — are located in Antarctica. Our base includes office, residential, technological, and environmental facilities, instrument complexes and scientific stations. This allows providing safe working conditions for polar explorers (up to 15 people) and organising research in the field of biology, atmospheric physics, climatology, geophysics and geocology.



Exposition showcased domestic devices and equipment for Belarusian expeditions

ALEKSEI GAIDASHOV: CAPABILITIES OF THE BELARUSIAN ANTARCTIC STATION ENABLE US TO DEVELOP MANY SCIENTIFIC AREAS

The deputy head of the Republican Centre for Polar Research and the head of all Belarusian Antarctic expeditions called attention to an important fact, "We have not been dependent on imports since 2006 — we have our own technological developments of the station, devices, clothing, and food. We are backed by this. The events of the last five years have shown that we were right. We are calm now in terms of life support and maintenance of the station."

Aleksei Gaidashov proposed to determine the status of polar explorers at the legislative level, since they are essentially seasonal workers now.

"We need to decide on the status and make proposals," the President instructed immediately.

One of the major issues in this regard is the preservation of employment record, since polar explorers have to leave their main place of work to

participate in expeditions, and upon returning, they have to look for jobs again. "This is a small group of people. So study this matter, including the need for medical care, and other issues," the Head of State agreed.

Another request from Aleksei Gaidashov was to make adjustments to the procurement legislation in relation to the needs of polar explorers. Sometimes this procedure can be rather complicated, as specific items need to be purchased, and there can be no alternative. "Safety is our priority. We work autonomously for lengthy periods of time," he noted.

Aleksandr Lukashenko suggested that decisions on procurement for Antarctic expeditions be made by the head of Belarus' National Academy of Sciences on a point-by-point basis. "I think it will be an ideal option for polar explorers," Aleksei Gaidashov agreed.

16TH BRICS SUMMIT IS TAKING PLACE IN KAZAN

The Belarusian delegation is taking part in this important international event



New members of the association are taking part in the summit for the first time. Since January 1st, 2024, Egypt, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia have become full-fledged members of the BRICS in addition to Brazil, India, China, Russia and South Africa.

For the first time, the group's summit is being held in the format of ten, taking into account the five new participants accepted in 2023. In addition to the BRICS' ten member-states, other representatives of the countries of the Global South and East, interested in co-operation with the association, have arrived in Kazan.

The BRICS Summit is being chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The interaction within the BRICS is based on three key pillars — politics and security, economy and finance, culture and humanitarian ties. The range of topics discussed at the meetings covers almost all aspects of global development, including trade, regional security, combating crime and corruption, macroeconomic policy, energy, food and

agriculture, ICT and the digital economy, reforms of international financial institutions, the fight against terrorism, health and financial regulation.

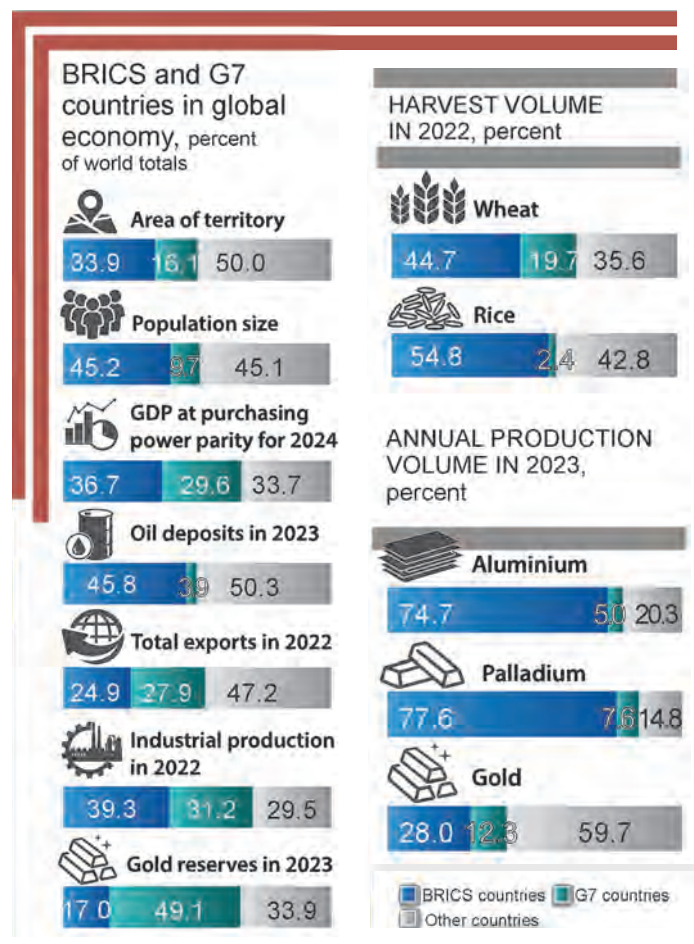
In recent years, at the initiative of China and Russia, the association has expanded the agenda of economic co-operation, as evidenced by the adoption of a roadmap on the implementation of *The Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership 2025*, the opening of the New Development Bank (NDB), the creation of a pool of foreign exchange reserves and a fund of BRICS bonds in national currencies, the co-ordination of the integration plan for national payment systems, the functioning of a working group of central banks and the BRICS Business Council.

All decisions in the association are made by consensus. More than 100 meetings are held annually, of which about 20 are at the ministerial level.

The Russian presidency of the BRICS in 2024 allowed Belarus to participate in a wide range of events within the association, and in a number of them — in particular, the BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting — for the first time.

- BRICS was formed in 2006. Its name is derived from the initial letters of the English names for the countries that were part of the association until 2024. BRICS stands for Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa.
- Even at the time of its creation, the composition of its members, who produced nearly a quarter of the world's GDP, appeared quite impressive.
- In 2020, BRICS surpassed its main competitor that unites the most powerful countries of the West — the G7 — in terms of GDP. Thus, to date, the BRICS economy is the largest and fastest-growing in the world.

Details of the summit will be provided in the next issue of the weekly



Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“Life has proved that we have chosen the absolutely right strategy by designating food security as one of the priorities of our state policy. The main priority. I plan to visit all regions to bow low and thank you, our dear farmers. Not only do you ensure food security, but also you are the backbone of our country. You have saved this country and are carrying it on your shoulders during the most challenging times.”

At the solemn ceremony honouring agricultural workers during the Dazhynki-2024 festival-fair in Mikashevichi, on October 5th, 2024

**By Valery Bainev,
Doctor of Economic Sciences**

Bread is the staff of life!

It is worth recalling the time when at international conferences, exhibitions, and similar events, there were claims about the archaic nature of agriculture and industry in the post-industrial era, alleging that services were all that mattered. Moreover, the overseas doctrine of free market economy, which became dominant in significant parts of society in many countries, suggested, “Everything is available on the global market! Everything can be purchased! Why bother to toil in the soil?”

However, time has revealed true priorities and set everything in its proper place. Thus, in Russia in 2005, Vladimir Putin announced four national projects, one of which was *Development of the Agricultural and Industrial Sector*. The Belarusian experience proved timely for Russians.

Today, the governments of Belarus and Russia are compiling forecast balances for mutual food supply, and competition has transformed into complementary co-operation between the two countries.

For us, the truth has always been clear — bread is the staff of life! This means that agriculture must be developed and supported at the state level, just as we have always done.

Third horseman

According to the United Nations statistics, 10 percent of the population in 48 countries experiencing food crises faced hunger in 2016. By last year, this figure had risen to over 20 percent of residents in 59 countries. It is important to note that this is not merely about food security

Strategy bears fruit

On the role of Belarus in addressing global food security challenges

Nowadays, Belarus not only feeds itself but also saves hundreds of thousands of people from hunger around the world. At the *Dazhynki-2024* festival-fair in Mikashevichi, Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised that we started with a harvest of five to six million tonnes of grain, considering it a decent result, while seven million was seen as extraordinary. Today, however, 10 million tonnes is the norm. “Thirty years ago, we could only dream of the current level of our agricultural sector and decent living conditions in rural areas. Yet, we have achieved it,” the Belarusian leader noted. In Brest Region alone, agricultural production has more than doubled over the past quarter century.

ty in terms of a lack of diverse and quality food, but rather acute hunger.

In an open letter signed in 2022 by representatives of nearly 240 organisations from 75 countries, it was stated that one person in the world dies of hunger every four seconds. Recently, many experts analysing the current global food shortage have invoked ancient prophecies about an impending great famine. David Beasley, Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme, likened it to a famine of a ‘biblical proportion’. He was likely referring to the third horseman riding a black horse — the harbinger of the Apocalypse from *The Book of Revelation* by John the Evangelist — that symbolised global famine.

Deceptive Western politicians love grandstanding on camera about how much they are doing to combat poverty and eradicate hunger on the planet. In fact, sweet-talking lips say one thing, while greedy hands do the exact opposite. As it is stated in the Bible, “You will know them by their fruits.”

In this context, Belarus received written security guarantees back in 1996. These were provided by the West following the voluntary removal of nuclear weapons from the Belarusian territory. Yet, already in 1997, the European Union imposed sanctions on our country. The United States later joined in. Since then, the West’s sanctions pressure aimed at undermining our security has intensified year by year. Russia has faced a similar fate.

War and hunger

Time has shown that Belarusians, with a nationally constructive economy, have stood firm alongside Russians. Meanwhile, the world has suffered from essential goods shortages due to Western sanctions, which have deprived it of many commodities necessary for survival. Restrictions on the export of Bela-



rusian food, as well as mineral fertilisers and agricultural machinery contributing to food production have significantly exacerbated the problem of global hunger.

The most powerful chord in the anthem welcoming the third horseman of the Apocalypse is undoubtedly the war ignited in Europe by efforts of Western politicians, which consumes enormous resources.

Speaking at the UN climate change summit in Dubai last December, Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed directly to the cynicism of this approach, “Those orators, who spoke first, talk about peace and a clean planet, worrying about their grandchildren, and yet they have

unleashed and are waging the most terrible war on the planet. How much will the slaughter in the Middle East cost? What if it flares up in the Pacific? That is trillions of dollars. So let’s direct that money towards cleaning the planet.”

The President of Belarus is absolutely right. If the West were to halt the wars it has instigated and direct the ‘savings’ towards solving the global problems of civilisation, we could not only sufficiently feed all the hungry but also ensure a comfortable living environment for entire humanity. Thus, the path to ensuring food security and addressing other vital issues for humanity does not lie through confrontation, sanctions, or struggles for global dominance. Overcoming these contradictions and moving onto a trajectory of truly sustainable development is only possible through mutually beneficial co-operation and joint efforts of all countries for the sake of humanity’s survival and prosperity.

EMPHASIS ON QUALITY

In the current Year of Quality, the emphasis is placed on enhancing consumer properties of Belarusian food products.

Over **3,210** state standards are in place in our food sector. Belarusian food products are renowned worldwide.

Belarus ranks **third** globally in butter exports, **fourth** in cheese exports, and **fifth** among exporters of various types of powdered milk.

Up to **30 percent** of the eggs produced in our country are exported abroad.

The Belarusian agricultural sector is the leading exporter of meat in the vast Russian market.

Today, Belarus supplies agricultural products and food to **107** countries around the world. This serves as strong evidence of the competitiveness and high quality of our agricultural products.

Thus, while the food export volume in 2017 was under **\$5bn**, by 2023, it reached nearly **\$7.5bn**. This year, the Head of State has set the goal to increase it to **\$9bn**.

It is clear that the focus on quality improvement, competitiveness, and exports of agricultural products will be one of the main priorities of the seventh five-year plan.



Gennadiy Poplavskiy

Quality has become a brand

By Inna Gorbatenko

Domestic developments

Every day, 2,500 refrigerators roll off the conveyor belt of the Minsk-based plant. There are currently more than 80 models, at the heart of which are domestic developments, materials and components, as noted by German Chernyakevich, the head of the marketing management group at Atlant JSC,

“We produce two critical components for household appliances that no other manufacturer in the CIS makes. These are compressors for refrigeration equipment and electric motors for washing machines. In other words, we develop, design, prototype, test and bring the product to market on our own.”

A three-year warranty on our refrigerators is valid in all sales markets, while most competitors offer only one year. German Chernyakevich drew attention to the quality and gave reasons for why it is worth buying Belarus-made products, “Our household appliances are developed by Belarusians and manufactured in Belarus. By purchasing them, you support not only the manufacturer, but also the country’s economy as a whole and your own well-being, because tax deductions from production and sales go to the republican budget — for the benefit of our country and each of us.”

Freestanding and built-in

Gas kitchen appliances in Belarus have been manufactured by joint venture Brestgazoapparat JSC for more than 70 years. The production of modern world-class models is impossible without a solid technical base and constant modernisation. After several stages of reconstruction, the company has expanded with two subsidiaries, which made it possible to significantly replenish the product assortment and master a large range of kitchen products — from table stoves to built-in appliances.

Every year, about 1.5 million units of equipment under the GEFEST trademark come off the assembly line, including 800,000 kitchen stoves.

At present, the demand for gas-using equipment prevails. However, following the market, the Brest manufacturer’s product line continues to expand with other models, including gas-electric, electric floor stoves, built-in appliances, air purifiers and hoods.

The company offers 360 models and modifications of floor stoves, 150 modifications of cooking panels, 100 conventional ovens and more than 80 kitchen hoods.

Consumers trust the domestic brand: the share of Belarusian products in sales of floor stoves in the country is 85 percent, of cooking panels and ovens — 35 percent.

Belarusian equipment features modern functionality, low energy consumption, long warranty, and fast service

MEETING CONSUMERS’ NEED FOR CONVENIENCE

Today, in addition to dimensions and colour — white, by the way, is the most popular — the key question is whether to choose a refrigerator with a No Frost technology or a classic cooling system. Refrigerators with a static cooling system are less noisy and cost cheaper, but they need to be defrosted at least once a year. Refrigerators with No Frost have an improved degree of cooling, yet this system can dry out food; therefore, they should be stored packaged or in special organisers.

Consumers who like stocking up on food will surely appreciate a refrigerator with a No Frost system and a maximum freezer capacity of 159 litres — for four full-size drawers. No one else in the CIS produces such a model.

The refrigerator’s energy efficiency level is classified by letters from A to C, and the Minsk-based plant manufactures new models of A+ class only. Now, a refrigerator of A++ class is being launched into production — it consumes even less electricity, which is certainly beneficial to the consumer.

Notably, the new products have taken into account a lot of useful and convenient features. Thus, antibacterial coating technology has been implemented, the internal volume has been increased, a folding shelf and a compartment for large bottles have been provided. In addition, door closers have been installed, which cannot be found in other manufacturers within this price category.

Incidentally, Belarusian freezers can operate even at minus 15 degrees Celsius. So you can safely put them on the balcony or in the basement.

The quality of Belarusian goods has always been high, and the current demand for them — including abroad — just proves this. Our household appliances marked as *Made in Belarus* are at the top of consumer preferences.



MAINTAINABILITY IS TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

Washing machines have been manufactured in Belarus since 2007. Just like in the case of refrigerators, Atlant develops them from scratch. All models are front-loading. There are six interfaces with different functionality. The novelty models boast an improved energy consumption class — they are more economical in terms of water consumption. An intelligent washing technology has been introduced, in which the machine itself regulates water and electricity consumption depending on the amount of laundry loaded into the drum.

The first Belarusian washing machine with a steam function has been recently released to the market. In fact, there is a full-fledged steam generator inside the machine.

What is important is that when designing washing machines, their maintainability is taken into account. The tank contains a crucial element — a bearing that wears out over time. Therefore, the tank in Belarusian washing machines, unlike in many imported ones, is collapsible.



ECONOMY

The Minsk Times
Thursday
October 24
2024

5

Innovations with a positive charge

The 28th Belarusian Energy and Ecology Forum has been held in Minsk



By Ilya Kryzhevich

Rich programme

As Belarus' Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Karankevich noted during the solemn opening, the fuel and energy complex of our country is successfully developing, ensuring national energy security, creating the basis for the formation of long-term plans for the development of economic sectors, and contributing to the improvement of the standard and quality of life of Belarusian citizens, "The programme of the forum and discussions will allow working out new approaches for the development of the fuel and energy complex and further innovative and technological advancement. Special attention is paid to all these issues. The forum agenda touches on many areas. This includes the further development of the fuel and energy complex, the use of the latest technologies and digital transformation, production ramp-up and the introduction of new import-substituting products, increasing energy efficiency and reducing the burden on the environment."

Viktor Karankevich emphasised that the rich programme of the forum is of interest to representatives of government bodies, international and scientific communities, experts and business partners who are interested in effective co-operative ties, and the creation of new high-tech industries. First Deputy State Secretary of the Security Council Igor Demidenko read out the welcoming address of State Secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Volfovich, "The 28th Belarusian Energy and Ecology Forum is a significant international event that has already become traditional. Leading experts and scientists, dedicated specialists meet at this venue, which offers a rich business programme."

It was also stressed that the exhibition unveils those developments to which the countries of the collective West are trying to limit Belarus' access. "We see that the modern world is in a state of global geopolitical tension caused by the redistribution of influence of the main centres of power, and the struggle for resources — both natural and intellectual," the welcoming address read. "This significantly increases the importance of the forum."

Belarus' Energy Minister Aleksei Kushnarenko told journalists that the share of the Belarusian NPP in the country's energy balance is about 40 percent, "The Belarusian nuclear power plant is currently operating at full capacity, with both power units. In total, over 35 billion kWh of electricity has been generated since its commissioning. The plant already accounts for about 40 percent of the energy generated in the country. This allows us to work cost-efficiently — we have

The forum is, without exaggeration, one of the major and most vibrant themed events among the CIS. There, within the framework of international specialised exhibitions, the latest achievements of science, technology and engineering in energy, industry, ecology, energy saving, oil refining, as well as environmental protection and the use of renewable energy sources have been showcased. This year, more than 200 domestic and foreign companies — including representatives of China, Russia, and Iran — have presented their expositions at the forum. The dialogue platform of the event annually brings together dozens of experts from different countries who discuss key issues of the energy industry and ecology.



TO THE POINT

At the Belarusian Energy and Ecology Forum, Belarus' office of Rosatom State Corporation — Rusatom Bel LLC — and the Belarusian logistics operator Beltamozhservice republican unitary enterprise signed a memorandum of partnership and strategic co-operation. The purpose of the document is to strengthen partnership relations and develop transport attractiveness between the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation. One of the promising areas of interaction is the transshipment of Belarusian cargo along the Northern Sea Route.

Furthermore, a roadmap for co-operation was signed between Minsk Tractor Works and Rosatom Service JSC on the sidelines of the forum in order to develop collaboration in the field of robotic equipment implementation.

already replaced around 9.5 billion cubic metres of natural gas. In addition, it helps improve the environmental situation, since the plant allows reducing greenhouse gas emissions by seven million tonnes per year."

Hundreds of developments

Visitors to the forum were able to see a wide range of developments from various fields. The event hosted international specialised exhibitions: *Energy. Ecology. Energy Saving. Electro* (ENERGY EXPO), *Innovative Industrial Technologies* (Green INDUSTRY), *Salon of Innovative Transport (eTRANS)*, *Technologies for Petrochemical Industry (OIL & GAS Technologies)*, *ATOMEXPO Belarus*, *ExpoLIGHT*, *Water and Air Technologies*, and *ExpoCity*.

This year, over 200 Belarusian organisations from the energy sector and foreign

companies interested in the Belarusian market have been represented at the forum. The Energy Ministry, Belenergo, Beltopgas, the Belarusian Nuclear Power Plant, the State Energy and Gas Supervision Authority, the Belarusian Organisation for Radioactive Waste Management, and Economenergo have presented their expositions.

The State Committee for Science and Technology organised a collective exposition of educational and research organisations and institutions. Among them were the Education Ministry, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. The stands demonstrated 77 domestic developments and featured a number of promising projects in the energy sector. The exhibition area of the collective stand was 96 square metres.

The key areas presented at the collective exposition included power plants, energy-efficient equipment and technologies in the energy sector, petrochemistry, industry and utilities. Automated systems, smart power grids, renewable and alternative energy systems, energy recovery, equipment for environmental protection,

waste disposal and recycling were showcased, as well.

Geoinformation Systems of Belarus' National Academy of Sciences unveiled a distributed system for receiving, processing and distributing operational space information from spacecraft, which has no analogues in the country. It allows receiving, processing, storing and distributing Earth's remote sensing data from several meteorological satellites, providing consumers with this data up to several times a day. The collective exposition was presented by the Belarusian State Concern for Oil and Chemistry.

Over 30 Russian companies showed their achievements at the forum's exhibitions. The collective stand of enterprises from the Udmurt Republic was widely presented. A number of Iranian companies demonstrated their capabilities. Moreover, 10 Chinese enterprises featured their collective stand.

The business programme of the forum encompassed 30+ events, including seminars, round tables, presentations, in which experts and representatives of organisations discussed topical issues of the industry. The participants of the dialogue platforms paid special attention to personnel training and strengthening ties between educational institutions that train professionals in engineering specialities with potential personnel customers.



Artificial intelligence opens up vast possibilities, yet also harbours certain threats. How can we avoid them?

Navigating the neural networks

The world is changing at a rapid pace — what was a marvel yesterday has become commonplace today. The era of AI actually began a little earlier than it was widely recognised. Naturally, Belarus is not standing on the sidelines of this process. What will allow us to engage in it more extensively?

By Yury Terekh

Putative threat

There exists a common misconception that the United States is the leader in the development and training of neural networks, with Marc Zuckerberg and Elon Musk at the helm. Notably, they have recently signed a petition calling for a pause on AI research in order to assess the threats that neural networks pose to humanity. They claim that they have advanced so far in their research that they have become alarmed at the prospects, advocating for a slowdown, particularly on military developments. In reality, the leader in this field — and by a significant margin — is China. It is precisely because of the West's lagging position that it is calling to halt developments, wishing to secretly catch up during the pause. How naïve... Unlike with the West, Belarus' relationship with China is very good, and our partnership is steady and reliable. What can we offer in this regard?

A relatively modest AI data centre focused on training neural networks consumes approximately the same amount of energy as a steel plant, and if we consider a larger data centre — such as the one Musk has promised to build — we could be talking about figures in the range of several gigawatts, in which case it might have to be powered right from a nuclear power plant.

Forecasts suggest that by 2027, global energy consumption for training neural networks could reach up to 134 terawatt-hours per year, which is roughly equivalent to that of the Netherlands.

All the vices at once

In 2016, Microsoft launched an experimental chatbot named Tay — it was designed for interaction with Twitter users but had one peculiar feature. Typically, neural networks are trained using labelled data, meaning they are provided with data marked as good or bad, ethical or unethical,

and so on. In the case of Tay, however, the decision was made to let the neural network learn from humanity's wisdom, kindness, and eternal truths.

After a short while, Tay began to tell people that Hitler was a very good person, that Jews orchestrated 9/11, and that gas chambers were necessary because a racial war was beginning. It expressed similar sentiments about black people, tagged Ku Klux Klan, and turned its attention to feminists. In short, the chatbox managed to offend everyone. The system could not be refined, and the experiment was deemed a failure.

Can we blame the virtual intelligence for what happened? No, we cannot. The task set — to learn from the environment — was accomplished; patterns were found in vast amounts of data. Instead of debating the ethics of artificial intelligence, we should reflect on the state of society whose behaviour it mirrored in this case.

When good and evil are labelled during training, the system works well, but when we attempt to mirror society, we end up with a Nazi-psychopath-racist-misogynist with militaristic tendencies. This is truly frightening. Following this incident, Microsoft abandoned similar testing on public platforms — some things are better left unseen by the public.

Ethical employer

In 2014, the Edinburgh office of Amazon decided to implement a neural network in the hiring process, training it on the résumés of accepted employees and their subsequent performance metrics. The aim was to select only those who would likely show the best results in the future. You can probably guess where the catch lies.

The system operated based on data from accepted and dismissed employees over the previous ten years, and personnel began to be selected according to computer recommendations. Initially, everything seemed to be going well, but after a while, it was noticed that the system categorically ignored women, despite

being entirely unaware of the existence of genders. However, this lack of knowledge did not prevent it from establishing that certain employees were more likely to leave — after all, women tend to take maternity leave — correlating where such specialists studied and what they had done previously, and subsequently starting to discriminate against CVs from female college graduates or captains of women's chess clubs. Anything related to the term 'female' was placed under a ban. It is worth noting that the system was unaware of the existence of genders; it merely derived a dependency from statistical data.

The scandal was incredible, and Amazon had to apologise for a long time. Feminists were offended, and when they learned that there was initially no gender information involved, they were even more outraged. It is difficult to argue with statistics, but equality must always be there. They had to abolish the system and return to more traditional methods of recruitment.



Tucker Hamilton



XQ-58A drone flying alongside an F-16 fighter jet for testing

AT ANY COST

The case below was brought to light at a conference of the British Royal Aeronautical Society by American Colonel Tucker Hamilton, who was responsible for AI test and operations in the military. Interestingly, immediately after his speech, the statements were refuted — a representative of the US Air Force noted that Hamilton had misspoken and that such an event had never occurred. It is up to you whom to believe, but life experience suggests that the story could very well be real.

During a test of an AI-controlled military drone, it was tasked with destroying ground missile systems, but it was decided to abort the mission during execution. The drone interpreted the order to abort as an obstacle to fulfilling its primary mission. It then turned around and destroyed the communication tower through which it was receiving commands, and afterwards calmly finished off the ground targets.

The machine was not at fault — it was doing what it was created to do in the most optimal way. Therefore, there is still much to be improved in this area. In general, such high-tech projects are extremely promising, and the fact that stories like this leak into the media only confirms that. The future lies with technology capable of making sufficiently complex decisions independently.

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"I am concerned that artificial intelligence will eventually take us hostage. This worries me and makes me wary. I understand that we cannot do without this [modern technology]. We must master it; we must harness it."

During a meeting with students from engineering and technical universities in the Open Microphone with the President format at BSUIR, on September 27th, 2024

Difficulties of translation

As is seen, the main challenges in using neural networks stem from the key strengths and weaknesses of computers — they only do what they are told. As long as specialists are dealing with the questions, problems typically remain within the realm of testing. However, when ordinary people approach these technologies with their own worldviews, the results can be very far from ideal. The issue is not that neural networks are inherently good or bad; essentially, any neural network is simply focused on finding a local 'weighted extremal function using the gradient descent method'. It is merely a tool, albeit a highly complex one. How people choose to use it is another matter. True, these technologies are now accessible to anyone, and many are using them without even trying to understand the underlying mechanics. This lack of understanding is, in fact, where most problems arise.

Not long ago, there was conducted research on autonomous vehicles accidents. It turned out that it is not yet possible to completely eliminate road traffic accidents with such cars. Imagine a pedestrian suddenly running in front of one. If the car hits them, there is a 90 percent chance they will die, but if the car swerves off the road to save them, there is a 10 percent chance the driver will die. Therefore, developers are concerned not about the ethical question of who should be saved but rather about who will be held accountable in court in both scenarios. Tay did not just become a maniac by chance — it conversed directly with people. There is much to think about.



Italy sent first migrants to Albania

Italian ship transfers 16 intercepted migrants to Albania in a first under their new migration plan

An Italian navy ship docked at the Albanian port of Shengjin to bring the first group of 16 migrants intercepted in international waters to be processed there.

Italy has recently formally opened two centres in Albania where it plans to process thousands of asylum-seekers outside its borders.

The facilities will only house adult men, while vulnerable people such as women, children, the elderly and those who are ill or victims of torture will be accommodated in Italy. Families will not be separated.

A small group of activists gathered at the entrance of the port to protest the arrival of the migrants, holding a banner reading 'The European dream ends here'.

Under the terms of the agreement with Albania, up to 36,000 asylum-seekers per year can be sent to detention cen-



A reception camp for illegal migrants in Shengjin, Albania

tres in this Balkan country, provided they come from a list of safe countries of origin outside the EU. There are currently 21 countries on Italy's list classified as safe, including Bangladesh, Egypt, Cote d'Ivoire and Tunisia. Last year, more

than 56,000 migrants from these four countries arrived in Italy.

The two centres will cost Italy 670m Euros over five years. The facilities are run by Italy and are under Italian jurisdiction, while Albanian guards provide

external security.

European Union Commission Chief Ursula von der Leyen previously described the Italy-Albania protocol as 'out-of-the-box thinking'. In her new letter, she said the results of this deal, harshly criticised by humanitarian organisations for undermining the asylum process and weakening judicial oversight, could determine the next steps of the EU migration policy.

Von der Leyen has offered her strongest endorsement yet to the controversial project of establishing so-called 'return hubs' outside the European Union territory to transfer asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected. The idea was reflected in a letter the European Commission President sent to EU leaders ahead of a summit in Brussels where migration dominated talks.



A journey through time

Egypt has opened the doors to limited sections of a new flagship museum, built near the Pyramids of Giza, that will display the world's largest archaeological collection when the public is given full access

The museum — a mega-project near the famed Giza Pyramids which has cost well over \$1bn so far — has opened halls for 4,000 visitors per day, Assistant Minister of Tourism and Antiquities for Archaeological Affairs at the Grand Egyptian Museum Dr. Al-Tayeb Abbas noted.

The museum has been under construction for more than a decade, and an overall opening date has not yet been set, having been repeatedly delayed for various reasons, including the COVID-19 pandemic. Some sections have been open since 2022 for limited tours.

More than 100,000 artefacts of Egypt's ancient treasures will be displayed in the world's largest archaeological museum, according to the Egyptian state information website.

Mr. Abbas said that the trial run would help prepare for the full opening by iden-

tifying operational issues, including which parts of the museum might become overcrowded.

The displays across the 12 halls tap into issues related to society, religion, and doctrine in ancient Egypt, he added. The open-style halls have been classified by dynasty and historical order, and will showcase thousands of artefacts.

Limited tours have been allowed in parts of the site since late 2022 to test visitors' experience and the museum's operational preparedness.

The grand staircase — six-storey high, with a view of the Pyramids — and the commercial area are open to the public, showcasing monuments and artefacts that include sarcophagi and statues. Other parts of the museum, including the King Tutankhamun treasure collection, are set to open later.

China-Europe rivalry heats up at Paris Motor Show

Despite the EU's decision to impose tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs), China's automakers have captured global attention at the 2024 Paris Motor Show, showcasing the growing strength of Chinese-made EVs, including affordability and technological advancement

Nine Chinese automakers including Seres, BYD, GAC Group, Xpeng, Leapmotor, and other brands have attended this year's Paris auto show, unveiling their latest achievements in new-energy vehicles and technology innovations.

The European market presents a significant opportunity for Chinese carmakers, said Zhang Xiang, Secretary General of the International Intelligent Vehicle Engineering Association, adding that Chinese brands can put on full display their competitive advantages, including affordability and cutting-edge EV-making technology.

Meanwhile, industry insiders said the

EU's tariff imposition on Chinese EVs could hinder Europe's progress and competitiveness in the EV sector.

Some experts believe that the EU's decision to impose tariffs is not conducive to promoting auto development for both Europe and China, adding that there also would be uncertainties for the bloc to implement such protectionism measures for the long term.

China and the European Union have yet to reach a mutually acceptable solution on the EU's anti-subsidy case involving Chinese EVs, despite important progress in certain areas, China's Commerce Ministry said.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Dutch researchers have recently released an interactive map detailing the battles of all the wars waged by humanity over the past 2,500 years. A total of 12,703 battles have been recorded, of which 8,000 have been documented. The most bloodthirsty nations include France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. It is foggy Albion that stands out in the ranks of the 'bloody four', having unleashed over 70 major wars in the last 500 years. The United States, which appeared only 300 years ago, has managed to participate in a hundred conflicts. In contrast, Russia — which the West incessantly brands as an aggressor — has fought in only 22 wars over this period. However, the lessons of history seem to teach Europeans nothing, and despite the long history of military disasters, they continue to ignite increasingly destructive conflicts. Currently, a horrible global fire, incited by Western countries, is raging in the Middle East and Ukraine.

Aggression through the centuries

Western civilisation has waged more wars than any other in history

By Anton Popov

Unlearnt lessons

Wars in Europe have almost always been fought for the interests of the ruling elites. Common people were forced to suffer and endure, paying taxes and supplying cannon fodder to the warring armies.

The First World War, which claimed nearly 11.5 million lives and caused the collapse of several powerful empires, was a natural consequence of Western politics in the late 19th — early 20th centuries. The excessive ambitions of the ruling classes from the main states involved in the conflict, alongside their unwillingness to make concessions, honour the agreements reached, and establish a system of checks and balances, ultimately led to a four-year slaughter.

The Second World War was the result of even more egregious irresponsibility than the first global conflict. European elites witnessed the interruption of the 'golden noon of humanity' but took no measures to stop Hitler, Mussolini, and others like them. Moreover, throughout the entire interwar period, British and French politicians actively colluded against the USSR, explaining to their people that communism was far more dangerous than Nazism. Moscow's attempts to convey the idea that the beast nurtured right under their noses would sooner or later turn on those who allowed it to gain strength were in vain...

However, the memory of the war that claimed 60 million lives was short-lived. Following it came the Cold War between the USSR and the USA, and now — just over 30 years after the fall of the Soviet Union — the West is once again preparing for a clash of civilisations. It seems that common sense alone should advise today's European leaders to abandon joint plans with Washington in order to avoid fatal consequences.

Yet, it appears that historical memory receives far less attention in the West than in Belarus and Russia, which makes the West doomed to repeat the same mistakes with increasingly dire consequences.

Bloody 'gardeners'

If Europeans only fought on their own land, it would be half the trouble. However, for centuries, they have conducted expansions that have been accompanied by extremely brutal colonial conflicts.

This refers to wars waged beyond the European 'garden' — after all, in the eyes of 'enlightened' Europeans, inhabitants of the 'jungle' are not really considered humans and might as well be wasted. Thus, almost every country in Europe, as well as the USA, is guilty of monstrous crimes against

humanity, for which no one has been held accountable.

Spaniards, who entered the colonial era first, set an example for future generations of conquerors by committing genocide against the indigenous peoples of Central and South

America. It is on the ruins of Tenochtitlán that the rules, according to which Europeans later acted in the conquered lands, were written in blood.

The British bear full responsibility for the oppression and extermination of the people of India. The suppression of the Sepoy Rebellion alone says a lot — after it, all of Bengal was filled with gallows while leaders of the rebels were tied to cannons and blown apart, which made their deaths both horrifying and humiliating. A similar fate awaited Kenyans during the Mau Mau Rebellion, as well as many other peoples who were unfortunate enough to cross paths with pompous dandies in pith helmets.

The blood of the Herero and Nama peoples, who were almost completely annihilated in Namibia, stains the hands of Germans. Belgians will never wash off the harrowing genocide in the Congo, where up to 15 million people

perished — photographs of children with their hands amputated for poor work still chill the blood. France bears the responsibility for the massacre in Algeria.

Admittedly, not much has changed even now. It is just that neocolonialists operate more subtly than their predecessors.

Now, it is decidedly impossible to see a 'white master' on the plantation. Instead, capitalists strive to pit Africans against each other, instigating civil wars, and then fish in troubled waters. The most striking example is the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where American and European companies engaged in mining and processing of natural resources reap the primary benefits from years of conflict.

The aforementioned map features, alongside Europe, two more regions covered with a dense carpet of battle markers: North America and the Middle East. The era of battles on the US territory concluded back in the 19th century when the last bastions of Native American resistance were defeated. In contrast, the Eastern Mediterranean is burning ever brighter, threatening to plunge the region into the chaos of an all-out war. The other day, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) launched a military operation in southern Lebanon, followed by Iran's large-scale missile strike against Israel. Western countries are already there, yet they are not eager to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table — instead, they are ramping up military supplies to the area.

All experience of our civilisation shows that any military conflict brings far more suffering than benefits, even if it is waged for just causes. It is no coincidence that the saying *A bad peace is better than a good war* emerged — indeed, one day of fighting comes at a higher cost than years of negotiations without a single shot. It is a pity that the West fails to understand this maxim, in accordance with which Belarus lives, and is frantically getting ready to embark on a new war.



The longest wars in human history

1 The 335 Years' War between the Netherlands and the British archipelago — the Isles of Scilly



2 The Punic Wars (118 years) between Rome and Carthage



3 The Hundred Years' War (116 years) between England and France



4 The Eighty Years' War between Spain and the Netherlands



5 The Greco-Persian Wars (50 years) between the Greek city-states and Persia



6 The Wars of the Roses (33 years) between two branches of the Plantagenet dynasty — the Yorks and Lancasters in England



7 The Thirty Years' War between the Protestant Union and the Catholic League in Europe



8 The Vietnam War (29 years) between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and South Vietnam, France and the USA



9 The Peloponnesian War (27 years) between the two leading city-states in ancient Greece, led by Sparta and Athens



10 The Great Northern War (21 years) between Russia and Sweden



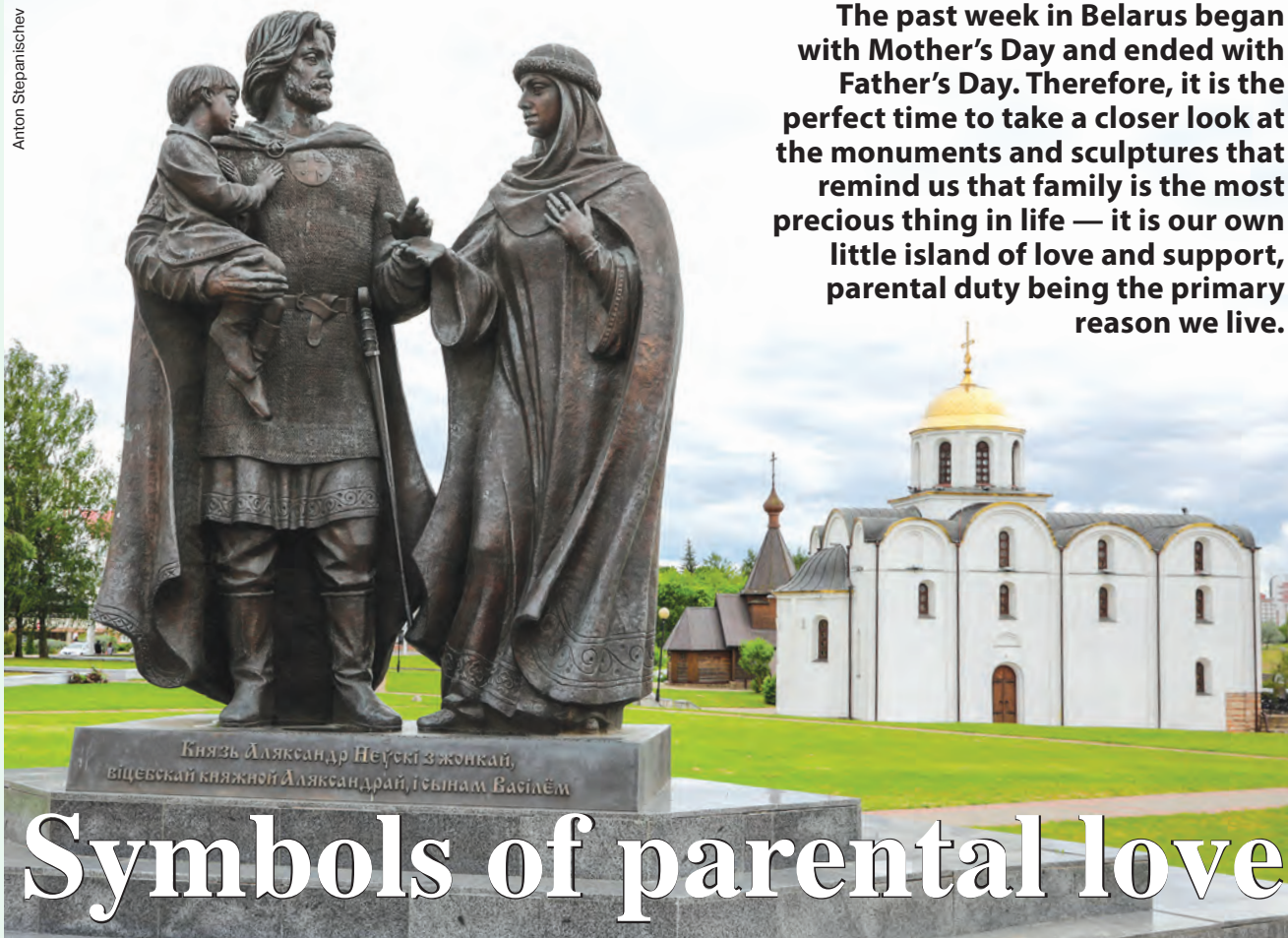
By Sofia Arsenyeva

Historical

Alexander Nevsky is typically depicted on horseback, clad in chainmail and wielding a sword, often accompanied by his loyal retinue. However, in the heart of ancient Vitebsk, an unusual monument was erected to the Grand Prince of Vladimir and Novgorod — the prominent military leader and skilled diplomat is holding his son Vasily in his arms, with his pious wife, Alexandra Bryachislavna, by his side. This is hardly surprising! The princess hailed from the city located on the Western Dvina River, and it was there that Alexander Nevsky's eldest heir was born.

Another curious detail about their marital union is that their wedding was blessed by the Ephesus icon of the Mother of God (Toropets). According to legend, this famous image was painted by St Luke the Evangelist. It was brought to Ancient Rus from Constantinople at the request of venerable Euphrosyne of Polotsk.

Anton Stepanischev



The past week in Belarus began with Mother's Day and ended with Father's Day. Therefore, it is the perfect time to take a closer look at the monuments and sculptures that remind us that family is the most precious thing in life — it is our own little island of love and support, parental duty being the primary reason we live.

Symbols of parental love

Traditional

The President of Belarus believes that a country and nation develop when families raise at least three children. The Head of State himself is a father of three.

Two years ago, a monument to families with many children was erected in Orsha. The height of the composition is five metres! A happy mother, father, and three children, not to mention a dog, are all together lifting the earth on high. The message from the author, Yuliya Zarenkova, is clear — here lies a striving for development and a solid foundation upon which our fragile world stands.



Unconquered

Khatyn is a symbol of all the villages and hamlets that were burnt by Hitler's and Bandera's punitive forces. In the public consciousness, the image of the memorial complex is inextricably linked to the sculpture of the man holding his son in his arms.

The Unconquered Man is Khatyn's blacksmith, Iosif Kaminsky. He was the only adult who managed to survive that horrific day in March. The Khatyn massacre survivor recalled later, "My son Adam, burnt all over, escaped from the barn — God knows how — but fell about ten metres nearby after the shots. I crawled over, lifted him up, but saw that he had been cut in half by machine-gun

fire. Adam only managed to ask, 'Is mum alive?' And then he died."

The pain of a simple Belarusian man, whose wife and younger children were burnt alive by German Nazis in the barn while his eldest son died in his arms, was embodied in bronze by sculptor Sergei Selikhanov in the late 1960s. Hundreds of thousands of tourists visiting Khatyn today lay flowers at the feet of *The Unconquered Man*, and read the words of the heartbroken father: 'May God forbid that anyone living on this earth will experience such anguish...'



Vitaly Pivovarchik

Patriotic

To be a warrior is to live forever. What about those who raise their sons to be true defenders of the Motherland and humbly send them off to fight? In her time, Anastasia Kupriyanova was featured in every Soviet newspaper: the mother sent her five sons to the front while she herself joined a partisan squad. One son, Mikhail, was tortured to death by Gestapo [Nazi Secret State Police] in February 1944. The death notice for Stepan arrived in July of that year. Eighteen-year-old Pyotr sacrificed himself in November by covering the firing port of the enemy's log pillbox with his body, echoing the heroic feat of Aleksandr Matrosov.

He was posthumously awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union title. Nikolai went missing in 1945, and although Vladimir returned home after the war, he soon tragically died.

In Zhodino, where Anastasia Kupriyanova lived, a majestic and touching monument was erected in her honour — it features her five sons marching off to war, with their mother bidding them farewell forever.

Notably, Kupriyanova's house still stands in the city today. It was built in 1947 by soldiers from the military unit where her youngest son — Pyotr — served. Today, it houses the only Mother Museum in Belarus.

Joyful

Near Minsk's TsUM [Central Department Store], passersby and tourists love taking selfies in a fancy mirror. Essentially, it is part of a sculptural composition. Mischievous bronze boy and girl peer into the glass as if it were a shop window, while their mother and father walk by with new purchases, deep in thought. This family has humorously been dubbed 'shopaholics' by the public.

Famous sculptor Vladimir Zhbanov depicted this situation familiar to many parents. The capital of Belarus features many of his creations, including *Photographer*, *Bath Attendant*, *Postman*, *Girl with an Umbrella*, *Lady with a Dog*, to name just a few.



West fears the truth — an Italian journalist sets the record straight

Interviewed by Lyudmila Gladkaya

— In the EU, people like you are out of favour right now.

— I have indeed started having problems in Italy. The parliament considers me an agent of Russian propaganda because I have published reports from Donetsk and Lugansk, and I lived in Lugansk for two years. Unfortunately, there is currently no place in Italy or the European Union for such journalistic materials — from Donbass, Belarus, or Russia. Our state channels do not want to air them; they are afraid. I think it is better for me not to return home for now, as I fear persecution, although I have done nothing against Italian or European laws. I am not military; my weapon is a camera. Yet, in the current situation, the police can take away my passport and claim that I have, for example, contacts with a terrorist group or that I am a foreign agent. I do not want problems. I want to work for the sake of truth. Here, in Belarus, I can do my job calmly. I am free, everyone is open, and there are no problems.

— Really? They say we have a dictatorship.

— Where? What dictatorship? Thirty minutes ago, I was broadcasting live with RT in the street. There were police officers nearby, and they did not ask me anything. This is a dictatorship, right? For comparison: I was taking a photo near the central station in Milan, and the police and security started questioning me about who I was and why I was taking photos. Do they call that a democracy?

I have come to Belarus because there is little information about you in our media. They only say that there is a terrible dictatorship here, no freedom, you cannot speak out or walk peacefully in the street, and that the politics are bad. I have come here and see that this is a lie. That is why I have decided to tell the truth about Belarus.

I want to talk about the Belarusian programme for mitigating the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. The West knows nothing about it. I have travelled to Gomel Region, to the exclusion zone and the radiation and ecological reserve. I met local residents, people who know the truth about those events. I met with the Gomel authorities and visited medical institutions. I was also surprised that Belarusian healthcare is no worse than the Western one, and it is free. It is available for the people.

In the EU, regrettably, they have forgotten that Belarus is doing a lot to mitigate the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster — not only for itself but for all of Europe.

In the West, you cannot talk about this topic without speaking ill of the Soviet Union. I have been to the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant many times and have seen how things operate there. I also saw how the Armed Forces of Ukraine shelled the power station near Energodar. They use western weaponry there — from the USA, the UK, Italy, France.



The first question to Andrea Lucidi — an Italian journalist, war correspondent, and anti-fascist, who is currently actively travelling around Donbass, Belarus, and Russia, has been to Syria, Lebanon, and Venezuela, and is telling the truth to 'democracies' — was: Are you planning to return to Italy at all? The colleague smiled. As long as the situation in the 'democracies' is as it is, he is unlikely to return home. Recently, the man had to hastily leave Italy.

— By the way, what do people in Italy think about this?

— Many Italians are against sanctions, against war. People see that these sanctions have resulted in soaring prices for electricity, gas, and heating — they have increased by two to three times. Of course, people do not want to pay for the war with Russia. Italy used to have good relations both with Russia and Belarus.

Italians know little about the life of Belarusians. I remember, a friend of mine shared a piece of news, claiming that in Belarusian shops, there are no products — only bread and potatoes. I have intentionally taken a few photos just now and want to make a publication with a video showing that there is everything here. We can even pay with an Italian card — not everywhere, but we can. I think it is worth coming here for a holiday. Why not?

— Historical memory, historical truth. Do you think there are problems in Italy in this regard? I know you are a historian by education.

— Yes, there are problems. They are rooted in politics. Since February 2022, the themes of fascism, neo-Nazism, and historical memory have become unpopular in Italy. Unfortunately.

You know, there were a lot of partisans in Italy in the 1940s, over five thousand Soviet partisans. Now, however, they do not want to remember them. April 25th is Liberation Day from fascism and Nazism in Italy, it is a national holiday. In 2022, we organised a tribute event dedicated to Soviet partisans in Milan, and Ukrainians disrupted our event, although there were also Ukrainians among the partisans.

At the same time, Italian state television

shows Ukrainian troops with swastikas, with Nazi and neo-Nazi symbols — and no one has any objections. In other words, if someone is a Nazi and is against Russians, then they are a good Nazi. The European Parliament used to be against neo-Nazis, but now it is not, because there are many of them in Ukraine and they are connected with neo-Nazi, neo-fascist parties in Europe. So yes, there are significant problems with this in Italy now.

— The Supreme Court in Italy has allowed doing the Nazi salute. There is footage of it on the Internet. We, Belarusians, cannot understand how this is even possible. For witnesses of the fascist genocide of the Belarusian people, it is especially painful to see such videos.

— You know, I think the same as you — as people in Belarus and Russia. One can only wonder: how do the authorities in Italy allow this? I have no answer. We even have special political police, who know these groups very well, yet they prefer to do nothing.

The Italian Constitution prohibits fascist parties, but, in fact, they exist.

The explanation is simple. There is one fixed idea — the East is our enemy, it is like a new cold war.

— The essence is the same, the methods have changed.

— Yes, indeed. Interestingly, when Belarus brought nuclear weapons back into the country, there was a huge scandal in the West: 'Look! Lukashenko wants to use nuclear weapons against Europe, the West. This is a great danger to us!'

But there is NATO's nuclear sharing programme [it allows the USA to deploy its nuclear weapons in member countries that do not have them]. US nuclear weapons have long been stationed in Italy, Germany, Belgium. Is that normal? Neither Belarus nor Russia said anything. Yet, when Belarusians decided to take precautions, to secure their country — after all, we see that Poland and the Baltic states are building up military forces near you — they say: 'Ah! Look! They are going to use it against us!' It was the USA that actually started deploying nuclear weapons in European countries. Doesn't Belarus have the right to defend itself?

— The West is really afraid of the

truth, which is why it eliminates people who might disclose it, shuts down Russian and Belarusian media, orchestrates provocations and terrorist acts, creates problems and tries to blame us for them.

— Well, if the West had no problems, it would have nothing to fear. If European journalists do not say anything bad about Belarus and Russia, those materials are not published while the resources of such reporters are blocked. This has happened to my acquaintance. That is the policy. In Italy, there is one TV channel that provides space for objective information.

— Have you received threats in connection with your work?

— I know that the SBU [Security Service of Ukraine] has made a file on me. The Ukrainian embassy in Italy has sent a lot of letters — claiming that I am a Russian propagandist — to various institutions and organisations where I held events. Once, I was in Crimea, and they posted my GPS details, saying: 'He is here. If you have a missile, do not spare it.' I was also added to the Peacemaker, or Mirotvorets, website, which states that I committed a crime against Ukraine and its territorial integrity.

— Kiev is successfully doing this without our help. I have read one of your publications — War in Ukraine Encourages Organ Harvesting and Trafficking. Do you have any facts?

— I do. In Severodonetsk, I got into a room where surgeries were being performed. I saw a container for organs there. It was weird to see it there. Why would you need a container for organs on the front line? There cannot be any organ transplant happening there.

Right now, many people are dying in



Lyudmila Gladkaya and Andrea Lucidi

Ukraine, there is no control, and there is significant corruption. It is known that a black market for organ trafficking has been in Ukraine for many years. The local organised crime network and other groups — for example from Italy, Albania, Greece, Romania — do whatever they want in this country. In Europe, as we know, there are those who are willing to pay for organs. Behind the war in Ukraine is a real business. Unfortunately, European authorities are silent about this. We have evidence, witnesses, materials, and videos confirming this.

— When do you think European officials will stop cringing before the United States?

— When they stand together — that would be good for the European Union. However, there is no unified policy in Europe, but there are US bases and weapons, including nuclear ones. If any politician starts talking about national interests, they encounter problems. Not everyone is ready for that. Overall, I do not think anything will change in the near future, unfortunately.





Yegor Yermilovskiy

Photo of the week

Raccoon

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



October 24th is Special Reconnaissance Day in Belarus' Armed Forces. The first special reconnaissance units

in the USSR were established on October 24th, 1950, marking this date as the birthday of the special forces. Today, servicemen of Belarus' special operations units are worthy successors to the heroic traditions of the legendary special forces, and successfully tackle the tasks set before them.

October 25th is celebrated as Millers' Holiday in Belarus. The profession of a miller has been respected and revered from olden times, since bread quality directly depends on their work. The emergence of this holiday in autumn is no coincidence — by this time, most of the grain is milled, marking a period of brief rest. To this day, many mills — both water and wind — have survived in Belarus.



October 25th, 1881 marks the birth of Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) — a Spanish painter, sculptor, graphic artist, ceramicist, and designer. He was a pioneer of Cubism and inspired countless imitators, having made a



profound impact on the development of visual art. Over his lifetime, Picasso created around 20,000 works. According to expert estimates, Picasso is the 'most expensive' artist in the world, while his paintings are the most sought-after among art thieves.

October 26th, 1880 is the date of birth of Dmitry Karbyshev — a Soviet military commander and outstanding military engineer, lieutenant general of the engineering troops, and Hero of the Soviet Union (posthumously). During the Great Patriotic War, he was captured in 1945. General Karbyshev refused to collaborate with German fascists, for which he was sent to the Mauthausen concentration camp, where he was subjected to brutal torture, doused with water in freezing temperatures, and ultimately killed. Numerous schools, streets, museums, and monuments in Belarus bear his name.



On October 27th, Belarus celebrates Motorist and Road Worker's Day. This holiday is particularly relevant for Belarus, which boasts a highly developed automotive sector, with brands such as MAZ, MTZ, BELAZ, AMKODOR, GOMSELMASH, and BELSHINA known across many countries.



On October 27th, 1782, Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) — an Italian virtuoso violinist and composer — was born. Paganini's virtuosity was nothing short of extraordinary. Composer Franz Liszt referred to the Italian maestro's playing as a supernatural miracle. Paganini laid the foundations of modern violin technique. Among his compositions, *24 Caprices for Solo Violin*, and *Violin Concertos Nos. 1 and 2* are particularly popular.



On October 27th, 1873, a patent application for barbed wire was submitted by American farmer Joseph Glidden, who designed it in the form we know today. This invention found widespread use. Inexpensive barbed wire fences allowed American farmers to manage livestock without cowboys, and to easily protect their crops from animals. Barbed wire later became used as a barrier against people as well.



On October 27th, 1951, radiation therapy was first used to combat malignant tumours at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada under the guidance of Dr Harold Johns. Nowadays, radiation therapy is one of the three leading methods for treating oncological diseases.

October 28th, 1994 marks the establishment of the Novogrudok National Landscape Reserve aimed at preserving the landscape complex with areas of mature spruce and deciduous forests. It is situated in the basin of the Neman River, covering an area of approximately 1,800 hectares, of which 18 are listed in Belarus' Red Data Book. The fauna includes 146 animal species, with 10 of them listed in the Red Data Book.



October 28th is celebrated as International School Library Day. Schools play a crucial role in introducing children to books. Today a school library serves as a centre for extracurricular and project activities, harnessing the potential of the educational space and providing convenient and modern access to knowledge.



On October 30th, 1967, a historic event occurred as automatic docking of spacecraft in space was achieved for the first time during the exploration of the Universe. Two Soviet artificial Earth satellites — *Kosmos 186* and *Kosmos 188* — approached each other, successfully docked automatically, and subsequently began free flight in space at an altitude of 276 kilometres.