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INTERNATIONAL

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## On May 9th, Belarus celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory

This celebration unites many nations and families since, during the war years, millions of people of different nationalities fought side by side against fascism. The Great Patriotic War which lasted 1,418 days and nights stole the lives of every third citizen of our country. Hundreds of cities and thousands of villages were looted and destroyed in our land during the war. However, even covered in the blood of millions of people, looted and depleted, the country did not give up. Many decades later, the memory of the feats of those who made the greatest contribution to the Victory over fascism is sacred.



**From the first days of his presidency, Aleksandr Lukashenko set a bold task: not simply to save the Chernobyl regions but to make the sunny Polesie area attractive and safe to live in. 25 years ago, this goal seemed unattainable for sceptics but, at present, not only the revival of these places but their sustainable development are being discussed.**

**Aleksandr Lukashenko clearly outlined this vector during his working trip to the Narovlya District, "People — including me — now understand that we can and should live here. The time has come to actively develop this land!"**

The sowing campaign in the Gomel Region is about to finish. Against the background of threats about the global food crisis, Belarus is increasing its volumes of agricultural production: from January-March, the rise was almost 6 percent. The Agriculture and Food Minister, Ivan Krupko, reported to the Head of State that, in the first two months of 2020 alone, about \$1bn was generated from exports. By the end of the year, the figure is likely to reach \$5.4bn. The key is to have no incidents with weather as no other external circumstances should be in place.

In his talk with the Chairman of the Gomel Regional Executive Committee, Gennady Solovei, the President asked about the growth of the gross regional product. Mr. Lukashenko stressed, "Don't even think that we should reduce production because of any psychoses, pandemics or epidemics. No way. That's not an option."

This instruction can be considered a guide to action for the heads of all regions. As for the areas affected by the Chernobyl accident, it is time to look for new growth points and actively develop their production potential, including the territories that are part of the Polesie Radiation Reserve.

"We do not yet know in detail what level we are at, on account of which we can expand. Therefore, it is necessary to re-evaluate such areas as Bragin, Narovlya and Khoyniki," Aleksandr Lukashenko said. According to him, it is necessary to create production multi-industry holdings in these areas in different directions in order not just to restore these areas, but to develop them. The President instructed a study to determine which areas of production should be created. A vivid example of

# Sustainable development

**New growth points in the Chernobyl territories, promising jobs, housing and infrastructure: on the 34th anniversary of the Chernobyl tragedy, the President made a working trip to Narovlya District**



Narovlya District

such a complex management is the Zarya farm. This powerful multi-industry enterprise has its own sites for the production of compound feeds, processing of livestock and poultry and milk. The final link in the economic chain is branded trade. By many indicators, the company exceeds the average regional level.

The Head of State also instructed the Ministry of Emergency Situations to report on what is happening in the 30km exclusion zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. In his opinion, it is time to also develop these areas. However, the situation there needs to be studied further. During his visit to the Zarya farm, the President got to know the local technological process of sowing corn for grain. He also visited the dairy farm to appreciate its snow-white walls and ceilings, well-groomed thoroughbred cattle and robotic milking equipment, all providing excellent results.

In 34 years since the Chernobyl disaster, the Narovlya District has changed a lot. It now boasts clean, well-maintained villages and green fields. Thanks to state support, industry, agriculture and social infrastructure are improving, while new accommodation is being built. The Head of State learnt about the construction of turnkey residential buildings in the Zavoi agro-town.

Aleksandr Lukashenko laid a wreath at the monument to the displaced villages of the Narovlya Village Council here, in

Zavoi. The President is convinced of the good prospects for the local settlements. Local residents supported him, while the Head of State stressed, "I have only one impression: we are being reborn."

Aleksandr Lukashenko added that, in summer, he plans to visit the affected territories outside the 30km zone around the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. "We can already see that we can breed animals in this protected area (we are not talking about the 30km zone yet). You produce a lot of logging here. The forest is ripe, and it needs to be used. Thank God we can process timber to make clean products. You produce a lot of honey here as well. It is an absolutely clean product," he said.

The President also spoke about his proposal to set up multi-profile production associations in the Bragin, Narovlya and Khoyniki districts. These can be holding companies specialising, for example, in agriculture, sawmilling and logging.

"People will be employed, they will have jobs. This is promising. We will think about it. We will make the relevant decision before the end of the year, despite what is happening today to the world economy. It is very difficult



Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



The Head of State was helped by those who work close to him every day: the Administration staff, protocol employees and journalists. Meanwhile, another assistant was registered that day: Aleksandr Lukashenko came with a white Pomeranian dog. The well-organised team planted 8,000 pine seedlings on an area of 1.5 hectares. As the chief forest officer, Sergey Shilets, later admitted, a monthly work plan with such a team can be completed in a week.

The journalists of the Presidential pool who worked with Aleksandr Lukashenko could not miss an opportunity to ask

him a few questions. Speaking about the subbotnik, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted it's a tradition which will not be neglected. The Head of State reminded that a new sovereign and independent Belarus will be built based on the heritage of our ancestors, without throwing away anything good from the Soviet period.

"Neither sovereignty nor independence is possible without a small homeland, especially villages," the Head of State stressed. He concluded that declaring a trilogy of the small homeland was indeed an effective measure. At the same time, Aleksandr Lukashenko honestly admitted

## With concern for the future

**This year, the President's working trip to the south of Belarus coincided with the national Saturday working day (subbotnik). Aleksandr Lukashenko spent it at the Prip'yatsky National Park. He commented, "Saturday working days are a good tradition, I believe, which we took from those [Soviet] years. The ideology is simple: we remember the past, honour our history, take the best and update it against the background of today's events!"**

that not everything possible has been done, "If more were announced, more would have been done. Most importantly, we've turned people back to their small homeland — especially to villages, to the houses left by their parents and grandparents."

Aleksandr Lukashenko also spoke about the reason why his Address to Parliament and the Nation was postponed. The event — scheduled for mid-April — will take place later, as there are many questions that lack clear answers in the context of the pandemic and rapid changes in the global situation.

"There are many issues that are difficult to answer today, or there is no answer at all. Most importantly, economic uncertainty around the world is being

seen. We need some time to analyse all the processes that are taking place in the country and abroad, and then we will be able to give answers to the people," the President noted.

At the same time, he stressed that answers to some fundamental questions are already available, i.e. with regard to the upcoming Presidential elections in Belarus. "We can assert that we will conduct them under the Constitution, as I promised. The issue of the Constitution is also acute as it's not gone away. Here we can clearly state that we are most likely to have a new Constitution within the coming five years," he said.

Aleksandr Lukashenko explained that the Address had been postponed for some time. In addition,

due to the fact that, this year, the country will hold Presidential elections, it may be expanded. "We can combine the Address (expand it and make more strategic) with the programme of the current President. It's one of the ideas," he explained.

According to the Head of State, the Address usually includes only focus areas for the current year and some ideas for the future. However, if it is combined with the Presidential election programme, it will be possible to 'look over the horizon' to the entire upcoming five-year plan. "I think other candidates will do the same," Aleksandr Lukashenko concluded.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

## Issues of provision and use of free foreign aid discussed at a session with the President in attendance

By Dmitry Kryat, Yevgeny Kononovich

The Head of State noted that the session focused on issues regarding the provision of foreign aid to Belarus, and the possible revision of registration regulations. The Property Management Directorate of the Belarus President Administration have prepared corresponding provisions. In order to reduce the burden on the budget, Aleksandr Lukashenko instructed the Government and the Property Management Directorate in 2018 to approve a set of measures concerning the provision of aid.

These measures have already yielded fruit. There is an increase in such financial receipts from abroad and it's primarily important to ensure their transparency and target use. "Over the recent three years alone, their total volume made up about \$240m. We see that our foreign partners, various funds and associations financing so-called humanitarian projects, have become more active. You are aware of my position. Money should not be wasted on destructive activities inside the country. The use of gratuitous aid should be under strict control," the President stressed.

### Honesty and transparency are major criteria

"If it is humanitarian aid for, for example, health-care, sports, people's health, Chernobyl projects, then those from the Chernobyl-affected territories, athletes and people in need of medical care should get every penny of it," Aleksandr Lukashenko remarked.

The President stressed that Belarus is open for funding aimed at social objectives, such as mitigation of the consequences of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, provision of medical care, support to low-income citizens, disabled people, pensioners and children. "We are ready to provide various tax benefits and preferences. The funds should reach the recipients, not disappear on the way to them," Aleksandr Lukashenko said.

The President emphasised that one-third of the aid has no direct social orientation at present. For example, part of the funds is spent to strengthen the material and technical base of certain organisations and pay for their general economic expenses. "We stopped such activities several years ago, and I think that we should not change anything here," he noted.

As regards improvement of the regulation for the receipt of foreign gratuitous aid, a new draft decree of the President has been prepared. Some of its provisions significantly change the existing mechanisms for the registration of aid. Therefore, the proposals made require comprehensive assessment and discussion.

Aleksandr Lukashenko believes that the proposed changes would not entail any negative consequences. "I

# For good causes



know that many of you are worried that if we introduce a payment for registration, or impose tough controls, the flow of humanitarian aid may decrease. We do not need that kind of help. Everything must be done in an honest, principled and decent way. You know that it's mainly western countries that provide this humanitarian aid. They are against corruption everywhere, at all levels. Everything must be honest, decent and the aid must reach the recipient. That is what we must do. We need to completely de-bureaucratise this process," the President said.

### FACT

The largest share in the total amount of aid received is taken by public organisations, whose share has increased from 33 to 55 percent over the past three years (from \$28.5m in 2017 to \$45.89m in 2019). Positive dynamics are also seen when receiving foreign aid by religious organisations — from \$4.5m in 2017 to \$6.42m in 2019. At the same time, the amount of assistance received by public administration bodies and state institutions, sports federations and organisations is decreasing.

### All interests taken into consideration

The Director of the Department for Humanitarian Activities of the Belarus' President Property Management Directorate — Igor Kudrevich — informed the session that, from 2017-2019, Belarus received \$238m in foreign aid. \$20m came in 2020. This money is not extra but all steps must be well-considered, thought through and arouse no doubts.

The draft decree on foreign aid comprises all the Presidents' instructions to change the procedure for aid registration and its exemption from taxes, fees, and duties.

After the session, Mr. Kudrevich told reporters

about innovations. According to him, it's been proposed to expand the concept of foreign assistance. "Earlier, this assistance accounted for money and goods received from foreign organisations but it's now been proposed to fix at the level of a regulatory act that this will include services, works or goods purchased with the money from foreign aid," he said.

Accordingly, approaches to taxation of this aid are changing, taking into account the interests of individuals and their ability to apply for tax exemption. Secondary recipients of assistance may be exempt from taxes.

Moreover, it was decided that the fee for registration of foreign aid will be charged only from the part which does not aim at social needs.

Another section of the draft decree concerns changing the control over the receipt and use of foreign aid. "The rights of local executive and administrative authorities will be expanded. They will decide upon the feasibility of implementing projects and exemption from taxation and, accordingly, participate in monitoring the target use of the funds," the official added.

It is also important that the procedure for registering aid for its recipients will be simplified as much as possible, including by working in line with the 'one-stop-shop' principle.

The President generally supported all the approaches outlined in the draft decree and instructed to finalise it in the coming days (taking into account the recent discussion) and submit it for signing.

### FIGURE

Over 60 percent of the aid received comes from the United States, Switzerland, Germany, Russia, China, Austria, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden and Poland.



## Important negotiations



### Aleksandr Lukashenko held telephone talks with the President of Kazakhstan — Kassym-Jomart Tokayev — and Moldova's President Igor Dodon

A telephone conversation between the presidents of Belarus and Kazakhstan took place last week on Kazakhstan's initiative. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev extended greetings to Aleksandr Lukashenko on the 75th anniversary of Great Victory and on behalf of the people of Kazakhstan conveyed congratulations to Belarusians, stressing that one and a half million people in Kazakhstan were participants in that war and half of them did not return home. Aleksandr Lukashenko congratulated his Kazakhstan's counterpart on this great date and conveyed his warmest wishes to all the people of Kazakhstan.

Another important topic for discussion was the preparations for the forthcoming session of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council. The heads of state discussed approaches and issues relat-

ed to its organisation, in particular, the time and format of the session as well as documents to be adopted at the level of heads of state. Consultations on these issues will continue. The format and date will be determined in the near future.

The steps taken to stem the spread of the coronavirus infection were also discussed. According to Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Kazakhstan is easing quarantine measures and gradually lifting restrictions imposed earlier due to the spread of the virus. The presidents exchanged detailed information on the strategy and tactics for treatment of COVID-19 in the two countries. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev thanked the Belarusian Head of State for help in bringing back the residents of Kazakhstan to their homeland, and Aleksandr Lukashenko expressed his gratitude for similar assistance.

Meanwhile, during a video-conference call with Moldova's President Igor Dodon, three main topics were discussed: the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Victory, the situation amid the coronavirus pandemic and the prepara-

tions for the upcoming meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council.

"I'm glad to see you in good health. I would like to greet you and congratulate you on our upcoming holiday — the 75th anniversary of Victory," Aleksandr Lukashenko said. "Please convey the warmest wishes from the Belarusians to the Moldovan people. We were together in that war. It was thanks to you in many ways that we haven't wasted this great legacy. In recent years, we have brought our countries closer together. We have no problems in the economy or politics. We appreciate it very much."

According to the Belarusian President, on May 8th-9th, Minsk will host festive events, including a ceremony to lay capsules with soil brought from different states, hero cities in the crypt of All Saints Church in Minsk. A military parade is also planned.

"The Victory parade is the most important event of those scheduled," Aleksandr Lukashenko said. "We have examined a lot of options and, after studying all the information, I came to the

conclusion that we cannot cancel any of these activities. But, of course, given the situation, we are applying very stringent standards in the organisation. We will not drag anyone there."

Speaking about the pandemic and the fight against it in Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko appreciated the strong epidemiological service and a good work of doctors. "Against our openness and the fact that we have not closed any business, shops, restaurants or cinemas, we still have a more or less normal situation," he said.

As for the organisation of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council summit on May 19th in Minsk, the President said that he is ready to hold it in any format but believes a face-to-face meeting is possible. "I'm ready to welcome all of you on May 19th. I promise complete security. I'm convinced that you will be happy to visit Minsk and leave it in a good mood," the Head of State said.

Based on materials of belta.by

# Transforming into an efficient business

## Proposals made to develop the leather industry



Tatiana Lugina



By Olga Korneeva

The situation in the leather industry has somewhat improved but efficiency remains low, said Belarusian Prime Minister Sergei Rumas at a session of the Presidium of the Council of Ministers to discuss the situation in the leather industry. He stated that the difficult situation in the industry was aggravated by

the coronavirus pandemic. “Many foreign consumers of leather products have suspended operations. Some domestic customers have cut working hours. At the same time, these challenges open up new opportunities for the leather industry,” believes the Prime Minister.

Bellegprom has recently proposed to establish a leather holding in the country. “We will propose that the

Government sets up a new structure: a Belarusian leather holding company. Today we have three established players: the tanneries in Minsk, Bobruisk and Grodno. Last year, we welcomed a new player — a tannery in Mogilev. It has proved itself a fairly stable manufacturer and market player. We will offer them the opportunity to join the holding company, but it is a private business. They will make their own decision,” said Tatiana Lugina, the Chairperson of the Bellegprom Concern.

The Mogilev-based manufacturer of gelatine — Mozhelit — will also be offered to join the holding company, if this project gets the go-ahead.

According to Ms. Lugina, the project to set up the holding company is based on the experience of other countries: Italy, Poland, Uzbekistan and Russia. “We understand that today this industry could really have a serious impact. Having analysed thoroughly all the pros and cons, the current approaches and those we would like to apply, we

have made this offer,” she noted.

Ms. Lugina added that, in the first quarter of 2020, the situation in the leather industry improved a little. The stocks of hides at warehouses of meat packing plants reduced by almost 20 percent.

A lot of work is ahead to increase the demand for domestic raw materials. The country’s two largest footwear manufacturers, Belwest and Marco, are still importing a large volume of leather. “Small business, our haberdashers and shoemakers report a 60-70 percent share of domestic leather materials. Meanwhile, these two holding companies have a large import component. Our new approaches stem from this analysis. In order to motivate the footwear manufacturers to use leather made by our tanneries, its price and quality should meet their expectations and requirements,” Ms. Lugina noted, adding, “We need to turn the leather industry into an efficient business. All over the world, this industry is quite profitable.”

# Linen for keeping healthy

## Japan makes face masks from Orsha linen



By Svetlana Yevgenieva

The Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Belarus to Japan, Ruslan Yesin, has announced that a store selling goods made from Belarusian linen recently opened in Tokyo. “The Japanese partners of Orsha Linen Mill have engaged in the most important task — protecting people’s health. Belarusian linen fabric is used to make face masks that are in demand in Tokyo and other cities,” he said.

The Representative Director of Japanese NBR that imports Belarusian linen and products of Orsha Linen Mill — Shogo Furusawa — said that the company launched production of face masks from Belarusian linen in Ishikawa Prefecture in

December 2019. “Masks made from Orsha Linen Mill’s material are pleasant to the touch and suitable for everyday use. Thanks to the natural antibacterial properties of linen, they are healthier than other masks. They are also easily washed, which is important for multi-use,” he noted.

“Now, in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, we have witnessed a shortage of the face masks the Japanese are used to, so the demand for linen masks is growing. Moreover, a lot of people are now staying at home, teleworking, and sewing masks themselves. Belarusian linen fibre is perfect for this. Its natural properties make it an excellent material for wearing in close contact with sensitive skin,” Shogo Furusawa added, noting that the company receives a lot of comments from Japanese clients saying that linen is a perfect fabric for clothing and other goods. “I’m convinced this is the merit of Belarusian producers,” he added.

Japanese consumers take an interest not only in linen face masks. Tablecloths and clothes are also popular.



# Innovations in oil production

## Last year, Belorusneft registered over 90 innovations which primarily tackle automation, digitalisation and the development of hard-to-recover reserves

By Igor Svetlov

147 authors submitted their proposals, with the economic effect of introducing the most interesting innovations exceeding \$250,000. Among the leaders in rationalisation are the Rechitsaneft oil and gas production department, the department for improving oil recovery and well repair, as well as the Svetlogorsk drilling department.

One of the initiatives is a block installation for metering multiphase liquids. It was launched at Rechitsaneft, and the upgrade of the telemetry field system has also been completed here. An innovation in oil drilling was the use of two mobile rigs ARS-250, manufactured by Seismotekhnika JSC. The main processes are fully automated and computerised, enabling them to set production records.

When working with hard-to-recover hydrocarbon reserves, the most promising hydraulic fracturing technology — Plug & Perf — is used today.

In 2020, Belorusneft began to create an organisational and information infrastructure for the intellectualisation of oil production. Several options for digitalising this process based on international experience have been worked on. Svyazinformservice management specialists developed an enterprise informatisation strategy, digitalised business processes, commissioned a modular data centre and began introducing remote access technologies to the company’s information resources. All this helps increase the reliability of storage, processing speed and the provision of information.

Innovative work continues.

# Atoms of strict accountability

Our programmers have developed an automated system for accounting for nuclear materials. The product is already being delivered to the Belarusian nuclear power station under construction and will soon be used to prepare the first reports for the IAEA. A simulator for training specialists in the field of accounting and control of nuclear materials is also expected to be created based on it. *The MT* has attempted to investigate the subtleties of the technological complex's development.

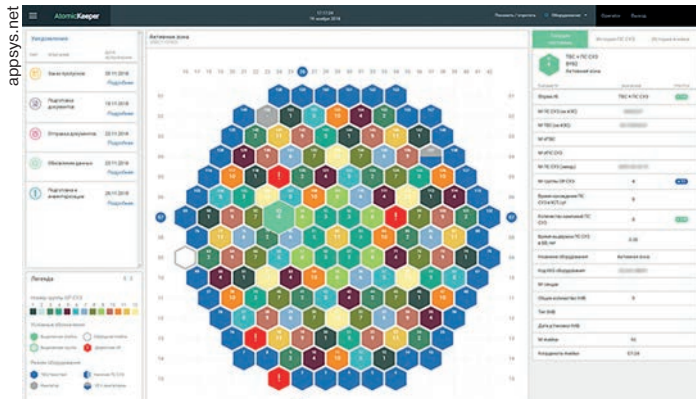


By Ilya Krasovsky

## Higher software development

Nuclear power is a responsible matter. After the commissioning of the nuclear power plant, our country will be required to regularly submit reports to the IAEA on qualitative and quantitative changes in fuel for the nuclear reactor. Even small amounts of plutonium and uranium that are stored in laboratories of institutes and enterprises have to be reported upon. It is very difficult to collect such voluminous data across the country without accounting errors and without a special automated system. Each stage of handling nuclear materials is accompanied by accounting documents, on the basis of which reports are compiled. These involve thousands or even tens of thousands of sheets of paper in physical terms.

It took five years to develop an automated accounting system for nuclear materials for nuclear power plants; it



It took five years to develop an automated accounting system for nuclear materials to be used at nuclear power plants

was our Belarusian company that did it. It's good not only in terms of prestige or data security but also to simplify software support. And the country spent less money overall, because such software solutions are expensive and complex. If we buy them from outside, it would probably be necessary to ask for the programme to be modified in order to meet national requirements.

Speaking of data security, it should be noted that the developers deliberately cut themselves off from classified information. When software

needs updating, programmers are not invited to Ostrovets: they are sent packets of unclassified data. The self-diagnostics module introduced into the system will help the specialists at the station complete the update.

One of the authors of the system is Yevgeny Khadzhinov. He heads the Department of Integrated Automation at Applied Systems JSC and works as an associate professor of the Department of Nuclear and Radiation Safety of the A. Sakharov International State Environmental Institute. "Our compa-

ny is two decades old and it's mainly engaged in the digitalisation of production," he says. "The automated accounting system is probably one of the most difficult projects for us — primarily, because of a great number of links between the elements of the system which was designed with the alumni of my department. Then the links were transferred to a language that programmers could understand. The choice was made in favour of web development tools: HTML5, ASP.NET. These tools were chosen to ensure that the technologies remain valid for as long as possible. The project is written with an expected life of 10-20 years. This period of time requires funds to 'repair' and update the system. These will be available. There are many projects written using such tools in the world and their number is growing."

## Impressive details

Yevgeny Khadzhinov demonstrates the interface of the new programme. The

system displays the repository of the spent fuel pool, the conventional active zone of the reactor. After clicking 'the fuel assembly', we can see its properties: enrichment and burnout level. Actually, the automated system for accounting for nuclear materials is '1C: Accounting' — though for nuclear scientists it has an exorbitant level of complexity of data detailing. The automated system can be used at any nuclear power plants with water-water power nuclear reactors (VVER) of Russian production. It's possible to change the programme for other types of reactors.

The developers of the system want to make a virtual simulator based on it — to teach students the rules of accounting for nuclear materials, as well as the specifics of working with the circulation of nuclear fuel. The specific part for the station will be removed from the system, while training scenarios will be added. The Education Ministry is now considering this proposal.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Robot measuring temperature at Minsk National Airport



A resident of the Chinese-Belarusian Great Stone Industrial Park — International Technology Company Intelligent Equipment JSC — has donated the IIM Ego robot to the Healthcare Ministry of Belarus for remote temperature measurement. It is now being used at Minsk National Airport to measure the temperature of arriving passengers. In addition, an LCD monitor for broadcasting information processed by the robot was donated by the Industrial Park Development Company JSC.

The IIM Ego robot was used in China during the spread of the coronavirus epidemic. The device was transferred along with a guarantee of installation and further maintenance services.

### Minsk-Arena joins top three KHL arenas according to TV workers

Match TV included Minsk-Arena in the top three arenas of the Kontinental Hockey League. The compilers of the rating took into account the total capacity of the arena, the date of its opening, the percentage of occupancy, use of the arena



(which matches take place there), as well as the social significance for the city and the country. "The IIHF World Championship in 2014 was successfully held at the stadium and it plans to host the world forum in 2021; this arena will also host the finals again. It's the largest KHL arena. It's an incredibly beautiful construction and the infrastructure is at a high level," note authors of the rating. Minsk-Arena lags behind the Ice Palace in St. Petersburg and the CSKA-Arena in Moscow.

### Belarus' National Centre for Contemporary Arts heads the top 5 museums and contemporary art centres in the CIS

The National Centre for Contemporary Arts led the top 5 best museums and centres of contemporary arts of the CIS states — popular for visits, online tours and virtual tours. This was reported by BelTA with reference to data from the TourStat portal.

The ranking also features the Heydar Aliyev Centre in Baku, the Contemporary Art Centre Kulanshi and the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation (the Pyramid) in



Nur-Sultan, the Museum of Modern Art of Yerevan and the Centre for Contemporary Art in Tashkent. The rating is based on a study of the popularity of museums and offers of virtual tours, as well as excursions to museum exhibitions.

### Minsk Tractor Works delivers over 250 tractors to Pakistan since the beginning of the year

Traditionally, MTZ exports to Pakistan BELARUS-510 and BELARUS-512 tractor models with a capacity of 57HP. Belarusian machinery has been supplied to this country since 1955, with more than 120,000 vehicles being already shipped. "Pakistan is a long-standing and strategically important export region for MTZ," notes the enterprise's press service. "Even despite the crisis in many Asian countries and restrictive measures introduced in connection with the difficult epidemiological situation, deliveries are maintained at the planned level. The next batch of MTZ equipment is currently being shipped to Pakistan."



# Crew of a combat vehicle

## Shklov residents restoring equipment from the war years

For more than twenty years, mechanic-restorer Vladimir Yakushev from the Shklov District has devoted himself to the search and restoration of military equipment. He began with his fellow countryman Aleksandr Mikalutsky, and then his sons Aleksei and Maksim joined. They have recently completed work on a replica of the German BTR-222, which could soon be seen as part of the reconstructions of past battles at the Stalin Line Memorial. A Soviet armoured fighting vehicle is next in line.



Aleksey Stolyarov

**Tanks, self-propelled guns, an armoured train... The experts restore military equipment to show youth how difficult it was during the war.**

Vladimir's grandfather — Stefan Yakushev — didn't return from the front either. In March 1945, he went missing. Before the war he lived in the Orsha District's Kopyts and chaired the collective farm in the Shklov District across the River Dnieper. Grateful letters from the command have been preserved... Apart from this, the family knows nothing about the fate of the front-line soldier, but they try to find information where possible.

### To remember

Military equipment assembled by the Yakushev brigade can also be seen in the Gomel Regional Museum of Military Glory. The heavy Soviet tank IS-3 stands on a pedestal at the entrance to Shklov while two guns are installed in the Russian Yelabuga. Moreover, the Great Patriotic War History Museum also boasts a T-34 and a T-III. The latter, by the way, was found almost intact: on June 22nd, 2001, at 4am, not far from Sychevka (Smolensk Region). It had covered only 400km, it was not even scratched...

"We have found several sets of binoculars (German and Soviet), as well as books inside tanks. We've also discovered a parcel, which, apparently, the relatives of one of the soldiers sent from Germany; curiously, it contained combs produced by the Leningrad Plastic Products Factory, alongside Sputnik and Gillette blades..."

For the Wargaming company they have created a copy of the first Soviet tank MS-1. Vladimir drove into the office on it but none of the Yakushevs play the 'tanks' game themselves. It's enough for them to create them in reality.

"Is your team able to create any tank?"

"Yes, if there are drawings. But if there are no drawings, we can do it using a photograph," explains the eldest of the sons. "That's exactly how we did the MS-1 vehicle. Specially for this we went to the museum in Moscow where this tank is on show to measure its body with a tape measure and calliper gauge."

"We're also helped by books and the Internet, where we find the exact description. Once we simply took measurements using details from the assembly model, which are produced on a scale of 1 to 35," adds the younger son.

The hardest part of the work is when the vehicle, in fact, is already complete, but it is necessary to disassemble it, paint all the parts and put it back together again. And what part of the work is the most pleasing? Aleksei answers without hesitation, "To raise the sunken military equipment and... to participate in the reconstruction of battles. We are often involved because there are not enough mechanics."

"When 'The Siege of Berlin' is shown on the Stalin Line, I appear there in the very finals on SU-76 or KV-1 and I always win," says Vladimir. "It's because I drive a self-propelled gun and have my granddaughter on my knees while Aleksei and his son drive a German Pz-38. My grandson then says: 'Wow, grandfather, you blew us up again!'"

The family are restoring military equipment to show youth how difficult it was during the war. It's hard to imagine simply from stories and realise that this should never be repeated.

By Nadezhda Dekola

### What a hard job!

The restorers are working in a historical and cultural complex near the hangar, which houses an exhibition of tanks from World War II. Almost all went through the hands of the Shklov residents. The workshop seems to like an ordinary garage but above the pit there's a German armoured fighting vehicle which looks brand new.

"And this is a replica," says Vladimir, the main restorer of the complex. "It has an engine and axles from a Toyota and we did the rest ourselves; we just needed metal, a grinder and welding."

The car is already on the move and Mr. Yakushev drives to the 'battlefield', where there is another example: not only tanks and self-propelled guns — but a whole armoured train. The team is working on a rotational basis. They spend a week at the Stalin Line and then a week at home. It takes four craftsmen 5-6 months to create a tank. Today, probably already half the military vehicles in the historical and cultural complex are copies.

"It's quite easy to restore them... It's necessary to disassemble, to clean, to complete what is missing and then to re-assemble — that's all. However, in order to do it from scratch, it's necessary to clearly understand where everything in the car should be both inside and out... However, it's becoming more and more difficult nowadays to find original combat vehicles," explains Vladimir.

He became a restorer thanks to his search work. For sixteen years he worked on a collective farm as a mechanical engineer until he got the idea to create the Shklov military-patriotic club Poisk (Search). The first serious project was the raising of a Soviet tank, bogged down in a swamp near the village of Shibeki, in the Orsha District in 1998. While Vladimir was contemplating how to pull out the BT-7 and then restore it, he took a great liking for the work.

It took enthusiasts almost a year to get the armoured fighting vehicle on the move. Since then, the tank has repeatedly participated in reconstructions, as well as in military parades in Minsk. Vladimir himself stood in the tower and saluted. He used to serve in the motorised rifle troops and is a reserve officer.

Vladimir Yakushev admits that the work in the Poisk immediately inspired him. However, it was not always possi-



ble to restore an entire machine. Sometimes only the mangled lower part or a corroded tower remained. For example, the T-34 tank on a pedestal at the entrance to the Stalin Line was assembled from the remains of five military vehicles.

**There were real lucky breaks, for example, the saving of the Soviet heavy tank KV-1, which sank during the crossing of the Neva River, and is now one of the exhibits of the Nevsky Pyatachok Museum.**

### A family contract

When the BT-7 was taken out of the swamp, Vladimir Yakushev's sons were ten and eleven years old. There is even a photo at home showing them standing next to the rare vehicle, about to be sent to the workshop. Of course, they were proud to boast about it at school. Later they went into the army: one to the gunners while the other joined missile defence, the command there had already heard about Vladimir Yakushev. After serving, the youngest Maksim, specialising in gas and electric welding, immediately agreed on a 'family contract'. Three years later, Aleksei also joined them. Vladimir is pleased because it's always good when children share their father's hobby. Furthermore, he says, four people is the optimum team.

"We are all interchangeable. We all weld, saw, cut... But I especially like working with engines. I always want to get to a vehicle as soon as possible, and, of course, to be the first one to test it," the man notes.

The working day is not normal: starting from 8am until they get tired. If it is necessary to stay longer, then they stay. They're on the same wavelength.



They are greatly appreciated because people know they won't let them down.

**In total, over twenty years, they have restored or made from scratch three dozen vehicles, with 12 being on the move at the Stalin Line.**

Vladimir conducts a tour along the tanks. Here is the famous T-34; the tower was found in the Gomel Region while the body and engine from the tank from Belarusfilm were present at the Stalin Line. Part of the body and tower of the KV-1 tank were found in the Senno District. The StuG III vehicle was restored from what was lifted from the bottom of the Vikhra River in Mstislavl. The medium German T-III tank is a copy based on the BMP-1.

...Most of them are even refuelled: they are sent 'to battle' straight from here: to take part in a reconstruction or film shoot. The Yakushevs mechanics have already participated in more than one film.

"What kind of tank would you like to make?" I ask.

"I'd like to restore a 'Tiger' or 'Panther'. We'll definitely try to do this, but it will require more time," Vladimir tells us while noting that the Defence Ministry transfers a lot of old equipment to the Stalin Line. Although they may be from the post-war period, the main units are often suitable. They work meticulously so that everything is as it should be. "Did you know that the Soviet tanks used to be called 'hunters' in the war? Because they beat German 'Tigers' and 'Panthers'. I would like to show what our grandfathers and great-grandfathers fought with."

# New air fleet

Increasingly, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) are winning over manned aviation, solving the tasks of border and national park protection, monitoring objects, oil and gas pipelines, terrain and water areas, providing operational information for making timely management decisions. To an even greater extent, their powers extend to military missions where, in complex operations, there's no need to risk the lives of pilots but entrust the most difficult tasks to unmanned aerial vehicles.

By Alla Martinkevich

The smaller class of UAS can be launched by hand and land using a parachute, and does not require the infrastructure of airfields. Drones are cheaper to maintain and operate. All these are obvious advantages. In addition, using the aerial radiation reconnaissance equipment on an UAS, it's possible to monitor vast territories for radiation level measurement, without endangering the health of the flight crew, since the UAS operator can be at a distance of up to 300km from the place of flight.



Yuri Yatsyna

At the same time, the UAS is a science-intensive high-tech industry that requires significant financial investments in research, mathematical algorithms, software, design and production. The opinions of a number of experts are as follows: the volume of the global market for gas, integrated solutions and services will exceed \$200bn by 2035. Belarus occupies a significant place in this dynamic market. Back in 2016, the Research and Production Centre for Multifunctional Unmanned Systems was established — becoming the key company in the field of unmanned aircraft engineering of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

“Our country boasts significant potential in mechanical engineering, but aviation is quite different. Over the years, long before the Centre was officially established, we have been gaining the necessary experience in designing, manufacturing and operating various types of unmanned aerial vehicles. To date, we've achieved much success in winning a part of the global UAS market,” the Centre's Director and a candidate of technical sciences, associate professor Yuri Yatsyna, says. “For more than 7 years, the ‘Busel’ drones created at the enterprise have been successfully used in the work of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of Belarus. Such devices weighing from 6 to 14kg are launched by hand or using a small catapult and have a wide arsenal of interchangeable target optical monitoring and surveillance systems. It has been proven in practice that they are reliable and durable.”



uavbusel.by

Recently, foreign customers have been interested in a new ‘Burevestnik’ device with an unmanned aerial vehicle — weighing up to 300kg and with a range of 300km or more. It can be equipped with various target loads with a total weight of up to 60kg. In fact, it is multi-functional and, following contracts with several partners, 3 versions of it are being developed at the moment.

Taking into account fierce competition in the world market for multifunctional unmanned systems, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus has defined a strategy — to localise production of not only UASs but also their main parts, as well as the ground aspect of the devices produced. Here, optical systems with high-resolution cameras on gyrostabilised platforms with algorithms for auto-tracking and determining the co-ordinates of the observed object, as well as ground control points, autopilots and simulators for training operators, catapults and other equipment are being created. All these are complex technological products.

The company participates in international specialised exhibitions, presenting its developments in real flights. “Two years ago, three types of drones — the MQ-1 Predator from the

USA, the Austrian Comcopter S-100 unmanned helicopter and our ‘Busel M40’ — were chosen to demonstrate to official delegations at the largest international exhibition of UAS vehicles — *UMEX-2018*, in the UAE — which brought together over 120 exhibitors from 34 countries,” Mr. Yatsyna notes. “Participation in such forums and successful experience of using our equipment by foreign partners strengthens the image of Belarus in this high-tech sphere. It provides an inflow of foreign currency to the country which is primarily directed to the subsequent improvement and development of the company's products already



Senior electronic engineer Sergei Loiko, junior research associate Ruslan Yefremov



Chief constructor of the project — Andrei Poplavsky

Yury Mozolevsky

represented in the CIS, Central Asia, the Persian Gulf and the Asia-Pacific Region.”

The Centre is particularly proud of its software that provides reliable control of an unmanned aerial vehicle along a given trajectory in automatic mode. In addition, new airframe designs, bench equipment and simulators are constantly appearing. Today, the most popular and commercially successful products are the ‘Busel M50’ short-range UAS, the ‘Burevestnik’ medium-range UAS, simulators for training drone operators (which also equip training classes of the Belarusian State Aviation Academy and other enterprises in the country and abroad).

Over the past four years, the company's product range has almost doubled — mainly due to the creation of products, including special-purpose items, which meet customers' technical requirements. The successfully conducted acceptance tests have made it possible to launch serial production.

“Unmanned aviation is an industry with the highest competition. Here, if you stop where you are, you are already behind. Therefore, to ensure the promotion of the Centre's products, we use modern business planning tools, conduct market research, and study market trends. The task for the near future is to create a new type of hybrid UAS made according to the aircraft scheme, with a vertical take-off and landing. Design and technological developments for this already exist,” said the official, sharing his plans.

## Commemorative coins

By Irina Sergeeva

The National Bank of Belarus issues new commemorative coins

999 20Br and 1,999 1Br silver coins depicting ‘75 Years of Soviet People's Victory in the Great Patriotic War’ have been minted. The copper-nickel coin features a stylised decorative composition symbolising the Eternal Flame — against the background of geometric design, while the reverse side depicts a stylised decorative composition of a flower, a five-pointed star and decorative geometric elements.

The ‘550 Years of the Miraculous Zhirovichi Mother of God Icon’ coins

are made from silver and copper-nickel: 599 pieces of Br100 denomination were minted and 1,999 of the Br1 denomination. The front features the image of the Zhirovichi Monastery and its reverse depicts a relief image of the venerated copy of the Zhirovichi Mother of God Icon.

1,599 silver coins with the nominal value of Br20 and 2,999 coins with the nominal value of Br1 were released depicting the ‘Great Stone Chinese-Belarusian Industrial Park’. The coin depicts a relief image of the state emblem of the Republic of Belarus and the reverse side features a relief image of the memorial sign of the Industrial



Park. Full-colour images of the national flags of the Republic of Belarus and the People's Republic of China are on the right and the left.

The coins are a legal means of payment in the Republic of Belarus and are subject to acceptance at their face value for all types of payment without any restrictions.

nrb.by

INSIDE



# Europe lifting lockdown

More European nations are eyeing a gradual end to their coronavirus lockdowns as infection rates slow and death rates decline

Spain is hoping for a return to relative normality by the end of June, said officials in Madrid, announcing a four-phase plan to lift one of the toughest sets of restrictions. While exact details will vary from province to province, hairdressers and other businesses will open in the initial phase, while restaurants will be able to offer take-away services.

From May 11th, schools in France will gradually reopen and businesses will be free to resume operations, French PM Edouard Philippe said. Restaurants, cafes and beaches, though, will remain

closed until at least June. “We must protect the French people without paralysing France to the point that it collapses.”

Italian PM Giuseppe Conte has decided that reopening society will come gradually in Italy. A series of restrictions was lifted on May 4th, allowing the country’s population to once again be able to exercise outdoors and move around their own regions. More restrictions will be lifted on May 18th and June 1st, in an attempt to gradually get the economy running again.

In Belgium, PM Sophie Wilmes has submitted a plan

for a progressive lockdown that is similar to Italy’s strategy. During the first phase, an increased number of public transport vehicles will be in use. During the next stage, starting on May 11th, all shops will be allowed to reopen while adhering to strict guidelines. Hairdressers will follow on May 18th, which is also the date from which school education will progressively return back to normal.

Airlines plan to resume some of their flights in May. For example, the Belarusian national air carrier Belavia restarted flights to Milan on

May 2nd. Flights are operated twice a week from terminal 2 in Malpensa Airport. Belavia has also opened a regular flight Minsk-Vienna-Minsk on April 25th. “The opening of this flight will contribute to establishing and strengthening of trade, economic and cultural relations between Belarusian and Austrian partners, as well as in view of the current situation in the world, it will facilitate the return of citizens of both countries to their homes. The flight to Vienna is the first step towards the return to the usual way of life,” said Belavia’s Director General Anatoly Gusarov.

## Record-breaking Arctic zone hole closes

The largest hole ever observed in the ozone layer over the Arctic has closed, says Copernicus’ Atmospheric Monitoring Service

Scientists spotted signs in late March of a rare hole forming and it was thought to be the result of low temperatures at the north pole.

The ozone layer shields the Earth from most of the Sun’s ultraviolet radiation, which is a major cause of skin cancer.

The record-breaking hole would only have posed a direct threat to humans if it had moved further south to populated areas.

But in late April, Copernicus — the EU’s earth monitoring programme — announced the hole had now closed.

The closing has nothing to do with the reduction in pollution caused by having much of the world on COVID-19 lockdown.

Instead, it’s down to the polar vortex, the high-altitude currents that normally bring cold air to the polar regions. This has split in two giving the Arctic region a relative heatwave, with temperatures up to 20°C higher than is normal for this time of year.

This year, the polar vortex has been extremely powerful and temperatures inside it have been very cold.

This generates stratospheric clouds that destroy the ozone layer by reacting with CFC gases, banned by the 1987 Montreal Protocol.

Unlike the hole that developed over the Arctic, the Antarctic ozone hole in the Southern Hemisphere is typically caused by chemicals such as chlorine and bromine migrating into the stratosphere. This has caused an ozone hole to develop in the Antarctic annually for the last 35 years.

There has been good news there, too: last year, the Antarctic ozone hole was at its smallest since it was first discovered.

## First-ever map of the Moon

For the first time, the entire lunar surface has been completely mapped and uniformly classified by scientists from the USGS, in collaboration with NASA and the Lunar Planetary Institute

The lunar map, called the ‘Unified Geologic Map of the Moon’, will serve as the definitive blueprint of the Moon’s surface geology for future human missions and will be invaluable for the international scientific community, educators and the public-at-large. The digital map is available online now and shows the Moon’s geology in incredible detail (1:5,000,000 scale).

“People have always been fascinated by the Moon and when we might return,” said current USGS Director and former NASA astronaut Jim Reilly. “So, it’s wonderful to see USGS create a resource that can help NASA with their planning for future missions.”

To create the new digital map, scientists used information from six Apollo-era regional maps along with updated information from recent satellite missions to the Moon. The existing historical maps were redrawn to align them with the modern data sets, thus preserving previous observations and interpretations. Along with merging new and old data, USGS researchers also developed a unified description of the stratigraphy, or rock layers, of the Moon. This resolved issues from previous maps where rock names, descriptions and ages were sometimes inconsistent.

“This map is a culmination of a decades-long project,” said Corey Fortezzo, USGS geologist and lead author. “It provides vital information for new scientific studies by connecting the exploration of specific sites on the Moon with the rest of the lunar surface.”



## Germans protest against lockdown

German police wearing riot gear and face masks tussled with dozens of protesters demonstrating in central Berlin against the coronavirus lockdown on public life

Protesters shouted ‘I want my life back’ and held up signs with slogans such as ‘Protect constitutional rights’, ‘Freedom isn’t everything but without freedom, everything is nothing’, and ‘Daddy, what is a kiss?’

Police said on Twitter they had arrested more than 100 people.

Some protesters tried to keep a distance from each other, sitting on the ground and wearing masks, but others clustered together.

Like dozens of countries around the globe, Germany has put in place strict curbs on public activity to slow transmission of COVID-19, imposing

its lockdown on March 17th.

The protesters handed out newspapers entitled *Democratic Resistance*, which said the new coronavirus is an attempt to seize power by spreading fear. The papers quoted 127 doctors from around the world who question the need for strict lockdowns.

Police spokesman Thilo Cablitz said permission had been granted for a newspaper distribution campaign, but the health authorities had not granted permission for a public demonstration.

“During coronavirus times and according to containment regulations, we are obliged to prevent a gathering,” Cablitz said, adding 180 police officers were on duty. Germany’s Constitutional Court ruled earlier that people have the right to hold protests if they adhere to social distancing rules.



# Partisans of Belarus

We are separated by 75 peaceful years from the terrible and destructive war which lasted 1,418 days. Millions of Belarusians were forging victory on the front and in partisan detachments, underground and at the rear. The current generations should be grateful to them for a peaceful sky, for the opportunity to live, work and study. There were hundreds of thousands of people's avengers among the united army of anti-fascists. Unfortunately, it's difficult, or perhaps impossible, to list the names of all those who fought in partisan units. But we're trying to find as much information as possible about these heroes! The database of the *Partisans of Belarus* — a joint Internet project partizany.by of the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House and the National Archives of the Republic of Belarus — already contains more than 85,000 electronic cards about partisans, and this figure is growing each day.

# Hero on hero street



Yemelian Barykin

By Stanislav Galkovsky, Oleg Usachev

**A 40m portrait of the legendary Gomel partisan and undergrounder, a Hero of the Soviet Union — Yemelian Ignatovich Barykin — was painted on the wall of a high-rise building in Gomel. The huge mural is located on a busy street that bears the name of the hero.**

The magnificent beard, which gives a special touch to the legendary partisan, strikes one immediately. It is an element of historical truth. A lot of Belarusian partisans used to have magnificent beards. As if to say, until we drive the enemy out of our native land, we won't shave our beards... They even compiled a song, entitled *The Partisan Beard*, which was sung by Leonid Utesov...

For the 41 year old secretary of the Gomel city party committee, it was the beard that became an important disguise factor. One of the main organisers of the local underground had to radically change his appearance. According to archival data, in August 1941, when the Nazis seized the regional centre, 62 communists of city party organisations were secretly left in the city, with 8 bases of weapons, provisions, medicines and clothes being created, as well as 7 secret addresses prepared. They also set up the Bolshevik partisan detachment, which operated in the Gomel, Vetka, Korma, Chechersk, Rechitsa and Loev districts. His fighters even participated in the famous raid of partisans Kovpak and Saburov in Belarusian Polesie. The military chronicle gives a clear idea of the constant military actions and forced movements of Gomel partisans. The occupiers were constantly hunting them. Barykin

was a commissar in the detachment (one of the battle groups was under his leadership) and, from November 1942, he was the chief of staff of the Gomel partisan brigade. He was engaged in planning operations and was respectfully named 'Batya' by the partisans.

**An interesting fact: on July 12th, 1942, the Bolshevik detachment opened its 'combat account' in the rail war. On this day, between Zyabrovka and Korenevka stations, Barykin's group blew up an enemy train with manpower and equipment, resulting in 17 carriages falling downhill.**

When the invaders were driven out, Barykin shaved off the lush beard from his face...

After the liberation of Gomel, Yemelian Barykin, as the head of the city committee, took part in the restoration of the almost completely destroyed city. Many contemporaries marked his simplicity and openness. Barykin often visited the families of Borodin, Timofeenko, Shilov and other underground comrades and insisted that they be paid pensions.

He headed the Gomel city committee until 1948, when he was elected secretary of the Baranovichi Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus and a member of the Audit Commission of the Communist Party of Belarus.

Gomel journalist and local historian Aleksandr Dobriyan notes, "When Yemelian Barykin died in 1951, the entire population of Gomel went to the funeral. In the regional centre there is a street named after Barykin and even a steamboat that used to go along the Gomel-Kiev route. Graffiti is an excellent form, the effect from it can be much greater than from lectures and it could initiate the process of perpetuating memory. With this proposal, I went to the reception of the Chairman of the Gomel Regional Executive Committee, Gennady Solovei, who supported the idea..."

In a conversation with a correspondent, Gennady Solovei noted that Barykin was from that cohort of people

who defended Gomel and the region from invaders. He is a legendary person who played a significant role in the fate of the city in the most difficult period. Graffiti is an interesting topic, it's an inexpensive project and it can also be used to popularise other heroes of the Great Patriotic War. "In the future, in Barykin Street where a multi-story building is currently underway, it is necessary to create a small park, and to erect a monument to Barykin in it," added Mr. Solovei.

### Finding and remembering

One perceives the personality of Yemelian Barykin in a special way, reading through the awards sheet posted on partizany.by.

In this regard we can mention the document dated December 25th, 1943 and signed by the chief of staff of the Belarusian partisan movement, Kalinin, who represented Yemelian Barykin to

the rank of Hero of the Soviet Union.

It has the following lines: 'He is disciplined, demanding on himself and his subordinates. He enjoys well-deserved authority among partisans and the surrounding population. He is devoted to the party of Lenin-Stalin and the Socialist Motherland. For the courage and bravery shown in the struggle against the German invaders, comrade Barykin is presented with the title of Hero of the Soviet Union'.

There is also an award document on his presentation for the Partisan of the Patriotic War medal of the 2nd degree and to the Order of the Red Combat Banner. These are unique pieces of archival evidence... and now these documents are available to everyone! Learn the history of the Great Patriotic War through the fates of legendary personalities direct from the source!



Ivan Yartivanovich

Artists Maksim Kozlov and Artem Sorokoletov author the mural in memory of Yemelian Barykin

## AWARDS

- Gold Star Medal of the Hero of the Soviet Union (1944)
- Order of Lenin (1944)
- Order of the Red Banner (1943)
- Order of the Red Banner of Labour (1949)
- Partisan of the Patriotic War medal of the 1st and 2nd degrees
- Honorary Railway Worker badge



## THE MT REFERENCE

Yemelian Barykin was born in 1902 in the village of Trostnaya (now the Bryansk Region) to a peasant family. At the beginning of the war, Yemelian Barykin became one of the founders of the Gomel regiment of the people's militia and underground urban resistance. After the occupation of the city, he became commissar of the Bolshevik partisan detachment, which was based in the Novobelitsa forest. After the unification of partisan detachments into brigades and partisan formations in 1943, Yemelian Barykin became the chief of staff of the Gomel partisan brigades. From 1944, Colonel Yemelian Barykin was in reserve, continuing to work as secretary of the Gomel city party committee. From 1947 he was a deputy of the Supreme Council of the BSSR. From 1948 he was a secretary of the Baranovichi Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus.

# Amazing routes

## Five reasons to take a virtual trip to Belarus

By Sofia Arsenieva

### Visit aurochs for breakfast

The largest animal in Europe is a symbol of the Belarusian nation. However, these powerful giants with kind eyes don't like to show themselves and no wonder: in the early 20th century, their population was on the verge of complete extinction because of hunters and poachers. However, aurochs rightfully rule in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha now. There are more than six hundred here. These proud animals boast remarkable strength and their external clumsiness is deceptive. They can jump up to two metres in height and get up to an incredible speed. Don't believe it? Then stock up on popcorn and make yourself comfortable. The pushcha is broadcasting live from its auroch feeding station. These horned 'beauties' come here regularly to treat themselves to fresh hay. Moreover, other forest inhabitants — deer, wild boars, foxes, martens, hares — are also caught by the camera.

The recording is accompanied by sound. Even if the animals are not on air for a long time, nobody will get bored: a bird orchestra is responsible for the musical accompaniment of the pushcha. In late April, nightingale concerts began.

**Where to watch:** [nbp.by/bison-online](http://nbp.by/bison-online)

### Go on a castle marathon

What about time travel? In the past, Belarus enjoyed the proud title of the 'land of castles' — for good reason. Local magnates invited the best architects in the world and built fabulously expensive and obscenely luxurious residences. Among them are Mir and Nesvizh castles which are now included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. However, they are not the only ones that have survived until modern times.

The Gothic castle in Kossovo amazes with legends, 'the greatest ruins of Europe' in Ruzhany

attract fans of large-scale beauty, while Gomel's Rumyantsev and Patskevich palace impresses everyone who sees it with its chic interior decoration... All this can be admired outside and inside, up close and from a bird's eye view, in snowy and blooming decorations on the website of the project #Belarus360. Walking along these colourful routes is the best remedy during the period of self-isolation.

**Where to watch:** [belarus360.by](http://belarus360.by)

### Walk around old Grodno

The romance of warm spring evenings is keenly felt on the banks of the Neman River. Narrow cobbled streets, majestic churches and houses overgrown with emerald ivy are wonderful. Grodno is the westernmost city of Belarus not only geographically, but also in spirit. There are always plenty of people who want to spend an unforgettable weekend



The 'Courage' monument was planned to be no higher than seven metres but a 36 metre composition was created instead



Nesvizh Castle is among the top-5 best museums of CIS history and culture for visits, online tours and exhibitions



The Great Patriotic War History Museum



Grodno

was drenched with the blood of Soviet soldiers in the hot summer of 1941. The biggest impression is made by the red walls of the fortress: traces of bullets and shrapnel dotted them, mixed with the defenders' last words.

By the 75th anniversary of the Victory, the fortress had been greatly beautified. Fresh expositions and restored fortifications are waiting for guests until June 22nd, for a large-scale military-historical reconstruction. The updated site of the memorial complex is available now — offering its visitors the chance to shelter inside the south-eastern and north-eastern barracks. During the virtual tour, one can examine in detail the most famous alarm clock of the Soviet Union, which shows the exact time of the German attack, get to know the defenders and their families from photos and letters. The realism of three-dimensional panoramas is striking: even sitting at the computer, users can feel themselves in the thick of military events.

**Where to watch:** [brest-fortress.by/virtualnye-tury](http://brest-fortress.by/virtualnye-tury)

### Move by tank

The Great Patriotic War History Museum is the most visited in the Belarusian capital. Having faced a noticeable decrease in visitors due to the closure of the borders, it has become the first to offer online tours. Schoolchildren and students can get thematic lectures on Skype and everyone else can enjoy free walks through its exhibitions. The authors of the virtual tour have taken into account even the smallest details — enabling visitors not only to see the exhibits but also read the inscriptions on the plates. Another undeniable advantage of such a tour is that it's possible to safely 'climb' over the fence and, for example, look at tanks from above — i.e. get on a T-34 tank or look into the muzzle of a machine gun.

VR glasses ensure full immersion, while an audio guide — available for downloading — creates an impression of being fully present.

**Where to watch:** [warmuseum.by](http://warmuseum.by)

here. It's no surprise that even during quarantine, the city attracts tourists' attention. Local guides have started conducting tours on Instagram live especially for them. Sunlit castles in the heart of the city, the first Belarusian pharmacy, the Gucci-like synagogue are the subjects of live broadcasts that attract thousands of viewers.

The success of tourism in this format is understandable. The fact that Grodno looks good on screen was well-known to Soviet film directors. The characters of Nikolai Karachentsov in *Belye Rosy* and Vladimir Vysotsky in *I've Come from Childhood* also promenaded along the ancient streets of the town.

**Where to watch:** [instagram.com/donkihot.grodno](http://instagram.com/donkihot.grodno)

### Shelter in the Brest Fortress

The legendary citadel over the Bug River attracts more than half a million tourists from all over the world every year. Many descendants of veterans of the Great Patriotic War go to see the places where every inch of territory

# Start with a pause

What will happen to international competitions that are to be held in Belarus in the nearest future?

The International Fencing Federation has announced that all international competitions scheduled for the period from April to June have been cancelled. The reason is clear: the coronavirus pandemic. Among the events which definitely will not take place are the World Cup stages where athletes could have competed for qualification to the Olympic Games in Tokyo. Nevertheless, the qualification will still go ahead eventually: the ratings of the fencers will be frozen, and they will be activated when it becomes possible to hold the last qualifying competitions. However, this is not the whole list of tournaments that will be cancelled due to the current epidemiological situation. In June, the European Fencing Championship is to take place in Minsk. What will happen to this tournament and other international events planned in Belarus for the nearest future?

By Tatiana Pastushenko

## European Fencing Championship

Scheduled dates: June 16th-21st

All the strongest European athletes had to attend the tournament in Minsk to compete for medals in the individual and team events in fencing with swords, rapiers and sabres. The championship is postponed; however, the possible dates are still unknown. According to the Chairman of the Belarusian Fencing Federation, negotiations are underway with the European Fencing Confederation on possible dates for the tournament.

The day before, the International Fencing Federation sent a letter to the national federations explaining under what conditions the competitions in this sport will resume: when the global health situation is safe, when all athletes will have equal conditions for training and the federations are able to participate in tournaments. Moreover, before resuming the qualifying stages, international competitions will be held, including the 'preparatory' stages of the World Cup and the Grand Prix.

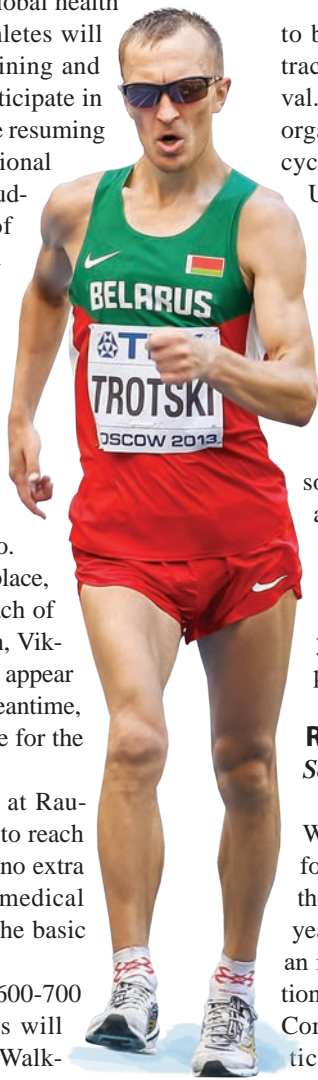
## IAAF World Walking Race Team Championship

Scheduled dates: May 2nd-3rd

The fact that this championship would be postponed became known a few weeks ago. It's not clear when it will take place, but, according to the head coach of the national walking race team, Viktor Ginko, the information may appear in the coming weeks. In the meantime, our athletes continue to prepare for the home tournament.

"The athletes are training at Raubichi, but they aren't working to reach the peak of their form; there's no extra effort. They are undergoing medical recovery procedures, that is, the basic work continues."

It was planned that about 600-700 athletes from 50-60 countries will take part in the IAAF World Walking Race Team Championship in Minsk, competing for medals in the individual and team events in three distances: juniors — 10km, adults — 20km and 50km. The race will unfold on Pobediteley Avenue, near the Sports Palace. The track, which will host the World Cup, was tested last year during the Belarus Walking Race Team Championship. At that time, a commission of the International Association of Athletics Federations arrived in Minsk and had no complaints about the equipment at the track.



Meanwhile, the Belarusian Athletic Federation has published preliminary dates for the postponement of the Republican competitions. It's planned that the Universiade will be held in Brest on May 21st-23rd, the Belarus Cup will take place in Brest on June 11th-13th and early August will see the country's championship in Minsk.

## International Cycling Week

Scheduled dates: May 15th-21st

International Minsk Cycling Week was planned to be vivid and memorable: the Grand Prix Minsk track cycling event and the Viva Rovar Bike Carnival. Coronavirus has seriously affected the plans of the organisers. Road cycling was abolished while track cycling remains in doubt: the International Cycling Union is now reshaping the calendar of competitions taking into account the World Cup stages and other events.

While there is a ban on holding international competitions under the UCI auspices, our athletes continue to train; there is no quarantine, so some of the athletes are practising on the cycle track while some go on the roads. However, it was decided not to abolish the bike carnival, which even last year gathered more than 20,000 participants; it's planned that it will be held on June 21st.

## Rhythmic Gymnastics World Cup Stage

Scheduled dates: July 1st-6th

The Minsk stage of the Rhythmic Gymnastics World Cup was expected to be a dress rehearsal before the Tokyo Olympics for gymnasts from around the world. But the Games were postponed until next year while the World Cup stage was postponed for an indefinite period. The head coach of the national team and the President of the Athletes' Commission of the International Gymnastics Federation, Lyubov Cherkashina, explains, "All stages of the World Cup were moved, as well as other competitions. Their resumption depends on how the situation



will develop in the future. But it's necessary to understand that when it normalises, athletes will need time to prepare, because many are not currently training at full strength. Our gymnasts are training at the Palace of Rhythmic Gymnastics in Minsk in isolation mode. Of course, it is not easy, because in the training process we need competitive motivation."

## WUC Canoe Sprint Championship

Scheduled dates: August 21st-23rd

In August, more than 400 rowers from 24 countries are expected at the rowing canal in Zaslavl. So far, the organising committee of the tournament

says that they do not plan to delay it. Specialists are conducting marketing work and developing souvenir products while carefully monitoring the development of the situation. Optimism is added by the fact that after another stage of reconstruction was completed in Zaslavl on

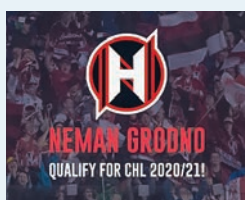
the eve of the 2nd European Games, no serious work is required to receive another major international event.



## ARENA

### Hockey players of the Grodno Neman gain the right to play in the Champions League in the 2020/2021 season

In the new season of the Champions League, Belarus will be represented by two clubs: the champion Minsk Yunost and the holder of the bronze, Neman.



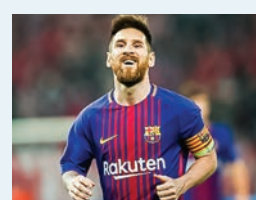
The Champions League Directorate made the decision to provide another place to the Belarusian club at the request of Slovakia to replace its representative because of the unavailability of the infrastructure and because Belarus

has the highest rating among all applicants.

As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the format of the hockey Champions League in the new season has been changed. Unlike the previous seasons, there will be no group stage. The tournament will begin on October 6th with matches of the 1/32 finals. Until the finals, teams will play two matches in each round of the playoffs: at home and away. The final match is scheduled for February 9th, 2021.

### Argentinean forward of Spanish Barcelona, Lionel Messi, tops the list of the best players of the 21st century, according to the ELO rating system

When compiling the rating, the number of goals scored and assists by the player was taken into account, as well as the level of opponents and competition. Goalkeepers were not taken into account.



The Argentine footballer who headed the rating scored 100 points out of a possible 100. Second place went to the Portuguese forward from Italian Juventus, Cristiano Ronaldo, who received the same 100 points as his eternal rival but lost to Lionel Messi in terms of statistics. Third on the list was French forward Thierry Henry (98), who has already completed his career.

## Photo of the week



**Veteran Aelita Samsonova celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory. As a teenager, she worked behind the lines and, after it became possible due to her age, joined the hospital as a nurse, reaching Berlin as part of it.**

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.

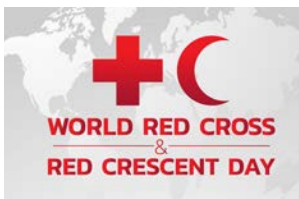
**On May 7th**, the Day of Radio, Television and Communication Workers — a professional holiday for workers in all communications sectors — is celebrated in Belarus. On this day in 1895, Russian



physicist Aleksandr Popov made the first radio communication and showed the world the first radio receiver. This date was officially first celebrated in the USSR in May 1925. By Presidential decree as of March 26th, 1998, the Day

of Radio, Television and Communication Workers was established as a professional holiday and is celebrated annually.

**May 8th** is the World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day. By decision of the International Conference of the Red Cross, it has been celebrated since 1953 on the birthday of Henri Dunant (1828-1910) — a Swiss public figure who initiated the founding (in 1863) of the International Organisation of the Red Cross.



**On May 9th**, the Victory Day is celebrated in the Republic of Belarus. On May 9th, 1945, the Soviet people won the Great Patriotic War, which lasted 1,418 days and nights and during which not only the fate of the USSR was decided, but also the future of world civilisation. Human losses during the war amounted to 26.6 million people. The Soviet Union lost 30 percent of its national wealth. The war revealed the strengths and weaknesses of domestic military art and military science, in the course of it the organisational talent of many commanders and military leaders was manifested. The whole world knows the names of the marshals of the Soviet Union — G.K. Zhukov, A.M. Vasilevsky, I.S. Konev, K.K. Rokossovsky and others. In the rear of the enemy in the occupied territory, 6,200 partisan detachments and underground groups operated, involving more than a million people. The history of the tragedy and the victory achieved is an eternal source of pain and bitterness, pride and glory of our people.



**May 10th** is the Day of the State Emblem of the Republic of Belarus and the State

Flag. This holiday is set to commemorate the adoption of state symbols on May 14th, 1995 and is celebrated annually on the second Sunday of May. The emblem and flag are the main symbols of our country. This is the history and future of the Belarusian state and embodiment of the idea of the national unity, as well as the most important attributes of the sovereignty and independence of our Fatherland.



**On May 12th, 1800**, Valenty Vankovich was born in the village of Kalyuzhitsa, in the Minsk Region's Berezino District. He was a Belarusian and Polish painter — a representative of romanticism in Belarusian and Polish painting. He is the author of the paintings *Napoleon at the Fire* and *The Feast of the Young Kiev Resident during the Siege of Kiev by the Pechenegs in 968*. He also created the portraits of Y. Korsak, A. Odynets, A. Pushkin, V. Zhukovsky and others. His graphic works include the lithography *The Head of the Old Man*, *The Landscape*, *The Pond*, the Mother of God Ostrobramskaya icon, and the Evangelist John. He died in 1842.



**May 12th** is the International Nurses Day. It has been officially celebrated since 1971 on the birthday of Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), the English sister of Mercy, the organiser of the service of the Sisters of Charity and the training system for nurses in the UK.

**On May 13th, 1905**, Stefania Stanuyta was born in Minsk — an actress, People's Artist of Belarus (1957) and People's Artist of the USSR (1988). Since 1931, she worked at the Yanka Kupala National Academic Theatre, performing characteristic, comedic and dramatic roles. Her works were peculiar for deep penetration into the psychology of the image, emotional expressiveness of the word, gesture and facial expressions, as well as vivid comedy, skilful use of irony and grotesque. Her best roles in the theatre include: Glafira (*Wolves and Sheep* by A. Ostrovsky), Duenna (*Day of Wonderful Deceptions* by R. Sheridan), Marylya (*The Broken Nest* by Yanka Kupala), Maude (*Harold and Maude* by C. Higgins). Stefania Stanuyta played more than sixty roles in film and television. She was also a laureate of the State Prize of Belarus (1982). She died in 2000.

