



The Great Stone Industrial Park has recently hosted the Day of Electric Transport



Belarusian neurosurgeons perform an extremely complex operation



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BELTA

Grand Prix holder of the 18th edition of the Vitebsk-2020 International Children Music Contest at the Slavianski Bazaar, Angelina Lomako, from Belarus

Festival with a bright history

Last week, the main festival of the Belarusian summer — *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* — was once again heard all over the world. For 29 years, the Vitebsk cultural forum has become a real holiday for the audience and for its organisers as it provides an opportunity to discover new vocal talents. In turn, performers in the children's and adult competitions got their first chance to gain popularity. Before the grand opening of the concert, the 2019 winners — Adilkhan Makin from Kazakhstan and Belarus' Ksenia Galetskaya — raised the flag of the *Slavianski Bazaar* and, in the evening, the Summer Amphitheatre for 6,000 spectators welcomed its first guests. Aleksandr Lukashenko took part in the opening ceremony as is traditional. → **3**



Stability is the basis for development

The President meets the Vitebsk Region's activists and opens the Polotsk overpass after reconstruction

The topic of conversation was extensive and went beyond the city on the Dvina River's problems: regional development, exports, income growth, harvest, protection of the country's interests and reforms. The main message from the President was a call to action for all managers, "The key task for the region and the country is to ensure the development of the regions. This will be the main focus. We need to develop the regions!"

Reforms stand for perfection

At the meeting, reforms — which are constantly being discussed by alternative candidates on the eve of the upcoming elections — were debated. The President stressed, "Any reform is a result. Our improvements cannot be fake, huge or comprehensive. Reforms envisage not breaking down or destroying (to demolish everything down to the ground and then to build it up). Do not believe in such talk. Our reform is about improving what we have. We must develop the production facilities that Belarus is based on since we know how to do this and because we have people and competencies to do it."

The Head of State is absolutely right when he says that we can do anything if we have the money — which must be earned. For example, Aleksandr Lukashenko believes the Vitebsk Region can generate money through the support of its tourism industry. "I am sure that if we raise support and money and develop our tourist complex, especially here in the north of the country, the region will demonstrate good results. Jobs will improve people's salaries and overall standard of living in the Vitebsk Region," he said.

The theme of roads is also integral to tourism. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, all regional centres in the country are connected to Minsk by good modern roads but we should not stop here but further develop the road network. "I'd like us to build a road from Minsk to Polotsk and Vitebsk. I have given instructions to realise this project," the President said.

Basis for development

The Head of State also touched upon the topic of exports, saying, "Exports will be the main direction of our activity. They provide the foreign currency without which the country cannot exist. We must earn this currency."

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that diversification of the geography of export supplies will continue further, in addition to mastering new markets and moving towards the 'thirds' export formula: these 'thirds' will head to Russia, the EAEU, the EU and the countries of the far east.

The President reminded people that the country is implementing programmes to accelerate the development of cities and districts with a population of about



The Kutynko family walk around the new Polotsk overpass, in Vitebsk

80,000. "We have indicated the direction along which we will develop. The coming five years will be dedicated to this small homeland. We need to raise up the regions, make people enjoy being in the agro-towns in the same way they do in Minsk, and ensure they have more desire to live in an agro-town than in Minsk," Aleksandr Lukashenko said. To achieve this, good accommodation, normal jobs and salaries are needed.

The topic of elections was also discussed in the context of international relations. Our western neighbours and partners sometimes apply double standards in assessing what is happening in Belarus, especially during the election period. According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, we are open to foreign observers, "If you want to observe the elections, please come. We don't mind. We are not hiding. However, do not tell how we must live. We know how to live."

At the same time, the President believes that we can learn from western partners on issues such as, for example, business development and the use of new technologies. This experience should be studied and implemented in Belarus.

"All plans will be ruined without the strictest technological and performance discipline. No Maidan or revolution can save us. Discipline and stability in the state are the foundation of any development," the Head of State stressed.

Gift for the city

After meeting with the regional activists, the President enjoyed a pleasant mission: to officially launch the Polotsk overpass, which was built in a year and a half. Although the bridge workers managed to work faster than planned, Vitebsk was greatly anticipating this overpass.

The President commented that he could hardly believe that the Polotsk overpass was reconstructed in such a short time, saying, "Importantly, we are launching this site on the eve of the *Slavianski Bazaar* opening. Guests — from Belarus and abroad — will come to us. The overpass is truly modern, beautiful and very convenient. It's a monument for the ages, which we leave to our Slavic city. It's an important road and we have made it."

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BELTA

The second day of the Head of State's working trip to the Vitebsk Region began with a visit to the 103rd Independent Guards Airborne Brigade. This is not just the elite of the Belarusian army, but also one of the most efficient units. It is unique in including a peace-keeping unit, whose fighters have distinguished themselves both in hot spots and at prestigious international competitions.

The President was not only informed about the history of the formation of the brigade, its mission and combat capabilities, but also the equipment, as well as the samples of weapons and military equipment in service with the unit.

Aleksandr Lukashenko also got acquainted with the living conditions of the servicemen. The Commander of the Special Oper-

ations Forces, Vadim Denisenko, explained that only contract soldiers serve in the peace-keeping unit. They can carry out tasks within the framework of the UN missions, the CSTO and NATO's *Partnership for Peace* programme. In general, the range of combat capabilities of the airborne brigade is extremely wide and fully corresponds to the motto of the paratroopers 'Nobody but us!' For example, the servicemen of the brigade are capable of marching for 400km a day, destroying about 10 enemy sabotage and reconnaissance groups and incapacitating 5 to 8 objects behind enemy lines to a depth of 70km.

"This is another example of what an army should be: contract enlisted service, conscription and so on. Where it is needed, it has contract soldiers. Where

Nobody but us

Aleksandr Lukashenko visited the 103rd Independent Guards Airborne Brigade in Vitebsk

conscripts can serve, we develop conscription service," emphasised Aleksandr Lukashenko.

In this regard, the President was keen to know if there are any staffing issues in the brigade. Vadim Denisenko assured him that there are many people who want to serve in the special operations forces, therefore the competition among job seekers is high.

various countries. However, in 2018, the Vitebsk peace-keepers were the best at the annual international military patrolling exercise, *Cambrian Patrol*, held in the UK. Belarusian paratroopers also regularly clinch medals at other international competitions.

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that he pays close attention to army sport and monitors



Belarusian peace-keepers excel at all military competitions, taking victories and prize-winning places. For example, last year, the brigade took silver at a prestigious competition in Wales that drew about 140 teams from

the participation of the Belarusian military in all contests. "The jury there is comprised of 'elders'. They see what kind of army Belarus has and its capabilities. They would not want to fight such an army. In other

words, this is the demonstration of the flag and our strength," noted the Belarusian leader.

The Commander-in-Chief was able to see with his own eyes what a peace-keeping company is capable of: the servicemen showed the President how, if necessary, the personnel would act at checkpoints, playing out a corresponding combat scenario. The Head of State was shown the possibilities of co-ordinating crew when driving combat vehicles. In fact, the BTR-80 armoured personnel carriers actually danced a waltz.

Aleksandr Lukashenko also met with the military team of the brigade, where he once again emphasised the importance of maintaining an efficient army, "Our powder must be kept dry. And the one who does not feed his soldiers will feed the stranger. It was not me who invented the saying, but we have learned it at a genetic level."

Based on materials of belta.by and sb.by

Festival with a bright history

According to the President, *Slavianski Bazaar* has become the heart of the cultural and spiritual unity,

“This ‘heart’ should beat in the name of the main idea that underpins the festival: ‘Through Art to Peace and Understanding’. It is particularly relevant for us today — when all countries and peoples are on the verge of a global geopolitical crisis — to preserve the tradition that brings people together. After all, no matter what is going on in the world, the international festival in Vitebsk has always destroyed barriers and strengthened friendship between nations.”

In his speech, Aleksandr Lukashenko emphasised, “On this solemn evening, I am overwhelmed with feelings of joy and pride for all of us, primarily Belarusians who have never knelt before the challenges of time. An example of this is the *Slavianski Bazaar* — a festival with a bright and interesting future. As you remember, its history began in the 1990s, against the background of the difficult establishment of new relations between sovereign states created from fragments of the huge empire.”

He reminded the audience that the festival was aimed at the celebration of friendship between fraternal peoples: Belarusians, Russians, Ukrainians and representatives of other states. “A quarter of a century ago, this great event could go on a journey through the cities and territories of the vast Soviet Union, the collapsed Soviet Union. This year, it could have taken a pause, as it has happened to famous world shows and competitions. However, then and now we’ve saved our *Slavianski Bazaar*, our Slavic tradition,” he said.

The Head of State stressed that, amidst international conflicts, inter-ethnic and domestic political crises, the Vitebsk venue has always been the abode of peace, friendship and mutual understanding. “What is the secret? Maybe, it can be attributed



first of all to the cultural code of Slavic nations, the common millennial history of Slavic peoples. Looking back at this history, you will not find any incidents of barbarian destruction of traditions and extermination of other civilisations. This history is about creation and mutual cultural enrichment,” he noted.

This is why, the President added, every year participants and viewers from all corners of the world flock to the picturesque



Belarusian Roman Voloznev wins the Grand Prix at the Contest of Young Performers of Pop Song



The 29th International Festival of Arts *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk — which claims to be the largest open-air event of its kind in Europe — will traditionally be remembered for its scale and incredible atmosphere

banks of the Dvina River for the festival. “They come to the city that, for many centuries, has inspired famous musicians, artists, actors, directors and designers, scientists and engineers, athletes and coaches who have brought glory to Belarus all over the world,” he said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko believes that the Vitebsk Amphitheatre has brought together the best of the artists and the most receptive of the audience, those who come to the festival because they had an overwhelming urge to be here. “These people attend this holiday following their heart. They are united by sincere love for the common Slavic culture,” the President added.

Sincere awards

Over the years, the festival has gained many good traditions. The President’s special award ‘Through Art to Peace and Mutual Understanding’ is among them. This time, it’s been presented to a long-time friend of *Slavianski Bazaar*, a People’s Artist of Russia — Filipp Kirkorov —

Last week, the main festival of the Belarusian summer — *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* — was once again heard all over the world. For 29 years, the Vitebsk cultural forum has become a real holiday for the audience and for its organisers as it provides an opportunity to discover new vocal talents. In turn, performers in the children’s and adult competitions got their first chance to gain popularity. Before the grand opening of the concert, the 2019 winners — Adilkhan Makin from Kazakhstan and Belarus’ Ksenia Galetskaya — raised the flag of the *Slavianski Bazaar* and, in the evening, the Summer Amphitheatre for 6,000 spectators welcomed its first guests. Aleksandr Lukashenko took part in the opening ceremony as is traditional.



The *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk was a real treat for the audience

who noted that it’s a great honour for him to accept the award from Aleksandr Lukashenko’s hands. “Today, at this difficult time, when *Slavianski Bazaar* is the only one that has survived among all the musical festivals of the former Soviet Union, I consider this award very symbolic — as is the fact that you’ve found an opportunity to host the festival, when even *Eurovision* gave up and was rescheduled. Belarus and *Slavianski Bazaar* lives on! I am proud of my friendship with you, Belarus!” he said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko presented another award — the Union State Award in Literature and Art — to the Artistic Director of the Theatre of Film Actors, Aleksandr Yefremov. It was also granted to a famous documentary director — Anatoly Alai, as well as a team of directors of Irina Margolina, Oksana Cherkasova, Yelena Petkevich and Irina Kodyukova.

Participants from 14 countries competed for victory in the 29th edition of the International Festival of Arts *Slavianski Bazaar* in Vitebsk: Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herze-

govina, Italy, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine and Estonia.

As a result, the ‘Lyre’ award went to Belarus’ Roman Voloznev. He also won the Vladimir Mulyavin Special Prize for the best implementation of the national theme and high artistic performance.

The Special Prize of the Belarusian President — ‘Slavic Hope’ — went to Ukraine’s Elina Ivashchenko for her lively performance of Slavic peoples’ songs. The ‘Lyre’ award was also bestowed upon Grand Prix holder of the 18th edition of the *Vitebsk-2020* International Children Music Contest, Angelina Lomako, from Belarus. The first prize of the Children Music Contest went to Kristupas Kerulis (Lithuania), followed by Zhasmin Tleumbetova (Kazakhstan) and Vladimir Serkov (Russia). Bogdana-Bianca Visterniceanu (Moldova) and Anastasiia Martyniuk (Ukraine) took third position.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Meetings with EAEU prime ministers. Quotations.

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, held meetings with the prime ministers of the Eurasian Economic Union member states who took part in the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council session held in Minsk. Belarus’ Head of State expressed the hope that the event would become a defining step in deepening relations in the EAEU. “At least, I would like it to be so. The exchange of views was very significant,” he stated.

The meetings also provided an opportunity to discuss topical issues in the development of bilateral relations with certain countries, compare notes and clarify positions on some other issues.



On meeting Armenian Prime Minister, Nikol Pashinyan, Aleksandr Lukashenko acknowledged the existence of many problems in the Eurasian Economic Union which are primarily related to the failure to implement previous agreements. “In truth, there are many problems within the EAEU in terms that we’ve failed to fulfil what we agreed upon... We have no borders but the tension on the frontier is excessive. You feel this just as I do. Therefore, there is something to work on,” noted the Head of State.



During his meeting with Russia’s Prime Minister, Mikhail Mishustin, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that Belarus insists that all the agreements be fulfilled. “Both ourselves and Russia

have a list of them. We need to build our relations in the Union exclusively on an equal footing. As an historian, I understand this well and have studied the topic very carefully. Unions built on an unequal basis are not viable long-term,” the President noted.



At a meeting with the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Askar Mamin, the Belarusian leader stressed, “As for our relations, I just want to assure you that the goals we set during the visits of Nursultan Nazarbayev and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev here will be faithfully observed. We’ll definitely realise everything that depends on us. If the Government of Kazakhstan moves in this direction, you will always get the most positive steps from us. We very much want to enjoy good

relations with Kazakhstan, primarily economic — since this is the foundation of it.”



While meeting the Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, Kubatbek Boronov, the President of Belarus appreciated the positive dynamics in trade with Kyrgyzstan. “Despite the coronavirus, although we had a drop in trade in 2019, this year, we have grown in turnover in five months. When I looked at the statistics, I was surprised: all countries have collapsed in their trade, as you know, but we have managed to add more over the past five months. This is a good sign. This means we need each other. I want to assure you that we are ready to act in this area,” he said.

Based on materials of belta.by

Where are 5G towers heading?



In Belarus, 5G is likely to be launched in late 2021 — early 2022

Autonomous driving, remote surgery, a whole new level of construction and production, smart homes and cities... The whole world understands that a delay in the launch of 5G could lead to the loss of huge opportunities for both users and industry, as well as a slowdown in technological innovation and economic growth. Pilot zones of the high-speed 5G network have already been launched in Belarus. However, what does 5G communication look like, when it will be available countrywide and how will our life and economy change with its full spread? Our expert — the Head of the Radio Frequency Spectrum Regulation Department at the Ministry of Communications and Informatisation, Dmitry Korzun — tells us more.

By Lyudmila Gladkaya

What is 5G?

The 5G mobile communication standard is a new stage in the development of technology that will expand the ability to access the Internet via radio access networks. There are several main advantages. Firstly, data transfer speed will increase up to 100 times and, accordingly, the speed to the subscriber will reach 10 Gbit per second, and from it to the base station — up to 5 Gbit per second. The number of devices able to simultaneously work within the network will also increase: up to 1 million per square kilometre. Moreover, such devices are not critical to delays in data transmission and have an autonomous power source that enables them to operate for up to 10 years. The minimum delay during signal transmission will be reduced from 10 milliseconds to 1. In addition, the cost of operation and power consumption of networks will be cut.

What will change for subscribers and industry?

I'm convinced that 5G will be of interest to everyone. It will be easier for us to live, manage our households, communicate, work and study. There will be a huge number of opportunities in all areas.

The services provided by the 5G network can be divided into three groups. The first envisages an advanced ultra-wide-band communication, which is aimed at



Dmitry Korzun

people and will provide multi-gigabit data transfer speeds. This involves, for example, the transmission of ultra-high-definition television, 3D video, including in real time, online games, virtual and augmented reality, new opportunities in healthcare, education, industry and so on.

The second group embraces large-scale inter-machine communication systems.

This scenario assumes a large number of low-cost connected subscriber devices that transmit a relatively small amount of data. These services can be used in energy, transport, healthcare, trade, public security, housing and util-

ities and industry. Obviously, international transport, public and individual transport in cities will become unmanned. For example, some metro trains in Europe already have no drivers.

The third group of services envisages ultra-reliable data transmission with low latency which includes wireless management of industrial and production processes (robotics), remote medicine (in particular, surgery), public safety, transportation security, smart homes and cities, intelligent road infrastructure and so on. For example, when a driverless car is moving, there must be a connection to the infrastructure and the cars.

Is Belarus ready to implement 5G?

A great job has been done to implement 5G jointly with state bodies, business representatives and scien-

tists, including learning from international experience. At present, Belarus and other European countries are in approximately the same state in terms of preparing for the introduction of 5G. As for the CIS countries, we are ahead of our partners.

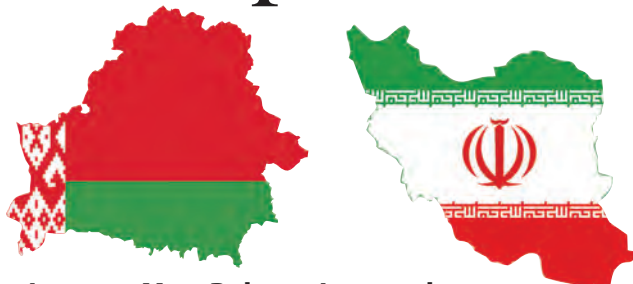
We are now forming a system of requirements for a potential operator, dealing with problems that require additional study. These are, for example, issues of access to the spectrum: how much of it will be available to us for 5G development. There are other issues which we are actively working on. It takes time to summarise the results and prepare a final decision. We have started at a good pace and I hope, by late 2020 or early 2021, we'll be approaching practical solutions.

When will the technology become available to all?

I think the network will be launched no earlier than late 2021 or early 2022. As regards Lithuania, Latvia and Poland, really powerful commercial networks there will come into force no earlier than 2022. As for our neighbours from the south and east, they do not yet have practical solutions for the implementation of 5G.

First of all, we should create the infrastructure for industry, technological processes, housing and utilities sector, the Healthcare Ministry and others. When the entire system is fully operational, then we — the citizens — will be able to use the new services. We are moving towards this goal in a timely manner, we understand the difficulties and are working to resolve them.

Enhancing co-operation



In January-May, Belarus-Iran trade in agricultural products and food rose by over 20 percent from the same period of 2019 — to reach almost \$4.5m, the press service of the Belarusian Agriculture and Food Ministry has announced after Agriculture and Food Minister Ivan Krupko met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Iran to Belarus, Saeed Yari

The participants of the meeting discussed ways to increase Belarus-Iran trade and economic co-operation in the sphere of agriculture and food, including ways to ship Belarusian dairy and meat products to Iran and Iranian fruits, fish and sea food to Belarus. Belarus continues working to get Belarusian companies certified for shipping their products to Iran.

In order to invigorate bilateral co-operation and take a

closer look at Belarusian products, Ivan Krupko invited the Iranian delegation to visit the international *Belagro* expo, which is due in Minsk on September 22nd-26th.

The two sides also discussed the timeframe for organising the second session of the Belarusian-Iranian working group on co-operation in the sphere of agriculture.

Based on materials of belta.by

Moving in a common direction

Belarus and Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) plan to strengthen co-operation in agricultural industry

Nabil Gangi, the FAO Deputy Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia, met with the Deputy Agriculture and Food Minister of Belarus, Igor Brylo, to discuss current joint activities and co-operation plans, including innovative technology in cattle-breeding and the scholarship programme of FAO and the Government of Hungary.

“Over the past seven years, 18 FAO projects have been implemented in Belarus, including

11 national, three interregional and five regional ones to the tune of \$2.5m. These projects were mostly financed by FAO and partly by Russia,” Nabil Gangi said. In particular, the projects helped strengthen Belarus' capacity in monitoring and controlling pests and diseases of animals and plants; they also helped boost food safety, expand access to the food market, take inventory of the agricultural sector, assess the scale of land degradation and reduce the risk

of natural disasters.

The Belarusian side suggested some new areas of technical support, including the promotion of food products, assistance in joining the World Trade Organisation, support for women entrepreneurs in rural areas, strengthening veterinary systems and ensuring control over the cross-border spread of animal diseases.

Based on materials of belta.by



Rushing into the future with lightning speed

The Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park has recently hosted the Day of Electric Transport, featuring a demonstration platform with the latest innovations of electric transport equipment — such as e-buses, e-cars, e-motorcycles and e-scooters. Domestic manufacturers and Park residents presented their developments.



By Ilya Kryzhevich

Development area

During the opening ceremony, Energy Minister Viktor Karankevich stressed that electric transport development has great prospects in Belarus.

He said, “The use of electric cars reduces harmful emissions into the atmosphere, improves the urban environment and road safety. The development of this area is a priority for Belarus.”

“The Head of State has made decisions aimed at stimulating the use of electric transport and developing electric charging infrastructure. These have created the basis for the successful promotion of electric transport and electric vehicles domestically, also ensuring new jobs and more comfortable living conditions for the country’s

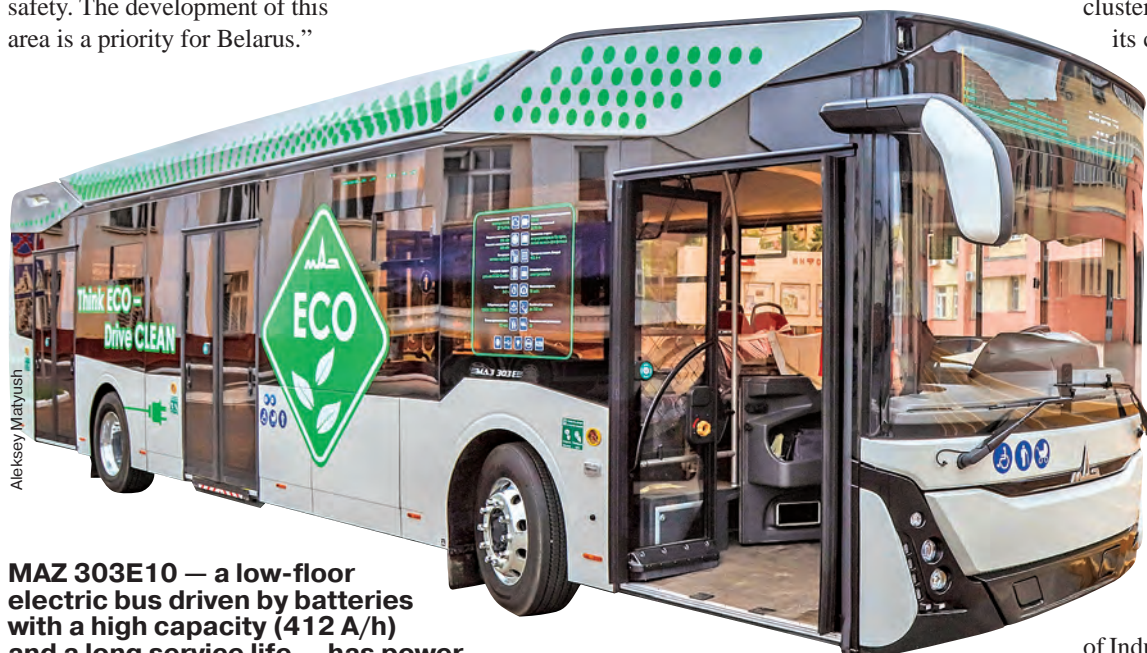
citizens. The commissioning of the Belarusian nuclear power station — a reliable and clean source of energy in our country — will also give an additional impetus in this direction,” the official added. According to him, international agencies assert that, by 2040, a third of the world’s vehicles will be electric.

Mechanical engineering cluster

In turn, the Head of Administration of the Great Stone Industrial Park, Aleksandr Yaroshenko, noted that the event was very important for the Park since high level technologies and new industry are the areas that are key for the project’s development. “It is the mechanical engineering cluster and electric transport as

its component that occupy a well-deserved place in the development of the Park and the national economy. The samples that are already being manufactured in Belarus, which are just beginning to be used, as well as those that will be produced, are showcased here. For example, just a month ago, we accepted a resident from Lithuania into the project; it will produce electric scooters for our consumers.”

The General Director of Industrial Park Development Company CJSC, Yan Gang, also expressed confidence that the development of motor transport using new energy sources has a great future in Belarus and the Industrial Park is ready to invest even more efforts and resources in the development of this sphere. “We will attract even more enterprises from China, Europe and America to form production chains of primary and secondary sectors to create cars using new energy sources, in order to create favourable conditions for the launch of domestic brands in Belarus,” he announced. “The Park is now shifting from the construction and development stage to high-quality development. Mechanical engineering is a priority area.”



MAZ 303E10 — a low-floor electric bus driven by batteries with a high capacity (412 A/h) and a long service life — has power reserve of up to 300km which is comparable to the advanced models of world manufacturers

Among the participants of the event were MAZ, Belkommunmash, the United Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, OPTRON Instrument-Making Plant, Belorusneft PA and Geely — demonstrating their developments. EES-group and Chengdu Hsinchu — resident companies of the Great Stone Industrial Park — also participated.

The General Director of Industrial Park Development Company CJSC, Yan Gang, also expressed confidence that

NEWS IN BRIEF

Central Election Commission (CEC) registers five Presidential candidates

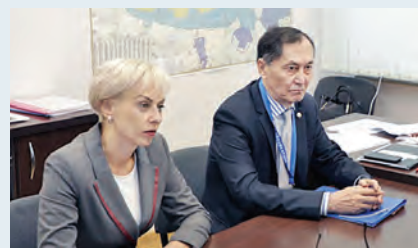


These are Andrei Dmitriyev, Anna Kanopatskaya, Aleksandr Lukashenko, Svetlana Tikhonovskaya and Sergei Cherechen.

CEC considered a number of other matters related to the Presidential race. For example, it amended the provision on the use of mass media during the election campaign and made corrections to the TV and radio air time of the candidates. CEC also amended the list of print media where candidates can publish their campaign materials. In addition, the commission held drawing of lots to determine the date and time of airing messages by each candidate.

Foreign Ministry invites international observers to monitor elections

Anatoly Glaz, the Head of the Information and Digital Diplomacy Office, Press Secretary of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry, announced the invitation, stating, “A day after the registration of Presidential candidates, in line with ear-



lier public statements, the Foreign Ministry sent invitations to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation. These are our traditional partners for election observation. We remain strongly committed to our promises and obligations, including within the framework of the OSCE.”

Strategy for the development of Eurasian integration until 2025 to be signed in Minsk in autumn

Belarus’ Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko announced the plans at the meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in an extended format. “The draft strategy for the development of Eurasian economic integration until 2025 has been prepared and generally approved. It lays down the mechanisms to develop common markets in the Union, formulates approaches to the development of new areas in joint

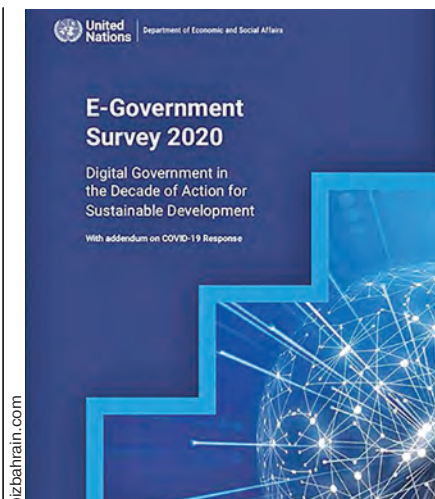


innovation and investment activities. The document is expected to be signed by the heads of state during the next meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council due in Minsk in autumn,” he noted

Belarusian medicines for treating pneumonia and COVID-19 shipped to Kyrgyzstan

Following Kyrgyzstan’s request, Belarusian manufacturers promptly addressed the issue dealing with the supply of medicines to treat pneumonia and COVID-19. In a very short time, a cargo of Belarus-made drugs was prepared and unloaded on the plane of Kyrgyzstan’s Prime Minister, Kubatbek Boronov. In total, about 30,000 packages of medicines were delivered, mainly antibiotics produced by Belmedpreparaty Republican Unitary Enterprise. Mr. Boronov appreciated Belarus’ success in fighting the spread of the coronavirus infection, making special mention of the high quality of Belarusian medicines.





Belarus has maintained its position as a country with a high level of readiness for e-government. Compared to 2018, the index grew by almost 6 percent: in 2018, the county was ranked 38th and, in 2016 — 49th.

Maintaining positions among the top 40 countries in terms of the level of development of e-government technologies has become possible thanks to state programmes on digitalisation; practical results of many of the projects of the latest programmes will become available from 2021. Among them are an ID card for remote identification, electronic services and scaling up of the e-recipe and e-school projects. Belarus is ahead of such countries as Belgium, Greece, Latvia, China, Kuwait, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia and Slovakia in terms of e-government development.

Number at the front of the mind

Belarus ranks 40th in the UN E-Government Survey 2020

Kazakhstan (29th), Russia (36th), Belarus (40th), Armenia (68th) and Kyrgyzstan (83rd) took the leading positions in the e-government index among the EAEU member states.

The rating is led by Denmark (since 2018), the Republic of Korea (among the leaders since 2010), Estonia (practical results of the e-government technology introduction have shifted the country from 16th to 3rd place in the rating).

According to the UN review, Belarus has maintained its leadership in the Eastern European region in terms of information and communication infrastructure development. The Telecommunication Infrastructure Component has grown by more than 20 percent in 2 years.

Traditionally, the review acknowledges a very high level of human capital development in Belarus. The increase in the value of the corresponding com-

ponent relative to 2018 is 2.6 percent.

In addition to the main components, the UN survey provides additional parameters. As noted, Belarus received a high rating on the open government data development index in 2018-2019 (the index value corresponds to 0.96). In terms of e-participation, Belarus is included in the subgroup of countries with a very high level of the corresponding index (0.7-1).

United Nations E-Government Survey 2020 Eastern Partnership Countries

| Country | OSI | HCI | TII | EGDI 2020 | EGDI 2018 | 2020 Rank |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Armenia | 0,7000 | 0,7872 | 0,6536 | 0,7136 | 0,5944 | 68 |
| Azerbaijan | 0,7059 | 0,7713 | 0,6528 | 0,7100 | 0,6547 | 70 |
| Belarus | 0,7059 | 0,8912 | 0,8281 | 0,8084 | 0,7641 | 40 |
| Georgia | 0,5882 | 0,8717 | 0,6923 | 0,7174 | 0,6893 | 65 |
| Moldova | 0,7529 | 0,7432 | 0,5683 | 0,6881 | 0,6590 | 79 |
| Ukraine | 0,6824 | 0,8591 | 0,5942 | 0,7119 | 0,6165 | 69 |

OSI — Online Service Component
HCI — Human Capital Component
TII — Telecommunication Infrastructure Component
EGDI — E-Government Development Index

The UN E-Government Survey is published every two years and is based on research of the development of e-government technologies in 193 countries — conducted by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). As a result of research, the readiness index for e-government in these countries is calculated and the corresponding rating is formed. The main components of the index are a sub-index of web services, telecommunication infrastructure and human capital.

Based on materials of belta.by

Leaving the disease in the past

Belarusian neurosurgeons perform an extremely complex operation on a patient with a tumour inside their spinal cord

Last week, our doctors operated on a Ukrainian citizen who suffered from a rare condition: an intramedullary tumour (inside the spinal cord). The surgery was performed by specialists of the Republican Scientific-Practical Centre of Neurology and Neurosurgery. The man is now recovering well and the doctors have shared some details.



Sergei Artemenko

Sergei Artemenko, from Ukraine's Krivoi Rog, suffered from a rare condition that accounts for a total of about 5-10 percent of all spinal cord tumours. In Belarus, about 10-15 such patients are operated on annually.

The situation was complicated since the tumour was quite large and was located in the cervical area. "The complexity of such interventions is due to the high risk of disability in the postoperative period. The goal of surgery is to remove the tumours as completely as possible while maintaining an acceptable level of function in the postoperative period: figuratively speaking, so that a person can look after themselves," Aleksandr Golovko, a Candidate of Medical Sciences, and leading researcher at the centre's Neurosurgical Department, explains. "We got the opportunity to perform such in-

terventions only after the centre was launched and equipped with appropriate equipment and micro-tools. Operations of this kind last from 4 to 7 hours, depending on the extent of the tumour. Of course, there are difficulties in terms of the forecast. Often, depending on the histological structure of the tumour, it can not only compress the spinal cord, but also destroy its pathways. Therefore, sometimes during the operation, we need to solve very difficult issues — such as those regarding the radicality of removal. It is radical removal that allows a patient to be cured of the disease and gives the greatest chances for its subsequent functional recovery."

Importantly, the operation preserved the anatomical integrity and functional integrity of the cervical spine. The 34-year-old patient got back on his feet the next day after being transferred from the intensive care unit to an ordinary ward and started walking on the second day. He said that, for six months, he had been looking for an opportunity to be operated on in clinics in Israel or Germany — paying for con-

sultations and even transferring 15,000 Euros in advance for the operation in Germany. However, doctors in these countries claimed that the risks of such surgery are extremely high.



"I chose the Belarusian clinic deliberately. I have read many positive reviews about Belarusian doctors and this centre in particular. Here we were told that we can expect quite good results. When we asked abroad, everyone said that when removing the tumour, two vertebrae would be removed. In Israel, doctors said there was about a 70 percent chance of success for such an operation, in Germany — about 50, while in Belarus everything is top level. I received a professional con-



Republican Scientific-Practical Centre of Neurology and Neurosurgery



sultation from neurosurgeon, Anton Rodich, after which I had no doubts and questions about where and who would perform the operation," Sergei says.

The man — who works as a locomotive driver — admits he feels better every day. Before the operation, his arm ached. He was so weak that couldn't even lift his hands and eat on his own. Therefore, as soon as it was possible to leave the country, considering the pandemic, he immediately went to Belarus.

Residents of Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia, India, Northern Ireland, the Czech Republic, and England often approach the centre and, according to its Director, Ryshard Sidorovich, in 2019 alone, 350 patients from far and wide were provided with medical advice, 138 people were treated in the centre's departments without surgery and 65 patients were operated on.

Based on materials of the Healthcare Ministry and belta.by

The city of reborn beauty

Five reasons to visit Vitebsk

According to the legend, Vitebsk was founded by Princess Olga. In the summer of 1812, Napoleon celebrated his birthday here. After the war, it was almost completely destroyed. However, it rose from the ashes, gaining the glory of the city of artists and becoming the festival and cultural capital of Belarus.

By Natalia Yemelyanova

Visiting the *Slavianski Bazaar*

The picturesque Belarusian city of Vitebsk has been transformed during July to host one of the main cultural events of the year — the annual *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* International Festival of Arts.

It's necessary to attend *Slavyanka* (as the townspeople themselves call their festival) at least once in your life. Firstly, this is the largest such festival, lasting a whole week, attended by people from all over the world. This is no exaggeration: in previous years one could meet tourists and artists from almost a hundred countries in Vitebsk. Secondly, here you can see everything that's new and interesting in Belarusian culture all at once. If you are keen on folk dances, national cuisine and unique hand-made goods — all this is in abundance. Finally, the *Slavianski Bazaar* is simply a place where you can forget about harsh everyday life and have fun or make new acquaintances.

Dukhovskiy Kruglik is located just two steps from the amphitheatre. This is a reconstruction of a castle tower from the 14th century. The kruglik, at the base of which is a square, was erected on an ancient foundation. At a height of 27m, there is an observation deck with the most beautiful views of Vitebsk. City jokers assert that Smolensk — the twin city of Vitebsk — is visible from here once in a hundred years!

Knocking on heaven's door

Another observation deck is the Rotunda of the Town Hall Tower. You can view the city from a bird's eye view from May to October on any day of the week, except Monday. It is especially beautiful in the evening when illuminations make it fabulous.

Magic also awaits you inside the town hall which houses a local history museum. More than two hundred thousand unique exhibits are kept in its archives. Here you can see birch bark letters from the 13th century, as well as paintings by Repin and Levitan. In the foyer there is a 2m high bronze coat of arms of the city: the face of Jesus Christ, with a sword beneath. If a person stands nearby and whispers their wish, it will definitely come true.

Staying with Chagall and Repin

In Vitebsk one can feel the subtle intertwining of the cultural context throughout the whole life of the city, as there are many theatres, cultural events, and even ordinary townspeople are distinguished by a noticeable artistic taste.

In the 1920s, Vitebsk was the capital of Russian avant-garde. At the Folk Art School, geniuses of the 20th century — Marc Chagall and Kazimir Malevich — created their masterpieces while also shaping the ideas of their students about painting and architecture.

Marc Chagall declared his love of the city of his youth throughout his long life: the roofs, churches and residents of Vitebsk are depicted on almost every canvas. He wrote at one time: 'Paris, you are my Vitebsk!'

Pokrovskaya Street, where Chagall's father's house has miraculously survived, became the place where the museum and two monuments dedicated to the creator are located.

The Marc Chagall Art Centre is located on the other bank of the Zapadnaya Dvina River: it is this red brick building that is depicted on Chagall's famous painting *Above the City*. The collection has none of the master's paintings, but there is a collection of three hundred lithographs, woodcuts and etchings, including a unique series of illustrations for Gogol's *Dead Souls*.

But that is not all! The scenography of local theatres is imbued with the spirit of Marc Chagall's works. Motifs borrowed from his paintings can be seen on souvenirs which are sold in shops and on the streets. Even graffiti in the courtyards depicts the artist himself and fragments of his paintings! It seems that the spirit of Marc Chagall is



Pobedy Square in Vitebsk



Marc Chagall's *Above the City*



An old tram and a monument to the conductor at the Museum of the Vitebsk Tram History



Motorboat trip along the Zapadnaya Dvina River



Town Hall

still hovering here, in the very air of Vitebsk, sharing with all its inhabitants a special romantic vision of the native city. People in Vitebsk also honour another genius. The estate of the Russian painter Ilya Repin — Zdravnevo — is located 16km from the city; it is a museum and a place of permanent plein airs for artists.

Seeing the biggest square

Pobedy Square in Vitebsk is the largest in the country and one of the biggest in Europe, being 380m long and 190m wide. Here the Eternal Flame burns at the famous monument, entitled 'Three Bayonets', in honour of those who liberated the city from the Nazis. Nearby there is an exhibition of military equipment and a park.

Beautiful places of worship are within walking distance from the square: the Church of St. Alexander Nevsky, the Assumption Cathedral and the museum of the famous Batka Minay (Shmyrev).

Taking a ride on a retro tram and a motor ship

The Tram History Museum is over 50 years old. There are 'old trams' here from the 19th century, as well as 'handsome trams' from NEP times. This type of transport is especially revered. In 1898, the first tram in the country passed along Smolenskaya Street in Vitebsk. This type of transport was innovative for Belarus; even in Moscow and St. Petersburg, trams appeared later.

Now, this is the most convenient way to see the whole of Vitebsk. Before the revolution,

the tram could be stopped at any place, by giving a signal to the tram driver.

But you can't only travel around the city on foot or by tram, it is also possible to choose the waterway. Vitebsk is surprisingly rich in hilly areas due to the fact that it is located along the banks of the Zapadnaya Dvina and Vitba rivers. In addition to these two main rivers, two more with affectionate names flow through it — Luchosa and Dobreika. A tourist motor boat runs along the Dvina River in the warm season, departing from the pier next to Pobedy Square. For an hour, the guide describes many interesting facts about the city and what you can see on the banks. It is a real pleasure to admire the unhurried river and greenery.



Most dangerous destinations in the world

A new index has ranked the most dangerous destinations in the world for 2020

The crowd-sourced global data website published its half-year findings for 2020. It provides twice annual snapshots of the safest cities and countries, along with measuring the cost of living. It measures countries using a 'crime index' and a 'safety index'.

"We consider crime levels lower than 20 as very low, crime levels between 20 and 40 as being low, crime levels between 40 and 60 as being moderate, crime levels between 60 and 80 as being

high and finally crime levels higher than 80 as being very high," Numbeo said.

The top most dangerous destinations were dominated by South American nations as well as South Africa.

The city that scored highest on the crime index was Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. It has one of the highest per capita murder rates in the world. Once the wealthiest country in South America has been beset by political turmoil and hyper-inflation. Murder and kid-

nappings have risen sharply in recent years and it is regarded as particularly dangerous for foreign travellers and investors.

It is ranked 84.36 for crime and 15.64 for safety, meaning the average resident feels extremely vulnerable to crime.

Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Afghanistan and Honduras are next on the list. Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Guyana, El Salvador and Syria comprised the bottom 10.

Kanye West makes presidential bid

Rapper Kanye West has qualified to appear on the Oklahoma presidential ballot, the first state in which he met the requirements before the filing deadline, amid confusion and uncertainty around whether he is actually running for the Oval Office

West's representative sent in the necessary paperwork and paid the \$35,000 filing fee, Oklahoma Board of Elections spokeswoman Misha Mohr said.

The news service reported that West would appear with two other independent presidential candidates — concert pianist Jade Simmons and cryptocurrency entrepreneur Brock Pierce — on the state's ballot.

The rapper's late entry into the race means that he has already missed the deadlines to appear on the ballots in half a dozen states.

News of the filing came shortly after Steve Kramer, an adviser who said he was hired to help West get on ballots by gather-



ing signatures in two key states, said West was dropping his 2020 race.

However, West took his first official step toward his White House bid by filing with the Federal Election Commission (FEC).



May never return to school

Save Our Education report warns Covid-19 will force children out of school and into labour

Deep budget cuts to education and rising poverty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic could force at least 9.7 million children out of school forever by the end of this year, with millions more falling behind in learning.

Girls are likely to be much worse affected than boys, with many forced into early marriage. As the impacts of the recession triggered by COVID-19 hits families, many children may be forced out of school and into labour markets.

Save the Children agency is calling for governments and donors to respond to this global education emergency by urgently investing in education as schools begin to reopen after months of lockdown. It is also urging commercial creditors to suspend debt repayments by low-income countries — a move that could free up \$14bn for investment in education.

"It would be unconscionable to allow resources that are so desperately needed to keep alive the hope that

comes with education to be diverted into debt repayments," said Inger Ashing, CEO of Save the Children. The agency calls for governments to use their budgets to ensure children have access to distance learning whilst lockdown measures remain; and to support children who have fallen behind.

The *Save Our Education* report reveals the devastating effects the COVID-19 outbreak is set to have on learning. In a mid-range budget scenario, the agency estimates that the recession will leave a shortfall of \$77bn in education spending in some of the poorest countries in the world over the next 18 months. In a worst-case scenario, under which governments shift resources from education to other COVID-19 response areas, that figure could climb to an astonishing \$192bn by the end of 2021.

The impending budget crunch comes after lockdown measures saw a peak of 1.6 billion children out of school, globally.

World's population likely to shrink after 50 years

The world's population is likely to peak at 9.7 billion in 2064, and then decline to about 8.8 billion by the end of the century, as women get better access to education and contraception, a new study has found

By 2100, 183 of 195 countries will not have fertility rates required to maintain the current population, with a projected 2.1 births per woman, researchers from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation at the University of Washington's School of Medicine said.

Some 23 countries — including Japan, Thailand, Italy, and Spain — will see populations shrink by more than 50 percent, researchers said.

However, the population of sub-Saharan Africa could triple, allowing for just under half of the world's population to be African by the end of the century.

The modelling study, published in *The Lancet*, also forecasts dramatic declines in working-age populations in countries including India and China, which will hurt economic growth and could have negative implications for labour forces and social support systems. But as fertility declines, researchers note that immigration could offset population shrinkage, particularly in countries with low fertility, such as the USA, Australia and Canada.

"The world, since the 1960s, has been really focused on the so-called population explosion," Dr. Christopher Murray, who led the research, noted.

"Suddenly, we're now seeing this sort of turning point where it is very clear that we are rapidly transitioning from the issue of too many people to too few."

Using data from Global Burden of Disease Study 2017, researchers predicted



that the fastest-shrinking populations will be in Asia and Eastern and Central Europe. A further 34 countries — including China — are also predicted to see their population decline by up to 50 percent. The population of sub-Saharan Africa could triple over the course of the century, from an estimated 1.03bn in 2017 to 3.07bn in 2100.

Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Appreciation of professionalism

Belarusian tenor Pavel Valuzhin to debut in Metropolitan Opera



The Metropolitan Opera announced the new recruit in early July on its website. The tenor has been invited to debut in the 2020-2021 season.

“I am immensely happy at the opportunity to perform in the world’s largest opera house. It’s been my dream for years. I worked hard perfecting my skills to achieve success. With years of work at various venues, internships with the most famous teachers in Europe and the world, I have accumulated sufficient

experience. I’m happy my professionalism has been so highly recognised. In January, I will be performing in New York as Rodolfo in the amazing production by Franco Zeffirelli. In the light of the pandemic, I’m staying in Minsk with my family at the moment. I enjoy spending time with my loved ones, soaking up emotions and impressions for my new achievements,” says the singer.

The Metropolitan Opera is New York’s landmark.

Along with the Vienna Opera and La Scala in Milan, the theatre is one of the three most prestigious opera venues in the world. At various times, this stage has been visited by brilliant artistes who form the world’s cultural heritage. From 1903 until the end of his career, the legendary Enrico Caruso performed here. In 1910, the admiring audience warmly welcomed the unique Fiodor Shalyapin. Sergei Dyagilev came here with the Russian Ballet

troupe, while Anna Pavlova also danced on the famous stage. Maria Callas, Placido Domingo, Montserrat Caballe, Luciano Pavarotti and many other great performers made an invaluable contribution to the theatre’s legacy. The American scale and classical opera traditions attract more than 800,000 spectators to the Metropolitan Opera every year.

Based on materials of belta.by

Belarusian tenor Pavel Valuzhin was born in the town of Radoshkovichi, in the Minsk Region. He graduated from the Oginski Music College in Molodechno, and Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg State Conservatory. After graduating from the latter, Pavel joined the ‘Young Artists Programme’ of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow. In the 2016-2018 season, he was a soloist of the Bolshoi Opera company where he had outstanding mentors and vocal teachers. At present, the operatic singer tours Europe and Russia, has performed in a concert in La Scala and has engagements with the world’s best opera houses.



Clicking on the library archives

By Lyudmila Kovaleva

Over 4,000 magazines from the National Library’s collection now available online

The National Library continues to open its collections online and, recently, the *Belarusian Literary Heritage. Magazines of 1919-1939* e-collection has been augmented with new issues. According to nlb.by, the virtual resource contains 270 titles of Belarusian periodicals and publications published in the BSSR and Western Belarus from 1919 to 1939 — uniting over 4,000 issues reflecting the socio-political, economic and cultural life of the country during the interwar period.

The issues disclose such information as what did Government House and the Central Villagers’ House look like in Minsk?; where and when did the first state fish hatchery of the BSSR open?; or what was the weather like in Belarusian cities? They show how Belarusians lived and what they were concerned about a hundred years ago.

For users’ convenience, documents are organised by subject categories: education and upbringing, art, health and medical sciences, politics and society, religious studies, construction, transport, economy and others. A special place is occupied by magazines devoted to literary studies. It is important to note that the e-collection contains not only publications that were regularly published, but also one-offs or irregular editions. The authors of the project are sure that it will be of interest to researchers in the field of history, pedagogy, economics and medicine, as well as employees of libraries, archives, museums and anyone interested in the history and culture of Belarus.

Back to the 14th century

New museum exhibition opens in Lida Castle

By Lyudmila Minkevich

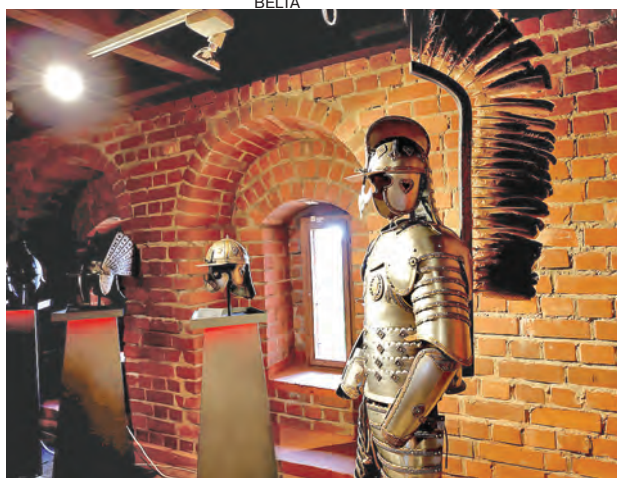
Lida Castle was built for Prince Gediminas in 1323 and, since then, this stone giant has experienced a great deal: it suffered from wars and even from the local residents who used ancient bricks and boulders to build their own houses. The castle was destroyed until 1959 but it was then declared an architectural monument of national significance.

The monument only came back to life in 2005 — thanks to the local authorities, cultural workers and ordinary people. A long reconstruction process began and, initially, the Gediminas Tower was restored. Three years ago, the Vytautas Tower opened for visitors, featuring an exhibition inside.

Recently, a new exposition was launched in the Gediminas Tower: *Pages of History Since the 14th Century* introduces the life of the castle at the time of its foundation. Thematic exhibitions are located on six floors of the tower. The first is devoted to the personality of Prince Gediminas, the second — to the creation and significance of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The exhibition on the third floor is dedicated to castles in the western lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, while the atmosphere of living rooms of the past is recreated on the fourth floor. Visitors can even play old checkers or chess



Lida Castle



Permanent exhibition at Lida Castle

games here. *The Planet Belarus* — by famous publisher, blogger and photographer Sergey Plytkevich — occupies the upper floors. Guests have a unique opportunity to compare what Lida looked like in the past and what the city has become now, especially with the magnificent views from the tower.

“The exposition is permanent but it will not be static. There are plans to replenish it with, for example, items that were found on the site and near the castle during archaeological research in different years. In this regard, we liaise with other museums, including foreign institutions,” said the Director of the Lida Historical and Art Museum, Olga Pilipchuk.

Saddle up!

How Sergei Antonenko from Gomel created Horse Island in the Dnieper floodplain



Sergei Antonenko:
‘The main thing in our horse is not agility and pure breed, but an agreeable character’

By Stanislav Galkovsky

The Horse Island agro-estate is 45 reserved hectares in the Dnieper River floodplain, in the village of Granovka, of the Gomel Region’s Rechitsa District.

The path whimsically winds along the swampy banks of the Dnieper River and lakes. You can’t even drive an SUV here, only in the saddle. Doctor Natalia Nazarova and her daughter are regular participants of their horseback riding sessions. Usually, in the summer they go on such trips with their relatives from Moscow. This time, they could not come because of the pandemic, so the company was made up of local horse-riding enthusiasts.

“Scientists call a horse a living simulator,” Natalia tells us. “Hippocrates even wrote about the benefits of horse riding. Hippotherapy is an effective method of treatment and rehabilitation, because almost all the muscle groups work. Moreover, exercise like this contributes to weight loss. So, we keep ourselves in good shape.”

The positive emotions are no less effective as medicine. Children, especially those from the cities, squeal with delight when they see the handsome wild-maned horses. These horses are a real rarity these

days in Belarus, and it’s not only this animal that’s included in the Red Book. Nowadays, there are 60-80,000 beavers in Belarusian forests and water reservoirs, who, until recently, were on the verge of extinction, while the number of horses slightly exceeds 40,000. According to the National Statistical Committee, over the past quarter century, their number has decreased by more than five times.

Having admired enough local scenery, we return to base. Previously, this huge area of 45 hectares was simply called an island, until the place was spotted by Gomel resident, Sergei Antonenko. He has been keen on horses since childhood and was fond of equestrian sports. He started his Horse Island with a plot of 20 acres, where the burned down house stood, and a selection of horses. The main thing here is not agility and fertility (after all, he did not want it for racing), but an agreeable character and love towards people. For his first herd, Sergei sourced 18 horses of different breeds. He says that he mostly bought them at the local stud farm.

“At first, I bought a thoroughbred and he became the main stud. Then there were Russian Trotters, Russian Heavy Drafts, various half-bred horses. Though what are



Scientists call a horse a living simulator and even Hippocrates wrote about the benefits of horse riding



Ivan Yartanovich

CASE ARITHMETIC

The average cost of a horse is about **\$1,000** (equivalent). Every day, a horse eats 30kg of hay, 3kg of oats and carrots and 1kg of bran. In a year, there is about the same amount as the price of a horse. Hoof trimming, compulsory veterinary examinations and the blacksmith costs more than **\$100**. Harness and saddle — plus **\$900**. Dressage on Horse Island is practiced independently, without involving outside specialists. There are also general costs for electricity and water, tax on land where there is a stable and grazing.

the half-breeds? The breed is determined by the mother. The mares are usually local while the male horses are often acquired of pure blood in order to improve their offspring. For horseback riding, the Belarusian Harness and the Polesskaya Harness horses are the best. People in Moscow and St. Petersburg are eager to buy them to ride people around. They are very hardy, with a calm and peaceful character. These are the descendants of ancient tarpans, who have improved over the past few centuries thanks to breeding with ‘foreigners’. We gradually started breeding our own ‘island’ breed and now have 14 horses, with 90 percent being local.”

At present, 11 tourist trails are operating at the Horse Island and their minimum duration is 1.5 hours. However, the island in Granovka has already ceased to be purely horse based. There are now two ponies, a pair of donkeys and even a camel called Gosh. The camel does not take passengers but creates atmosphere for the guests and enjoys chewing the grass. Gosh likes it more than desert thorns. The new islanders are part of the fun zoo.

Sergei believes that there are good opportunities in Belarus for the development of agro-tourism, but it’s impossible to do without support, “Our nature is magnificent and there are many creative people. But often those who open their own business in the tourist industry lack initial capital and legal literacy. We need various support funds, where a person can come with an interesting idea and receive help with paperwork and raising capital. This system is working in many countries, proving its efficiency. Belarusian agritourism has huge opportunities and it’s a sin not to realise them in full.”

Domestic tourism instead of external

Those who are happy to exchange a hotel room for privacy near a small forest lake or chat with friends around a campfire, while still keeping close to the benefits of civilisation would definitely appreciate camping. In Belarus, camping sites are organised countrywide, with services including tent hire and complex leisure activities.

By Svetlana Savelieva

The formation and development of a camping and auto tourism system in Belarus is a promising direction in the hospitality sector. The experience of foreign countries — such as the USA and the EU — shows that campsites are one of the most cost-effective and do not require significant investment in the development of tourist infrastructure.

At the moment, more than 60 campsites are available in the country (against 13 in 2014). Most of them are located in the Minsk, Vitebsk and Gomel regions. Their number is growing annually due to the involvement of roadside service facilities,

farmsteads and tourist complexes.

The owners of each campsite are well aware of the technical code of established practice, and the necessary standards of compliance with international standards. To date, only one venue in Belarus has passed the international certification: on Selyava Lake, in the Krupki District. Its Director, Vladimir Rudoi, admits that construction of such a campsite on a field meeting all standards is quite expensive: around \$100-130,000 (equivalent).

“We actually did not expect a quick return at the initial stage — investing in a promising direction and in a unique place: the reserve. We see how car-



vanning is gaining momentum in the neighbouring countries and we’ll definitely enjoy the same demand domestically,” he says.

The campsite can accommodate about 200 motorhomes and 500 tents at any time. Another two dozen people can relax in houses

with all amenities “These houses envisage additional services that camping does not provide. However, in the revenue structure, they are in second place after meetings, festivals and corporate events. They are always occupied in good weather. The more services are provided, the more money is generated,” Mr. Rudoi adds.

The movement of lovers of car journeys is gradually gaining momentum in Belarus and experts say, in the near future, people will get an even greater ‘ecologically-friendly’ attitude. Protection of the environment will be the priority when investing in tourism. Long-distance travel will be revived and we must be ready for this trend.

Pass from abroad

Not so long ago, some interesting news spread around the media: the first contract signed during the quarantine pause in German football was the agreement between Hallescher FC and 19-year-old midfielder Jan Rafael Shcherbakovski — a native of Belarus who was born in Mogilev and moved, aged 11 months, with his family to Germany. Many Belarusian football fans are already familiar with Jan, who is a graduate of the Hertha BSC Junior Academy in Berlin and who has already managed to play several matches for the U-19 national team of Belarus. We'll see who else among the young players playing in foreign championships has a connection with our country.

By Konstantin Nashchinets

We'll start our journey in the country of pasta and pizza — Italy. Here, in the south of Europe, two of our compatriots both perform the role of the legendary Gianluigi Buffon, being goalkeepers.



Aleksei Avgul

The eldest of them is Aleksei Avgul. The 20-year-old goalkeeper was born in Minsk and moved to Italy 4 years ago: the choice of the pupil of the Minsk FC school was solely related to football and his parents remained in Minsk, while the young man successfully completed selection for the Perugia Football Academy. The last club of the young Belarusian was Union Feltre in Serie D.

“Now the contract has ended and I'm a free agent,” Alexei tells us. “Today there are offers from Italy and talks about Poland. It is encouraging that clubs in Italy are just starting to build teams for the next season.”

The young player, who followed in the footsteps of his father — ex-defender of Minsk's Dinamo-93 and Belarusian national team Oleg Avgul — also has the ambition to be part of the national team of his native country.

The second representative of Belarus in Italy is 15-year-old Artur Bulavkin,



Artur Bulavkin

whom Belarusian fans have already heard about: last year, Artur came to us as part of the Milan youth team and became the winner of the Minsk Cup tournament. When the boy was five years old, his family decided to change Belarus to the historical homeland of his father, so Artur found himself in Italy. Today, the young goalkeeper has good prospects and is a mem-

ber of the Milan U-15 team. Sometimes, he joins the training process of older teams, where the legendary Brazilian Dida works with goalkeepers. Like Aleksei Avgul, the young Italian Belarusian dreams of a career in Italian clubs and playing for the national team of his homeland.

In another southern European country — Spain — is 19-year-old forward Daniil Voronin, who became known to the general public two years ago:

in January 2018, Daniil took part in the U-17 Football Development Cup in Minsk as part of the Belarus U-17 team. The player's mother, who was born in Ukrainian Lutsk, is a Belarusian, and his grandfather played as part of the Brest Dinamo squad. The forward himself is a pupil of the Villarreal Academy and, last season, he played in one of the Spanish minor leagues for Benidorm. Now, according to Daniil, he is a free agent and is busy looking for a new team.

A Belarusian representative was also found in the central part of Europe this year, with the Pokrok Krompachy team, representing the 3rd division of the Slovak championship. 18-year-old Belarusian goalkeeper Dmitry Sidorin, whose training took place in the youth teams of Belshina, Minsk's RGUOR (Republican State School of Olympic Reserve) and the Football Academy of the Belarusian Football Federation.

Moving westwards, we have 18-year-old Danil Ageenko, who plays in the Kingdom of Belgium, and, like Jan Shcherbakovski, was involved in the youth team of Belarus last year.

“I was born in Volkovysk, a city from the Grodno Region, but moved with my parents to Belgium as a child. Today I have dual citizenship. I started playing football at the age of 7,” Danil tells us.

It's difficult to judge the strength of Danil's championship qualities, but his statistics in the last season are impressive. “I played for the backup team of Berchem Sport [the club representing the



Daniil Voronin

II club — is, perhaps, the closest to the Bundesliga. Lucien's mother is from Belarus, and his grandparents still live in Svetlogorsk. Lucien does not speak either Belarusian or Russian, but he feels his Belarusian roots and has also visited Svetlogorsk several times. At the Borussia Academy, Lucien has been playing since he was 11, and every year he's getting closer and closer to the place led by his namesake — Lucien Favre, under whose leadership the young goalkeeper has already trained. The young player's contract has now come to an end and the parties have sat down at the negotiating table.

One of the representatives of Dynamo Dresden — Simon Gollnack — has a similar biography. The 18-year-old player, whose mother is from Belarus, is a very promising forward: last season, he scored 19 goals across 23 games as part of the U-19 squad, and was also included three times in the main team of Dynamo Dresden, but didn't manage to appear on the field. Everything points to the likelihood that, in autumn, Simon will become a fully-fledged player in the Dresden

adult team, who, unfortunately, lost the season in the 2nd Bundesliga, occupying last place and moving to the third league. Another representative of Belarus in Germany is the 20-year-old forward of the Erlangen club, playing in the Oberliga Bayern Nord, German Elperin. The name of the Greuther Fürth pupil, who was born in Belarus and who moved to Germany with his family in 2003, should be known to Belarusian football fans, since German had 5 matches and scored 2 goals in the junior (U-17) national team of Belarus, coached by the current BATE coach, Kirill Alshevsky, and also played 2 matches for the youth (U-19) team.

German speaks excellent Russian, “My favourite position is on the right flank of the attack, but if there is a need, I play both in defence and in the centre of midfield; this has been the case since the junior teams. Until now I wasn't the central defender and didn't stand at the net.”

Speaking about his personal statistics and the last season, German doesn't hide his disappointment, “It's not news to anyone that all German leagues, with the exception of the first three, which were resumed, are suspended after the first round and there will be no football in Germany until September. A few weeks ago, we were allowed to train with the whole team. What will happen next is not clear.

Much will depend on the second wave of the virus. In the first round I played, I gave away assists and scored, but all this doesn't matter now because after all, it was back in November last year.”

Uncertainty also affects career plans, but there is much more optimism here. “In any case, they want to finish the championship, and I will do this as part of Erlangen. Our team has ambitions, as has our sponsor, so time will tell which league we will play in next year,” he said.



German Elperin (on the left)

2nd Amateurs VFV B League — fourth ranked division of Belgium] and scored 15 goals and 8 assists,” he says.

Germany is in a similar area to Belgium and Lucien Hawryluk — a 19-year-old goalkeeper of Dortmund Borussia

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You are our pride!

Honouring champions and medallists of the 1980 Olympics held at NOC

Dmitry Komashko

On July 19th, 1980, Moscow hosted an event that determined the fate and development of sports in many countries — including in Belarus — for many years. The 1980 Olympics went through cities with a large-scale reconstruction programme and left behind several sports facilities. The latter are still viewed as the country's calling card. Over three dozen medals were won, including 14 gold.

It's hardly possible to believe that all these happened ten Olympic cycles ago. Nevertheless, the National Olympic Committee has recently recalled and honoured those who rose to the podium in 1980 and laid the foundation for our present victories.

The event was expected to be like a family gathering, but around fifteen prize-holders and champions were present. Everyone who was able to come attended.



There were warm words and a piece of a huge cake with a figurine of the Olympic Bear, which was the symbol of the 1980

Olympics, for everyone present. In response, the champions and prize-holders presented the National Olympic Committee Mu-

seum with items that remind us of the 40-year-old events.

According to the NOC First Vice-President, Viktor Lukashenko, it is difficult to overestimate the events of those years even now. “It's an honour to be with you. You are legends of not only our domestic but world sports. Having won 33 medals, you've made a significant contribution to the ‘treasury’ of the USSR national team, for which you competed. You still remain idols for our children. The 1980 Olympics were the first Games held in Eastern Europe and you were not merely champions and medallists but pioneers. Do know: you all are the pride of the Belarusian nation!” he said.



Photo
of the
week

Training for young footballers at Vitebsk Football Club's sports school

Anton Stepanisichnev

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



July 25th is the Fire Service Day in the Republic of Belarus. On July 25th, 1853, the Minsk Provincial Government and the Minsk City Council, having

examined the issue 'On the establishment of a fire department in Minsk', approved an estimate of the costs for maintaining a fire department with 51 people. From that moment, the story of the professional fire service of Belarus begins. In the same year, fire brigades were organised in Vitebsk, Mogilev and other Belarusian cities. Nowadays, 17 special services have been created and operate under the Emergencies Ministry of Belarus, including fire-fighting and emergency rescue, chemical and radiation safety, engineering, diving, medical, explosive, aviation, search and rescue, paratroops, pontoon bridge engineers and dog training.



On July 26th, 1970, Oleg Rummo was born (Slutsk, Minsk Region) — the Head of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Organ and Tissue Transplantation at the 9th City Clinical

Hospital, Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor and Honoured Doctor of the Republic of Belarus. He is the author of several inventions, boasting more than 200 publications in domestic and foreign print media. He was awarded the Order of Honour, as well as the 'Minsk Resident of the Year' honorary title.

July 26th is Trade Workers Day in the Republic of Belarus. Over 620,000 trade workers celebrate their professional holiday on the last Sunday of July. Trade has been and remains one of the most important sectors of the economy and is developing dynamically and rapidly today more than ever. Every year, new trade enterprises appear in Belarus:



from convenience stores to cutting-edge shopping centres and hypermarkets.

On July 29th, 1965, the Planetarium was opened in Minsk. The building was built according to the standard design of architect Natalia Afanasieva. In 2009, the Minsk Planetarium joined the Eurasian Planetarium Association. In 2013, a new digital full-dome projection system was



introduced in the star hall. Spherical films, along with scientific and educational lectures, become its hallmark. In 2014, the Observatory — closed to the public since the 1990s — was restored.

July 29th is International Tiger Day, established in 2010 at the International Forum on Tiger Conservation. During the event, a programme was adopted for the restoration of the tiger population for 2010-2022, aimed at doubling the number of tigers over the designated period. Unfortunately, only 5,000 of the creatures have survived in the wild, and this number continues to decline steadily. Nowadays, tigers are threatened with extinction.



July 30th is World Friendship Day, announced by the UN General Assembly on the basis that friendship between

peoples, countries, cultures and individuals can inspire efforts to ensure peace and makes it possible to build bridges between societies that honour cultural diversity.



July 30th is World Day against People Trafficking. It was announced at a meeting of the Committee of the UN General Assembly, which also adopted a draft resolution on enhancing co-ordination in the fight against people trafficking. The resolution was supported by representatives of Russia, the USA, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The main goal of the resolution is to protect the rights of victims of trafficking. Trafficking in persons, in particular children and women, is strongly condemned by members of the Committee. This is a monstrous criminal act that poses a threat to human life, health and dignity.

