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Aleksandr Kulevsky

The Borisov experimental forestry has grown about 70 thousand tulips by March 8th. In the photo: Olga Petrovich, reforestation and land reclamation engineer.

Day of spring, love and beauty

Belarus celebrates Women's Day on March 8th. This holiday is a day of spring, female beauty, tenderness, warmth and attention to a woman. Congratulations and words of gratitude for creative work, love and spiritual generosity are addressed to the beautiful half of humanity. It goes without saying that women are presented with flowers on this day — delicate tulips or classic roses, orchids and lilies, chrysanthemums, alstroemeria or mimosa branches — that symbolise the arrival of spring, express admiration, attention and care.

In our country, it has always been a woman who personifies the source of life, the home keeper and, of course, a sacred concept for all of us — Motherland. Nowadays, women successfully work in all spheres of activity of our country, making a huge contribution to the development of industry, healthcare, science, education, culture, sports, and the service sector. Happy holidays to you, dear women!



No radical scenario will work in Belarus



The President greeted the observers and members of the election commission, received the ballots, filled them out in a voting booth and dropped them into a ballot box. Aleksandr Lukashenko traditionally talked to journalists afterwards.

During his conversation with journalists the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, said he would participate in the presidential elections as a candidate next year.

Commenting on the journalist's statement that this topic was actively promoted by the destructive media, the President noted, "Tell them I definitely will [run for President]. Moreover, I will run for President more actively the more complicated the situation is, the more actively they disturb our society and you as well (for me, believe me, it is very important: no person, no responsible President will abandon his people who fol-

lowed him into battle), the more they strain you, me and society. Do not worry. We will do what is necessary for Belarus."

Answering the clarifying question whether these words can be perceived as an unambiguous statement, and whether a new electoral cycle has already begun, the Head of State stressed, "I have already said a lot that this is an electoral cycle, that we will continue to be rocked until the presidential elections, and that the latter will become the apogee of everything. This is already the cycle — officially or not, and the answer depends on the question. I answer the way I have been asked. If it is necessary to specify, then I will say absolutely seriously and sincerely: I can say nothing new yet. There is still a year to go before the presidential elections, and a lot can change. Of course, I and all of us, our society and journalists will react to the changes taking place in our society and the situation we will ap-

proach the 2025 elections with."

The President added that his current thoughts are focused on other issues, "I am thinking of how to make this Year of Quality strong and resultful, so that — even if the current President does not participate in the elections as a candidate — you remember it. Everything that happens in the last moment is always remembered. Therefore, this year will be very active, and I am guiding our society and government — which has worked honestly and conscientiously and will work in the same manner until the elections — at this."

In his talk with media representatives Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko named main qualities for the President of Belarus.

Answering a question from a Russian journalist about the qualities a Belarusian leader — for whom we should vote in the future — must possess, Aleksandr Lukashenko said, "I

On February 25th, the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, took part in the voting in the elections of deputies to the House of Representatives and local councils, casting his vote at polling station No. 478 located at the Belarusian State University of Physical Culture

know that many officials don't like me, because I strictly demand that at least our agreements and the decisions made by the President be fulfilled. If they are not fulfilled, then the entire structure of power will collapse and society will drown. Yes, I understand this perfectly well. Probably, not all journalists like me because of my character and so on. However, the good thing is that journalists, and then society, thanks to these journalists, begin to understand that Lukashenko said something, strictly demanded this and later it turned out that he was right."

The President cited the fight against coronavirus as an example. At the beginning of the pandemic and at its height, not everyone supported the Belarusian leader's actions. At that time, the whole world was moving in a different direction, introducing lockdowns, closing factories and enterprises. Afterwards it turned out that Aleksandr Lukashenko's decisions were optimal.

"This is my job: to sit and to think... Using my experience and knowledge, I have to predict. If the president does not have this, there is no point in doing this. Therefore, this is the main quality of the president. Of course, there must be iron intuition. Most importantly, you must always remember where you came from and remember that ten million people and three million

who come here on vacation are people to whom you owe. The president owes them," said the Head of State.

None of the scenarios of the seizure of power in Belarus, even the most radical one, will work, stated the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Earlier, the Head of State already noted that the fugitive representatives of the Belarusian fifth column and their curators from the Western special services are considering three scenarios for the destruction of Belarus: two of them envisage tough actions timed to the electoral campaigns, and the third one is to be long lasting.

Aleksandr Lukashenko commented on the key point of these plans, "It does not actually matter whether they will play for long or for short: there is only one goal — to turn Belarus into the opposite direction, but to do it, the current government needs to be overthrown. It will be very difficult, I am convinced — especially after the Single Voting Day and our elections. We will elect absolutely reliable, smart people who understand the tasks our people are faced with. Therefore, none of their scenarios, even the most radical ones, will work in Belarus. We are able to draw conclusions from our previous mistakes, so they have nothing to hope for."

LUKASHENKO, PUTIN DISCUSSED TOPICAL ISSUES OF BELARUSIAN–RUSSIAN RELATIONS

The Presidents of Belarus and Russia, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin, had a telephone conversation on February 2nd.

The Heads of State discussed topical issues of Belarusian–Russian relations, summed up the results of previous events and contacts at the highest level, including a meeting in Kazan and a session of the Supreme State Council of the Union State. Prospects for the near future in the development of bilateral relations were outlined.

In addition, Aleksandr Lukashenko and Vladimir Putin discussed issues in the work of integration structures: the Eurasian Economic Union, the CSTO, and others.

The Presidents also discussed the most relevant international issues, the situation in the region, and prospects for its development.

According to the Kremlin's press service, Vladimir Putin once again congratulated Aleksandr Lukashenko on the successful holding of parliamentary and local elections in Belarus on February 25th.

THE PRESIDENT OF BELARUS, ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO, HAS SIGNED DECREE ON SWITCHING OF STATE BODIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS TO WARTIME CONDITIONS

The document polishes the procedure for switching state bodies and other organisations from work under peacetime conditions to military footing, ensuring their co-ordinated and effective interaction in the event of threats to national security, taking into account changes in military and political conditions.

The decree outlines the range of state bodies to which it applies, including the Belarusian People's Congress, the National Assembly chambers, the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court. It also envisages the possibility of assigning military ranks to the heads of certain state bodies and a number of organisations upon the introduction of martial law.

PROTOCOL

The decree will ensure the systematic and uninterrupted functioning of the state apparatus in the period of increasing military threat and in wartime.

MEETING TO DISCUSS THE WORK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF BELARUS

It is necessary to provide support to MPs during the transition from one convocation of the parliament to another, Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenko said at a meeting to discuss the work of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus.

The event was attended by Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly Vladimir Andreichenko, First Deputy Head of the Belarus President Administration Maksim Ryzhenkov, Deputy Head of the Belarus President Administration Olga Chupris, Deputy Chairman of the House of Representatives Valery Mitskevich, Chairman of the Central Election Commission Igor Karpenko and Head of the Secretariat of the House of Representatives Andrei Naumovich.

"Involve whoever you need in this work. The parliament, the Belarus President Administration, the government, the Belarus President Property Management Directorate, and other government bodies will join in and provide assistance to you during the transition from one convocation of the parliament to another. We must do everything to make sure that the deputies will begin their work without delay," said the Head of State. "And all of you will also need to get involved to help the government form the composition of the Belarusian People's Congress and organise sessions and conferences of the Congress. Think of a plan and the way we will arrange the event. It is determined by the Constitution when the first session should take place. We must do everything in line with the law and we need to think what issues we should give priority to at the first session of the Belarusian People's Congress," the Head of State added.

"There is enough work for everyone. There is plenty of work," noted Aleksandr Lukashenko. The Central Election Commission should also get help, if necessary, to fulfil current tasks. "He [Chairman of the Central

Belarus and Kazakhstan should have the most advanced relations

The Head of State, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has held a meeting with Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan to Belarus Yerlan Baizhanov

“Our meeting is taking place for a reason. You know perfectly well that the President of Kazakhstan will make an official visit to Belarus — most likely, in the third quarter [this year]. It is very important for us today to specify some points of this significant event for Belarus. The negotiations will be held at the highest level, and interested parties will meet within the framework of this visit,” noted the Belarusian leader.

“I am convinced that a billion dollars that we have reached in our trade turnover will look simply ridiculous after this visit. This is because our countries have great potential, and are the friendliest ones in our integration associations. Such states as Belarus and Kazakhstan should have the most advanced relations.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out the positive developments in bilateral co-operation, “We have established good joint ventures for the production of combine harvesters, tractors, and elevators. It is planned to further promote our technologies and create joint facilities based on them in Kazakhstan and Belarus. We are ready to support you at any time. Any of your wishes on the territory of Belarus is the law for us. We are ready to expand our co-operation in terms of creating joint ventures.”

The Belarus’ President stressed that the situation in the world is not easy. “This affects both our countries, as well as our relations. Especially the threat of sanctions policy from the West. Still, we continue co-operating and we need to find directions for our co-operation without creating problems for Kazakhstan. You should know that we are ready to collaborate with you in all areas in the interests of your state. Therefore, I do not see any issues in this regard,” the Belarusian leader emphasised. “If we move in the direction that is of interest for Belarus and Kazakhstan, we can overcome not only sanctions, but also any barriers or obstacles.”

The Head of State drew attention to the fact that Kazakhstan currently chairs the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), as well as the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO).

As it was noted, the next SCO summit is planned to be held in Astana in July 2024. Yerlan Baizhanov under-



Sergei Aleinik and Yerlan Baizhanov

lined that Kazakhstan had fulfilled all necessary domestic procedures and welcomed Belarus’ accession to the SCO. “The common desire of both sides is for this to happen already at the July summit. There are all prerequisites for this,” the head of the diplomatic mission assured.

“We know that in February, you ratified all the documents on Belarus’ membership in the SCO. We are grateful to you for this. It would be very symbolic, and we would welcome this, if Belarus became a full-fledged member of the SCO specifically in Astana.

We will ask you about that. Of course, a lot depends on the presiding party. Our Ministry of Foreign Affairs needs to work more actively in this regard,” stated Aleksandr Lukashenko.

The President of Belarus thanked the diplomat for the great work he had done, especially during the current crucial period for Belarus.

“I mean the elections. You have been closely following the situation in Belarus. I know that you are currently visiting various localities in Belarus, and I would like to hear your impressions. Maybe you can tell us something that we fail to notice. It is always better to see things with a fresh eye,” the Belarusian leader said.

The President also stressed that the Ambassador of Kazakhstan is a friend of Belarus. “You can count on us to provide all possible support in your diplomatic mission,” the Head of State noted.

Yerlan Baizhanov expressed gratitude to the President of Belarus for the opportunity to meet, and admitted that he regarded that as a special sign of Aleksandr Lukashenko’s personal attention to the bilateral agenda of relations with Kazakhstan. The diplomat added that he intended to continue traveling around the country and enterprises, and his impressions were ‘the most serious’. “First of all, I am impressed with Belarus’ technological development and industrial potential, and, of course, the people. Everyone, from chief engineers to ordinary workers, want to develop further, including in the direction of Kazakhstan,” the Kazakh Ambassador pointed out.

When communicating with journalists, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan developed the topic,

“There are several companies in almost every region of Belarus that we would like to see operating in Kazakhstan.

I am talking specifically about localisation of production, not just trade supplies. This means a long-term and fundamental co-operation, and we orient our Belarusian partners towards this approach. We understand that such investment projects require more confident support from states, governments, and financial institutions. It could be possible — and I have proposed such an idea — to create a joint bilateral industrial co-operation fund. This is one of the ideas that was discussed today.”

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Election Commission [Igor Karpenko] does not have a huge team and a lot of people to deal with all the issues,” the President remarked.

The Head of State first of all focused on organisational issues relating to the work and life of newly elected and outgoing members of the House of Representatives. These issues included salary, new jobs, election of senior members of the House of Representatives, formation of commissions, rewarding distinguished deputies for conscientious work, and providing support with the formation of the Belarusian People’s Congress.

According to the Head of State, March 25th is the deadline for newly elected deputies to take up their jobs. Another important issue dealt with new jobs for outgoing parliamentarians. “These are very experienced and seasoned people,” the Head of State emphasised.

“If you need any help with employment of outgoing deputies, let me know and I will get involved. We will resolve these issues,” the President assured.

COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL ESTABLISHED IN BELARUS TO HONOUR 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF COUNTRY’S LIBERATION FROM NAZI INVADERS

On February 29th, the Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko signed Decree No. 75, establishing the anniversary medal: 80 Years of the Liberation of Belarus from the Nazi Invaders.

The document also approved the regulations on the anniversary medal, its description and a sample certificate for it.

The medal’s front side depicts a figure of a soldier of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army in summer uniform with a Shpagin submachine gun in his hands, as well as a figure of a partisan with a Degtyarev light machine gun to the right. The years ‘1944’ and ‘2024’ are written to the right of the figures, one below the other, while an image of a fireworks is displayed above. The Order of the Patriotic War — golden in colour — is placed on a wreath of oak leaves at the bottom.

The reverse side of the medal contains the inscription reading: 80 Years of the Liberation of Belarus from the Nazi Invaders, around which

there is a laurel half-wreath entwined with a ribbon and a five-pointed gold-coloured star on it.

The anniversary medal will be awarded to veterans of the Great Patriotic War, former prisoners of fascist camps, prisons, ghettos and other places of forced detention created by the fascists and their allies during WWII, alongside to foreign citizens and stateless persons who permanently reside outside of Belarus but directly received participation in the fighting for Belarus’ liberation from the Nazi invaders during the Great Patriotic War.

The medal will also be bestowed upon military personnel of the Armed Forces, other troops and military formations of Belarus, government officials and other persons who have made a significant contribution to the heroic and patriotic education of the country’s citizens, perpetuating the memory of the dead and organising the events dedicated to the 80th anniversary of Belarus’ liberation from the German fascist invaders.

THE PRESIDENT OF BELARUS SIGNED A DECREE APPROVING THE DATES OF THE 33RD SLAVIANSKI BAZAAR IN VITEBSK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS

The main events are scheduled for July 11th–14th, 2024.

Taking into account the established practice of state support for the festival, certain preferences are provided for its organisers and participants.

A visa-free entry procedure into Belarus has been established for participants and guests of the cultural forum from 73 countries. An original or electronic ticket to the festival events held in the Summer Amphitheatre or Vitebsk Concert Hall will act as a ground for foreign citizens’ visa-free crossing of the state border. At the same time, one original or electronic ticket allows a single entry into Belarus of one foreign citizen no later than the date of the event specified in the ticket.

According to the press service of the President of the Republic of Belarus

Single Voting Day: main results and trends

The Single Voting Day has been held for the first time in the history of Belarus. The authorised deputies of the House of Representatives of the Belarus' National Assembly of the eighth convocation and the local councils of deputies of the 29th convocation have been elected. The Central Election Commission established the official results of the elections on March 1st at its meeting. Sovereign and independent Belarus has opened a new page in its state-building.



By Maksim Osipov

Figures of scale and competition

The five days of early voting and the main Single Voting Day on February 25th were preceded by huge and multifaceted work involving thousands of people. There were formed 1,284 territorial, 110 district and 5,411 precinct election commissions.

There were initially nominated 298 candidates to run for 110 deputy seats in the House of Representatives, of which 265 citizens were subsequently registered as candidates for deputies — 25 candidates were refused registration by district election commissions, and eight people withdrew their applications. Two more registered candidates withdrew their candidacy later. Thus, 263 candidates for deputies participated in the elections to the House of Representatives, more than three quarters of whom are members of political parties. The competition in the elections was high.

There were nominated 18,999 candidates to local councils of deputies, of which 18,802 citizens successfully passed the verification and registration funnel. There were registered 119 refusals to nominate persons seeking to register as candidates for deputies, and 78 more citizens withdrew their applications.

The voter turnout was already evident during the early voting period held from February 20th to February 24th — as many as 56.43 percent of citizens who took part in the voting.



Open to the truth, closed to lie

The voting process was monitored by 45,505 national and 294 international observers, of which 238 observers represented the CIS Observer Mission; 11 were accredited from the central election authorities of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan; and 22 — from the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation.

Twenty-three politicians, deputies, and public figures from Bulgaria, Spain, Italy, Lithuania, Lebanon, Poland, Serbia, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and Iran were also accredited as international observers. They acted as independent experts.

In contrast, observers from the notorious OSCE ODIHR did not receive an invitation to the Belarusian elections, in relation to which the organisation representatives expressed their hypocritical 'deeply regrettable' attitude on their websites. However, CIS Secretary General and Head of the CIS Observer Mission Sergei Lebedev fully approved of Minsk's decision, "Western observers have a biased approach even before arriving in the country to observe the elections. As a rule, this does not lead to anything good. The characteristics and conclusions, the

The Central Election Commission plans to convene the first session of the House of Representatives of the eighth convocation on March 22nd



statements that they announce following the results of the elections are always imbued with an incompetent approach to monitoring. This is especially pronounced in relation to the CIS countries. As the head of the mission, I can say that we support Belarus' decision to refrain from inviting OSCE observers to the parliamentary elections. Their presence would create tension."

Legitimate and democratic: observers' assessments

The CIS Observer Mission concluded that the elections in Belarus were conducted in full compliance with the Constitution and the Electoral Code of Belarus, openly and publicly. They were held on alternative choice basis, and proved to be transparent, fair, and consistent with the principles of democratic elections. They ensured the free expression of the will of Belarusian citizens. This was announced by the Head of the CIS Observer Mission, CIS Secretary General Sergei Lebedev,

"Our assessment of these elections is as follows — they were carried out in an organised and proper manner, without violations. We have not recorded any violations that could affect the election results."



DIRECT SPEECH

Vadim Borovik, political analyst,

"A new, responsible stage in the life of our country is coming. Taking into account the existing challenges, we have made adjustments to our legislation, as well as to the directions of foreign and domestic policy. This does not mean that we have closed any vectors on our own initiative. As a sovereign Central European state with an open export-oriented economy, we need to maintain a balance of interests, and have partners in various parts of the world, especially in matters of foreign trade. We need to rely on different centres of power. We should remain loyal to our strategic allies — Russia and China, but at the same time remember that, no matter what alliances we join, no matter what unions we make part of, all this is aimed at strengthening the sovereignty of Belarus."

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"The role of Parliament will increase every month, every year. We are already transferring some powers to the Parliament and other authorities. There is a certain restructuring going on, generations are changing. This is a very serious event, especially at the time when our government is going through modernisation. We may be criticised for somewhat weak modernisation. But we have always said that all processes everywhere should be evolutionary in nature. If we take drastic approaches — it is also possible — then this is a way of revolution. Belarus and Russia have already exhausted the limit of revolutions. What could this lead to? To the situation similar to that in Ukraine. It also reached its limit, but they still tried again in 2014–2015 through the Maidan coup. That is what those sharp turns led to. Therefore, we are calmly moving forward when modernising our system."

After voting in the elections of deputies to the House of Representatives and local councils of deputies, on February 25th, 2024

Voting in the elections in Belarus took place in a calm and friendly atmosphere, as emphasised by the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation Observer Mission. The Head of the Mission, SCO Deputy Secretary General Nurlan Yermekbayev noted,

"The mission came to the conclusion that the elections marked an important step towards further political development of Belarus. The mission has acknowledged that the elections complied with the requirements of the electoral legislation of Belarus and the international obligations assumed by the Republic. The mission did not note any violations of the norms of national legislation that might cast doubt on the legitimacy of the elections. The mission recognises the elections as transparent, legitimate and democratic."

Who was elected to the local Councils?

Following the election results of deputies to local councils of deputies, there were formed 1,284 councils in the authorised composition: 6 regional and Minsk city; 118 district; 10 urban (cities of regional subordination); 14 urban (cities of district subordination); 8 settlement; 1,127 rural.

During the elections, there were elected 12,511 deputies to local councils of deputies at all levels. 47.7 percent of the total number of elected deputies are women, 50 percent — deputies of the current convocation elected for a new term, 3.2 percent — deputies under the age of 31, 30.4 percent — deputies representing political parties.

Among the elected deputies

- ▶ 29.6 percent work in the field of science, education, healthcare, culture, sports, 18.5 percent — in government bodies,
- ▶ 17.1 percent — in agriculture,
- ▶ 10.2 percent — in industrial, transport, construction organisations,
- ▶ 5.4 percent — in trade organisations, consumer services, housing and communal services,
- ▶ 3.7 percent are law enforcement and emergency service officers, military personnel,
- ▶ 1.5 percent are entrepreneurs,
- ▶ 11.4 percent represent other fields of activity,
- ▶ 2.2 percent are pensioners,
- ▶ 0.6 percent are unemployed.

The tradition of popular sovereignty



By Maksim Osipov

Milestones and popular assemblies

The legal tradition of Belarus is inextricably linked with the mighty Romano–Germanic legal family, as a number of historians note. The Byzantine, Serbian and Bulgarian traditions had a massive impact on the Belarusian law of the early period of statehood (late 10th — mid 13th centuries). At that time, there were three main institutions of power: the prince, the princely council and the Veche [popular assembly]. While the prince was the head of state and the carrier of executive power, the Veche enforced legislative power. It is known that the Polotsk Veche asserted the legitimacy of the prince. It was also impossible to introduce new types of taxes or declare war without the consent of the Veche.

The 16th century brought to Belarus an even greater influence of the ideas of ancient thinkers of law and legal philosophy — Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Tullius Cicero. The first person to justify the law concept as a fair retribution for crimes, and harmony between the state and the individual in our tradition was Francysk Skaryna. In the preface to the Bible, he outlined his own concept of ideal power as *the enlightened, humane and strong power of the monarch. Thus, the monarch should be wise and fair and at the same time strong and formidable so as to stand up for the rights, if needed, and protect its people from both internal enemies and criminals, and from external ones.*

Decisions are made together

An unbiased and impartial look allows noticing even more interesting things in common. We can track certain continuity both in the resolution of the First All-Belarusian Congress held in 1917, and in the constitutions of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Byelorussia and the Belarusian Soviet Socialist Republic of 1919, 1927 and 1937. The fundamental principle for all those who created the Belarusian national law in the twentieth century was the consolidation of the rights to self-determination and statehood, the need to preserve the territorial integrity of the country, as well as the appeal to its historical and cultural wealth and heritage. It is true that there was a class division principle in the Soviet constitutions. Yet, the principle of equality before the law, regardless of ethnic and linguistic origin, was the core idea that was woven through all the legal framework of that time. The fundamental right of

Participation in elections is a guarantee of both the sovereign development of the state and the preservation of peace in its land

On February 25th, Single Voting Day was held for the first time in the history of Belarus to elect deputies to the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the eighth convocation and to local Councils of deputies of the twenty-ninth convocation. However, we can only talk about relative novelty in this case — rather, we can pinpoint real continuity. After all, the traditions of popular sovereignty in the Belarusian land are rooted in the deep past.



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“Our country’s ancient tradition of popular sovereignty lies at the heart of our national unity. We choose our historical and political status together at referendums and Belarusian people’s congresses. We vote by heart, on our own, and no one dictates their will to us.”

At the patriotic forces forum Symbol of Unity, on September 17th, 2021



all citizens of the country to their cultural identity was also emphasised. This explains the preservation of the council system, the repeated use of the referendum institution, and the availability of a bicameral parliament in our present-day independent country.

It is safe to name a wide-spread public discussion of draft laws as an essential element of popular sovereignty. This is one more form of the Belarusian original development model that is actively practised in modern Belarus.

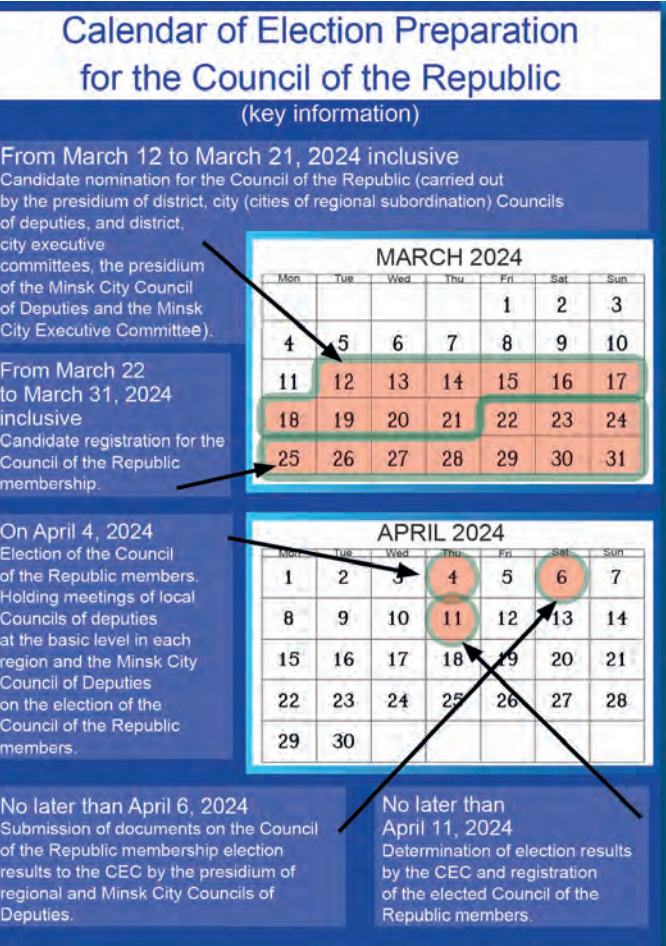
Thus, in 2022, the country held a wide public discussion of the most important draft laws ‘On Amendments to the Electoral Code of the Republic of Belarus’ and ‘On the Belarusian People’s Congress’. Political analyst, researcher at the Philosophy Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus Piotr Petrovsky has pointed out in this regard as follows, “This is a real direct form of popular sovereignty. I have no examples of this happening in the West. While our Western neighbours are winding down the institutions of democracy, we have taken popular sovereignty to another level. In particular, there is a public consensus regarding the necessity of the

Law ‘On the Belarusian People’s Congress’ and its body — the Belarusian People’s Congress. This confirms that citizens of our country appreciate the development and stability that we have.”

Civil harmony

It is particularly worth noting that the Belarusian People’s Congress has been held in our country since 1996. To date, six sessions of the Belarusian People’s Congress have taken place — the previous one was on February 11–12th, 2021. A unique feature of the seventh session will be its fundamentally new status. According to the amendments and additions made to the Constitution following the results of the republican referendum on February 27th, 2022, the Belarusian People’s Congress has become a constitutional body. The competence, procedure for the creation and activities of the Belarusian People’s Congress are determined by Chapter 3–1 of the Constitution and the law.

The Belarusian People’s Congress is the highest representative body of the people’s power in the Republic of Belarus, which determines strategic directions for the development of society and the



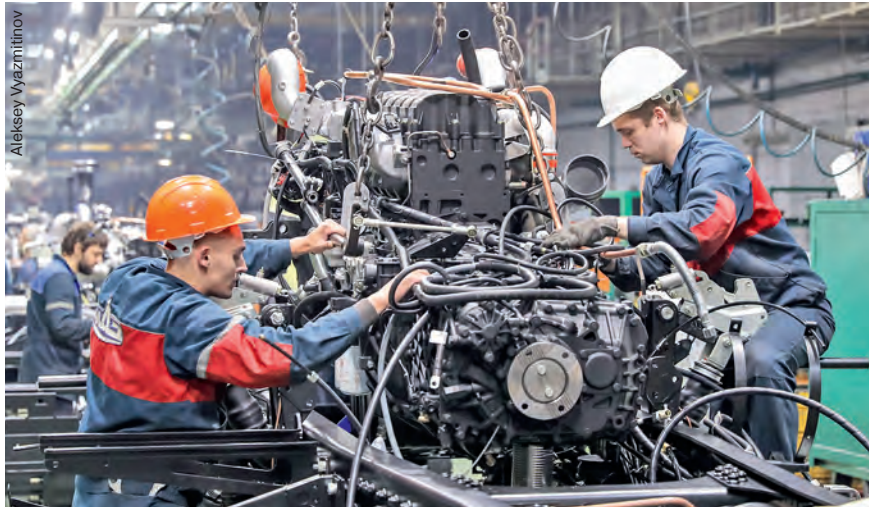
state, ensures the inviolability of the constitutional system, the succession of generations and civil harmony.

The term of powers of the Belarusian People’s Congress is five years. The meetings are held at least once a year. The Belarusian People’s Congress is entitled to approve the main directions of domestic and foreign policy, military doctrine, the concept of national security, programmes for the socio-economic development of the country, as well as to hear the report of the Prime Minister about their implementation. The Belarusian People’s Congress is endowed with the right to put forward legislative initiatives. Its decisions are binding and may cancel legal acts, other decisions of state bodies and officials that contradict the interests of national security, with the exception of acts of judicial authorities.

“The advantage of the Belarusian People’s Congress is that only this body is capable of uniting all political forces — the government and civil society, including political parties regardless of ideology, the youth and pensioners, workers and the intellectuals, private business and representatives of state structures,” clarifies Doctor of Historical Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Centre for Belarus’ History at the end of the 18th – 21st centuries of the Institute of History of the Belarus’ National Academy of Sciences Nikolay Smekhovich. “No other political institution is able to ensure this.

The benefit of the Belarusian People’s Congress is that only this body can take responsibility for the further historical fate of the state, as well as preserve peace, unity and harmony in Belarus.”

MAZ is building a new bus factory



By Vladimir Bibikov

MAZ started the production of city buses back in 1992. For the first time in the former USSR, a passenger car was made according to a modern layout diagram. Three wide doors, a spacious interior, and large windows provided a new standard of comfort. And of course, its state-of-the-art design deserves a special mention. The appearance of MAZ buses in Minsk and other Belarusian cities immediately changed the looks of the streets.

At that time, frames of the cars under construction were put in the production building almost end to end. Many assemblies and parts were manufactured in other workshops and had to be delivered using complex logistic schemes. While the plant was working for Belarus only and its capacity did not exceed 500 cars per year, those inconveniences could be tolerated. However, very soon the Minsk novelty attracted the interest of Russia and other CIS countries. In addition, there were developed short bus models, articulated models (of extended length) for suburban and intercity services, as well as airport apron buses. As a result, the production of MAZ buses increased from year to year — 1,000, 1,500, and last year — up to 1,800 units! Still, production did not keep up with demand. Drastic decisions had to be made.

The question on the necessity to build a full-fledged bus manufacturing plant for the Minsk automobile giant was for the first time raised at a high level several years ago. A governmental decision was made, a business plan was developed, considerable funds were found, including with the support of the Minsk City Executive Committee, and design and estimate documentation was elaborated. And now, the grandiose project is entering a crucial phase.

According to Aleksandr Ignatyuk,

Deputy General Director of JSC Minsk Automobile Plant – Managing Company of BELAVTOMAZ Holding – Director of Economics, the bus plant under construction with state support will double its capacity. Starting from 2025, they will begin to manufacture more products with the focus on the latest, third-generation buses.

This aspect of the project is also of paramount importance. Eco-friendly, comfortable for both passengers and the driver, cost-efficient and just beautiful buses will come out of the gates of the new production. Several third-generation cars are already undergoing operational testing

in regional Belarusian cities. Recently, a batch of innovative passenger transport has been sent to Kazan. The in-

The area of the new MAZ bus plant will be 65 thousand square metres. Closed-loop production will be arranged under one roof — from metal cutting to finished product testing

Minsk Automobile Plant (MAZ) is entering a new stage of development. It has launched the construction of a new bus factory, where passenger buses will be produced under the most advanced technologies. In the near future, residents of Belarusian and Russian cities will be able to appreciate the quality and comfort of new transport.

novative driver is electrical engineering. The high-capacity articulated e-buses produced at MAZ operate on the busiest routes of the Belarusian capital. And all this — in the context of unprecedented economic pressure exerted on Belarus and Russia. The purchase of the latest equipment and some components is limited. But the difficulties have been overcome, as stated by Aleksandr Ignatyuk, “Time has shown that the development pattern of Belarusian industry is resistant to external shocks. Belarusian industry is geared to the production of its own goods, which allows not to engage in complete knock down assembly or rely solely on import. Our holding is developing its 10 subsidiaries that are involved in import substitution. The relevant sections have been created. We did not stop even for a day. MAZ is fully loaded. Truck tractors, dump trucks, and construction machinery are in demand.”

As for MAZ buses, they are produced using a wide range of Russian materials and components. An example is the new generation intercity and tourist bus MAZ-350, which recently won the prestigious international business award. In fact, Belarusian and Russian components make up 78 percent of the entire vehicle.

On a side note, Russia is closely watching

the development of bus production in Minsk. Thus, MAZ was recently visited by Dmitry Zverev, Deputy Minister of Transport of the Russian Federation, and Sergey Semenov, Director of the State Policy Department in the Field of Automobile and Urban Passenger Transport of the Ministry of Transport of the Russian



Federation. They thanked the enterprise staff for having delivered about 900 modern spacious vehicles to various cities of the Russian Federation last year. They also inquired how many units MAZ will be able to sell this year. This will become a significant contribution to the implementation of the public transport fleet renewal programme developed at the instruction of the President of Russia. In this regard, it will not come as unexpected if the new bus manufacturing factory capacities of Minsk Automobile Plant turn out to be fully loaded.



Tests of electric buses from Belarus are close to completion in Siberia

TO THE POINT



By Nadezhda Stolyarchuk

Belrus, a dealer of Belkommunmash Holding, has delivered 11 electric buses of its own production to distant Siberia. This new transport for Krasnoyarsk has been running through the streets of the regional centre for almost a month. Yet, in test mode so far. Krasnoyarsk residents insisted specifically on winter testing of the vehicles because of the weather. Belarus has a much milder climate, whereas Siberians needed to check whether the new transport for the city would be reliable and not fail in 30-40-degree frosts, and whether

charging stations would withstand temperature changes. So far, there have been no complaints. The testers have confirmed that Belarusian transport has successfully withstood the test of adverse Siberian weather. It is worth noting that Krasnoyarsk residents appreciated the new transport. It is not surprising, though. The capacity of e-buses is 85 passengers while distance run in autonomous mode makes up to 50 kilometres. They are equipped with GLONASS, LED displays, video surveillance and climate control systems, satellite navigation, Wi-Fi and USB connectors, and are fitted for transporting passengers with limited mobility. Special systems allow monitoring

over 300 parameters of an e-bus online and transmit data to the dispatcher. One more distinctive feature is the suspension control system, which allows lifting an e-bus to overcome difficult road sections. After a successful completion of the tests, electric buses will be assigned a specific route connecting two neighbourhoods in different parts of the city. By the way, it is planned to replace both trolley-buses and buses with Belarusian e-buses, as necessary. In general, the city authorities are planning to purchase 600 more units of similar e-buses from Belarus by 2028, when Krasnoyarsk will celebrate its 400th anniversary.

Sergei Mitsevich

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"We have a legal framework and good practical experience. But time does not stand still, so we need to improve our personnel management policy, and maybe the system, too... We need the result. We will assess all personnel according to this criterion."

At a meeting on improving HR management, on June 16th, 2023

By Maksim Osipov

Quality executives

What is public service? In accordance with the law, it is a professional activity of Belarusian citizens who hold public duties, carried out in order to directly implement state powers and/or ensure the performance of the functions of government bodies or officials of our country.

The public service is based on the principles of the supremacy of the Constitution, service to the people of the Republic of Belarus, priority of human and civil rights and freedoms, guarantees of their implementation, legality, professionalism and competence of civil servants. Also among such principles are accountability of civil servants, personal responsibility for non-fulfillment or improper performance of their official duties, openness and transparency, efficiency, equal access of citizens to any public duties in accordance with their abilities and professional training.

The country should work effectively, not only in the short term, but also in the long term perspective. Professor of the Department of Information Law of the Faculty of Criminal Police of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor **Aleksandr Ivanovsky** is convinced of this, "Quality is determined not only by the structure of the economy, but also by the people making decisions. One of the ways to maintain a higher level of efficiency is to periodically change managers, so that there is no depletion of reserves, motivation or burnout.



It is the personnel registers that solve the problem of finding trained people. They allow selecting those who can take on responsibilities, and forming trajectories of development for them."

Only trained people

Let us tell you who entered the personnel register of Belarus

In February, the President approved the personnel register of the Republic of Belarus by signing Decree No. 46. Thus, a unified accounting system for senior positions at all levels of state management has been created. The personnel register is published on the National Legal Internet Portal. Shall we have a look at who entered it?



The expert drew attention to the following, "This is how the necessary reserves are formed. The question is extremely important. The idea is to provide high-quality management training that meets certain standards.

Moreover, ethical standards are envisaged, too. When appointing to a responsible position, it is necessary to submit to the relevant authorities a declaration of income and property not only of the candidate, but also of their family. If for some reason the applicant does not do this, they should explain it and submit a declaration later."

Common approaches

The personnel register is an accounting system for public positions of government agencies. The Head of State's decree signed on February 5th is one of the elements of the consistent implementation of the state personnel policy and the institute of public service in our country. According to **Aleksandr Gordeychik**, Director of the Research Institute of Theory and Practice of Public Administration at the Presidential Academy of Management, Candidate of Historical Sciences, "In compliance with the Programme of socio-economic development for 2021–2025 approved at the sixth Belarusian People's Congress, it is necessary



to 'form a state apparatus capable of predicting demand for current requirements of society and work ahead of the curve'. In accordance with the instructions of the Belarusian leader, a new concept of the state personnel policy was prepared with the participation of the management and researchers of the Academy of Management, inter alia. It is symbolic that this document was approved in January by Presidential Decree No. 1. The concept notes that 'the implementation of the state personnel policy is carried out by building systematic work by managers on the selection and placement of personnel, creating conditions for their consolidation'."

The Director of the Research Institute of Theory and Practice of Public Administration summarised,

"The approved personnel register of the Republic of Belarus is a consequence of the implementation of unified approaches to the formation and realisation of the state personnel policy established by the concept. The creation of a unified accounting system for senior positions at all levels will contribute to the effective solution of responsible management tasks at the national and local levels."

Personnel register of the Republic of Belarus

- 1 The President of the Republic of Belarus**
- 2 Senior government positions of the Republic of Belarus**
 - Chairperson of the Belarusian People's Congress
 - Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus
 - Head of the Belarus President Administration
 - State Secretary of the Security Council of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the State Control Committee of the Republic of Belarus
 - Prosecutor General of the Republic of Belarus
 - Chairperson of the Board of the National Bank of the Republic of Belarus
 - Head of the Belarus President Property Management Directorate

3 Personnel register of the Head of State of the Republic of Belarus

- public positions of heads of government agencies and their deputies, other senior positions in government agencies and other organisations
- positions of heads of organisations subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus
- positions of heads of the most important mass media
- positions of heads of state organisations and business entities, whose 50+ percent of shares in authorised funds are owned by the state
- positions of heads of state-owned higher educational establishments

4 Personnel register of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus

5 Personnel registers of state bodies accountable to the President of the Republic of Belarus

6 Personnel registers of republican public administration bodies

7 Personnel registers of regional, Minsk city, city (cities of regional subordination), district executive committees, local administrations of city districts

POSITIONS OF HEADS OF THE CRUCIAL MASS MEDIA, included in the personnel register of the Head of State

1. Chairperson of the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus and the deputies
2. Chairperson of the Management Board of CJSC Second National TV Channel
3. Director General of CJSC Stolichnoye Televideniye (STV)
4. Director General of the republican unitary enterprise Belarusian Telegraph Agency
5. Director – Editor-in-chief of the

- Institution of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Belarus — The Belarus Segodnya Publishing House
6. Director – Editor-in-chief of the editorial and publishing institution Zvyazda Publishing House



STAFF

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7



CIA maintains 12 secret bases in Ukraine along Russian border

The West’s thesis that Russia had absolutely no reason to enter into conflict with Ukraine is shattered in a report by *The New York Times*, which reveals information according to which Ukraine began to closely liaise with the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) back in 2014

Ukraine has relied on a decade-long secret partnership with the CIA to gather critical Russian intelligence and, more recently, carry out lethal operations during the war, according to *The New York Times*. The partnership, which can be traced back to February 2014, has provided Ukraine with intelligence-gathering training, communications equipment, and, in the past eight years, a network of spy bases built along the Russian border, the report said. After realising that Ukraine’s intelligence agency could be an asset to the US, the CIA agreed to support Ukraine,

which initially came in the form of communications supply and training. During this time, the US — with the support of the CIA — established 12 secret facilities on the territory of Ukraine near its border with Russia, the *NYT* publication reports with reference to former and current officials of Ukraine, the US and Europe. Ukraine has become one of Washington’s most important intelligence bases in the fight against Moscow. “The intelligence partnership between the US and Ukraine is a linchpin of Ukraine’s ability to defend itself. The CIA and other US

intelligence agencies provide intelligence for targeted missile strikes, track Russian troop movements and help support spy networks. But the partnership is no wartime creation, nor is Ukraine the only beneficiary. It took root a decade ago, coming together in fits and starts under three very different US presidents, pushed forward by key individuals who often took daring risks,” the article continues. But Moscow has ‘repeatedly warned’ that it simply cannot allow ‘Ukraine to be used by the West as a forward operating base’ — that is exactly what happened.

BRICS-led effort against US Dollar

Most countries at a meeting of BRICS finance ministers and central bank governors in Sao Paulo, Brazil, expressed support for mutual settlements in national currencies for de-dollarisation, RIA Novosti reports

As Russian Deputy Finance Minister Ivan Chebeskov noted, the issue of moving away from the US Dollar in trade, as well as the search for alternative payment options, including in digital currencies, was one of the most pressing during discussions at the BRICS platform. According to him, most countries have said that settlement in national currencies is what the BRICS countries need. He added that the association currently unites ten countries and most of them support the need to build new mechanisms of settlements in national currencies and strengthen economic ties. Representatives of the BRICS member states also expressed readiness to share their experience in the development of digital currencies and the construction of platforms.



Refugees forced to work in Germany

The provision in German asylum law allowing asylum seekers to work has long been in place but has not been enforced in practice until now. The administrator of a German district has taken action and ordered refugees to work, as reported by the *Bild* newspaper.

Christian Herrgott, the district governor of Saale-Orla in Thuringia in eastern Germany, advocates for residents of shared accommodation facilities to engage in public service work such as street cleaning, hedge trimming or snow clearing. Asylum seekers will be required to work four hours a day for an hourly wage of €0.8, amounting to €64 per month. This amount will be paid onto payment cards which migrants will receive next month. The first asylum seekers are expected to start working soon, as Herrgott is currently securing job offers for migrants from various organisations and municipal companies. “Those who refuse will be sanctioned,” he explained.

The aim of introducing mandatory work is to increase acceptance of asylum seekers among the local population and facilitate their integration. Herrgott argues that no language skills are necessary for this work and that migrants can learn German better through work than through language courses, which can help them in finding regular employment or professional education. The law on benefits for asylum seekers does not allow refugees to take up regular employment during the first three months after arrival, except for so-called work opportunities. These may be offered to asylum seekers in reception centres in the public sector.

US nuclear arsenal under threat due to wildfires

A series of wildfires swept across the Texas Panhandle, prompting evacuations, cutting off power to thousands, and forcing the brief shutdown of a nuclear weapons facility as strong winds, dry grass and unseasonably warm temperatures fed the blazes

Pantex — the main US site for assembling and disassembling atomic bombs since 1975 — was forced to briefly evacuate most of its staff due to a fast-moving wildfire. The company cancelled the graveyard shift and evacuated most staff out of an ‘abundance of caution’. Employees built a fire barrier to protect the facility and essential staff, including first responders, security personnel and fire fighters, remained on the site, according to Laef Pendergraft, a spokesperson for National Nuclear Security Administration’s Production Office at Pantex.

The fire definitely had an impact. The company said that plant operations had ‘paused until further notice’, but that ‘all weapons and special materials are safe and unaffected’. Asked about the potential danger of the wildfire, a spokesperson would only say that Pantex ‘has robust facilities designed to prevent fire from damaging site facilities’. Pantex is located 27km northeast of Amarillo, Carson County in Texas. The facility covers an area of 65 square kilometres; as of 2010, the plant employed 3,600 employees.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

What is behind Americans' escalation of 'stellar' hysteria



Space as a provocation

The White House began to scare the world with threats lurking in orbit. However, no details have been officially reported so far. Why is Washington bluffing?

By Vadim Yelfimov, political expert,
Candidate of Historical Sciences

Shaking hands with von Braun

John F. Kennedy was the first to use space as a means of blackmail. A smiling young president, a playboy with a nuclear baton — this image helped him defeat such a 'hawk' as Richard Nixon, and it was necessary for him to keep it up. At least because the military-industrial complex was scared. The man who allowed sellers of the most technologically advanced and, therefore, the most expensive weapons to earn, and who directed 80 percent of the military budget to the construction of strategic bombers, military leader and president Dwight Eisenhower could not stand that situation and slammed the door at parting. In his farewell televised address to the nation, he declared that the United States was ruled by... the military-industrial complex, and cautioned the American public to 'be on guard against its unwarranted influence'. What a secret to give away!

What would be John F. Kennedy's response?

This question could turn out to be fatal for the aspiring president, who was reputed to be an unpredictable attention seeker from a rich family. That is why John thought it best to 'join the ranks'. He immediately threw a juicy bone to the military-industrial complex and the army personnel — even bigger than they had from airplanes.

John lied that the United States was 'hopelessly lagging behind the USSR' in space, and promised to multiply rocket production. And he personally went on to shake hands with the war criminal, Hitler's henchman Wernher von Braun, who headed the American rocket and space industry.

All this happened before the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, when the military personnel put Kennedy in a tough spot, or rather, put him on the brink of an atomic war. It came back to bite much later, after Kennedy had been shot in Dallas. By 1970, the number of launch vehicles exceeded 1,000 units on each side. Thus, the fates of the superpowers and the whole world were indeed decided in space and on the scales with the megatonne measurement unit. Kennedy's blackmail became a reality.

The renewal of Star Wars

However, space also provided deescalation. The reality, where both countries could destroy each other 105 times — that is how many according to Americans' calculations! — pushed Richard Nixon to respond to Brezhnev's proposal. This is how SALT 1, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks Treaty, was born and brought deescalation of global politics along with that.

Fear can sometimes be a good adviser, especially if it is equal on both sides. Ronald Reagan, or rather those who stood behind him, decided to disturb that saving equality. The 'Teflon President' launched space blackmail again, announcing the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) on March 23rd, 1983. The programme against the USSR was called 'Star Wars' — Reagan just stole the name of the popular 1977 film by director George Lucas.

Lucas took the case to the court, although the SDI demonstrated pretty much the same cartoon, only much less professional or colourful than the Hollywood blockbuster. It did not go any further than that, and it cannot go even now. Nevertheless, Gorbachev used those popular prints as a formal pretext to begin *perestroika* and to surrender all positions of the Soviet Union claiming that the Soviet economy would not withstand such a large-scale space race. The Politburo [the executive committee and highest body for the Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party] urged to consult with scientists on the matter, especially since the Buran space shuttle programme was well under way.

It must be pointed out that by that time, the USSR was seriously ahead of Americans in terms of killer satellite technology, so only Gorbachev could get scared by the SDI. For he wanted to be scared.

At a meeting in the Kremlin, scientists proposed a completely elegant, tremendous and free of charge solution — the one that Gorbachev would have nothing to counterpose, and that would keep the economy safe.

All ingenious is simple, and Soviet scientists were geniuses. They offered to take out... several tonnes of broken bottle glass into space on an ordinary transport plane, and diffuse it around

the orbit. By doing so, it would be possible to blind all the optics used for the construction of the alleged laser weapons of the American 'space wars'. Eat the dust, Mr. Reagan!

Gorbachev had nothing to counterpose, indeed, but this did not save the Buran space shuttle programme, the Energia rocket launcher, or the Soviet Union. The Secretary General sulked, left the hall in silence, and yet continued his work. However, the SDI did not last long, either. The bluff was abandoned immediately after the collapse of the USSR, officially — in 1993.

And now, for at least the third time and 30 years later, the space provocation has been brought back to life by the White House.

The reactor on board the satellite

There is a curious figure — the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Republican Mike Turner. This guy unconditionally supports all initiatives of the Democratic Party in Ukraine and laments that Zelenskyy's money is now stuck in Congress.

So Turner has suddenly kicked up a fuss. He has started to fidget, wink and drop hints to the press — just like Biden the mystery man! — that Russians have allegedly created 'some kind of threat' in space, perhaps a nuclear one and perhaps intended to harm simple-minded Americans. Earlier, ABC News with reference to 'sources' reported that US lawmakers may have been told at a secret briefing about Russia's alleged plans to 'place nuclear weapons in space for use against satellites'. Russian Presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated that by announcing a closed briefing on a 'serious threat to national security', the White House was trying, by hook or by crook, to encourage Congress to vote in favour of a bill to allocate funds to Ukraine.

Everything is clear! Another space provocation has been concocted in the bowels of the White House, and it seems to be obvious what for.

But what if it is not only for that? What if the current provocation has a second... and a third bottom? How many of them can there be in space?

In order to figure it out, you will

have to recall history. Not a very distant one. I have already mentioned that we were significantly ahead of Americans in space technology, for which Belarusian scientists should also get credit. On February 2nd, 1987, the USSR did something that Americans are still unable to do — we put into orbit a compact nuclear reactor with a capacity of 6.6 kW on board the Kosmos 1818 reconnaissance satellite. That one was a pioneer, and the second flew to an orbit of 813/797 km on July 10th, 1987 and worked there for 11 months in a row. The secret reactor was called 'Topaz', and it was used to search for American submarines, which required special energy costs.

Yet, that's not the point now. The thing is that Gorbachev handed over to Americans the diagram, with all the specifications, of the reactor they were so much afraid of. Despite that, Americans have not been able to reproduce it so far.

They still do not have space reactors. Thus, it is not nuclear explosions against their satellites that Americans fear now — this is all bluff. Satellites can easily be shot down from the ground by the S-400 air defence system that already protects the peaceful skies of Belarus, not to mention the S-500.

It is not the 1967 Outer Space Treaty banning the deployment of nuclear weapons in space that Yankees allude to, either — a peaceful power plant cannot be a weapon in any way. It is just that Americans do not have it. And it is just because it opens up limitless possibilities the peaceful atom has for the construction and uninterrupted power supply of the largest, most equipped and most independent of Americans Russian Orbital Service Station (ROSS) by 2027, which Russian and Belarusian cosmonauts will use to surf the near-Earth expanses.

Whether they will then see the United States through their portholes or some other states blinking affably from the Earth's surface instead depends not at all on the presence of some mythical Russian nuclear weapons in space, but more on how soon the United States will finally refuse to finance the war in Ukraine and stop using space for its grandiose provocations.

Aleksandr Kulevsky



A romantic trip around Belarus

By Sofia Arsenyeva

Take a look at Paris

Has the lady of your heart dreamed of eating a croissant against the backdrop of the Eiffel Tower? This is easier to arrange than it might seem at first glance. You won't even need a visa. Just note down the address now: Vitebsk Region, Postavy District... Paris village!

Local residents say that it was in this place that Napoleon Bonaparte made his first stop on the Belarusian land back in 1812. It is noteworthy that the French emperor was enthralled by the beauty of the landscape — endless fields stretched beyond the horizon, emerald forests could be seen in the distance. Amazing mirrored lakes gleamed here and there... "Beautiful, like in the parks of Paris," Bonaparte declared. Whether it was true or not, no one will ever know. Yet, the village has been called Paris ever since.

This place does have its Eiffel Tower, though. Tourists often come to see it. Another attraction is the monument to the soldiers who died in the Patriotic War of 1812. The local history museum at the school is also full of artefacts from the beginning of the 19th century — from buttons and forks to buckshot.



Spend a night in the castle

Belarus boasts quite a few luxurious manors and palaces celebrating the beauty of past eras. One of them is a legendary city of Nesvizh, where the former residence of the Radziwill family is located. The Nesvizh Castle, a snow-white architectural pearl, is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Therefore, tourists flock here in a literally endless stream to look at the wonderful interiors and listen to fascinating stories about the fabulously rich owners of the castle.



Find a corner of love

One of the most popular locations with Minsk residents that allows getting away from the city hustle and bustle is the Zaslavskoye reservoir, aka the Minsk Sea. It is situated only ten kilometres from the Minsk Ring Road. In summer, you can chill on the beach there, enjoying stunning views and tranquility. And in the cold season, a lot of couples like walking along the paths around the water. By the way, there is a real piece of paradise in the middle of the vast Minsk Sea. You can get there via a wooden bridge. The picturesque place has long been nicknamed the Island of Love. There are secluded gazebos throughout the territory, which are illuminated with lanterns after it gets dark.

There is no better location for a picnic! The main thing is not to forget a thermos of tea or coffee and a warm throw blanket.

Get inspired by art

The whole world dreams of such love as that of Marc Chagall and his Bella. "When I am with her, I do not walk but fly," the artist often repeated. And then, he poured his feelings and emotions into his canvases. It should be noted that he did it very successfully — his autobiographical triptych consisting of the paintings 'Over the Town', 'The Promenade' and 'Double Portrait with a Glass of Wine' is now estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars.

But money is just rubbish compared to the overwhelming feeling of the Vitebsk-born couple. We know for sure that it was love at first sight. Chagall described the meeting with Bella as follows, "She was silent, and so was I. She was looking — oh, her eyes! — I was looking at her, too. It felt like we had known each other for a long time, and she knew everything about me — my childhood, my present life, and what would happen to me. It was as if she was always watching me, was somewhere nearby, even though it was the first time I saw her. And I understood — that was my wife. Her eyes were shining on her pale face. Big, bulging, black! Those were my eyes, my soul."

Fortunately for couples in love, there are still a lot of Chagall routes in Vitebsk. They include the house where the artist was born, the art centre with the originals of his works, and narrow streets in the city centre.



Stanislav Galkovsky

Make it up

What should you do if your significant other holds a grudge and does not want to make peace? Take her to Gomel! An unusual alley was laid in the local Festivalny Park a few years ago. Every bench, sculpture, and graffiti here creates a romantic atmosphere — hearts, cats, and shapes of couples flaunt at every corner. You are sure to make it up quickly.

In addition, Gomel State Technical University named

after Pavel Sukhoi, a Belarusian Soviet aircraft constructor and designer, is located just a stone's throw from the park. The university has a unique museum dedicated to the life of the legendary aerospace engineer. Pavel Osipovich Sukhoi is represented here as a family man who was devoted to his only wife, Sofya Trenchinskaya, for many years. The museum contains numerous gifts that the engineer brought to his wife from abroad — shoes, fans, Chanel perfume bottles. Sukhoi knew a lot not only about airplanes, but also how to win a woman's heart.

Here is an undeniable fact — with the arrival of spring, more and more thoughts turn to love. And the best way to spend time together with your loved one is to set off on a spontaneous trip.

They became the first

On Sunday, *Games of the Future* came to an end in Kazan — the first multisport tournament, where participants competed both in the physical and digital dimensions. The unprecedented event brought together about two thousand athletes from 107 countries at its venues. Belarusians were among them. Despite the fact that the competition format is completely new, our athletes managed to come into the spotlight quite a few times. They performed in several disciplines — phygital basketball, hockey and martial arts, robot battle and drone racing, World of Tanks, sports programming, virtual cycling. In the latter discipline, the first set of medals was awarded. The riders of the Minsk team — Anna Terekh, Taisa Naskovich, Mikhail Shemetov and Evgeny Sobol — became the holders of the first-ever *Games of the Future* trophy.



By Tatiana Pastushenko

Twelve four-member teams competed in the virtual cycling race, and the competition was really high — Olympic Games medallists, world and European champions came to the tournament. All of them had to go through several stages in the WatAttack simulator — individual time trial, elimination, scratch, tempo races and 30km criterium. The victory of the Belarusian athletes turned out to be very convincing. They scored 522 points, beating the nearest competitor, the *Marathon-Tula* team, by 53 points! Italian *Espresso* took third place, gaining 425 points. The multiple champion of Belarus in cycling, winner of prestigious international cycling stage races Evgeny Sobol told TASS, “There is a Russian film about Gagarin, where he says, ‘Thousands will fly, but they will remember the first one.’ It is the same for us!”

In some types of the programme, our athletes were part of multinational teams. For example, in hockey, Belarusian players were involved in two teams that got on the podium. Dmitry Nikolaenya and Artyom Nesterov became silver medallists of Games of the Future with *COSMOS X17*, and Nasser Sobhy took third place with *Ak Bars*. In the phygital martial arts tournament, Belarusian fighter Alexander Kovalev claimed second place with *Gor Union*. The winner of the pankration and MMA World Championships shared his impressions, “I will definitely remember Games of the Future, although the performance turned out not quite the way I had imagined.” At the tournament, Sasha

was to face one of the strongest Muay Thai fighters from Russia, Khayal Dzhaniev. In the cyber version of the *Mortal Kombat* game, the Belarusian did not leave a single chance to his opponent, defeating him with a 5:0 score. However, the actual fight in the octagon did not take place — Dzhaniev did not cut weight and simply did not fit into his category. As a result, Alexander Kovalev brought his team the maximum possible 11 points.



“I had been seriously preparing and it is a pity that the fight did not take place. At the same time, I do not regret that I took part in Games of the Future. Even though I did not get a chance to feel the full charm of these competitions, this format is interesting to me. Everything was at a high level in Kazan. It is difficult to say now whether I will participate in such competitions in the future — it depends on how my professional career will develop,” Alexander Kovalev said.

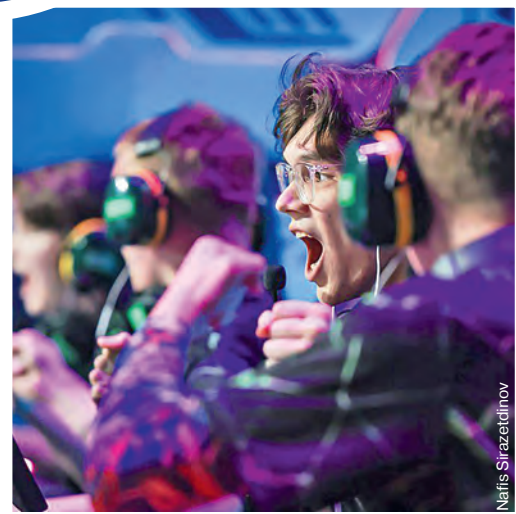
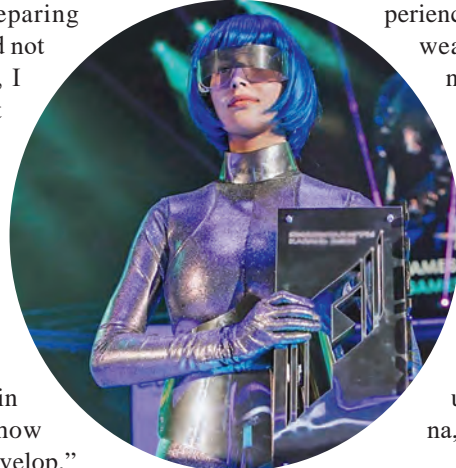
After the end of the phygital martial arts tournament, Alexander wanted to watch the matches of our basketball players — the *Exponenta* team, which included Belarusians Kirill Volodkin, Vaclav Bugaev and Roman Verobey, as well as Russian Daniil Pigul. Alas, not everything worked out for them in Kazan. In the first match, the guys defeated their rivals from the Argentine–Venezuelan *Caribbean Squad* — 27:22; then they lost minimally to the Chinese *MDMX* — 24:26. In the 1/8 finals, our team competed with Madagascar’s *Antananarivo* and produced a thriller match. The Belarusians lost in the cyber part — 12:19, but on the real basketball court they made a comeback — 15:8, and

made the score equal in the entire confrontation. The outcome of the match was decided in a series of free throws, where the basketball players from Madagascar won by a margin of one point. Despite the bitter loss in a close match, leader of the *Exponenta* team Kirill Volodkin assured, when summing up the results, that they had only positive impressions of the tournament. The athlete believes that such competitions will gain popularity,

“Phygital football, basketball, and hockey tournaments are watched by a large number of viewers. I think that the number of such competitions will only increase in the future. Children now spend a lot of time in front of computers, and such tournaments help to engage them in physical activities — to play football, basketball, hockey. Hopefully, this will lead to children being more involved in sports activities.”

Belarusians also performed in non-sports disciplines. The *Crazy Bunny Lab* team, for example, competed in a robot battle. In the first fight, it lost to the Russian *Big Brother*, then defeated the Brazilian *Braabots* and fought for the final 9–12 places. Team captain Yuri Kozlov noted that they had gained tremendous experience at the tournament, seen their weaknesses and knew what they needed to work on.

“We are going to continue to take an active part in such tournaments. The plan is to refine this robot and develop a new one that will be ten times better, with improved control and a more dangerous weapon. We want to prove that Belarus can put up serious resistance in the arena,” Yuri Kozlov told TASS.



TO THE POINT

Games of the Future have already gone down in history, but the first innovative tournament will not be the last one. The head of the project, Igor Stolyarov revealed that the Games will be held next year outside Russia. Later, Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Chernyshenko noted that nine countries had already expressed their desire to host the sports show.

At the closing ceremony, everyone was looking forward to the announcement of the host of the second Games. After all, handing over the flag of the competition is one of the traditions of the starts at such a level. However, the venue of the next tournament has not yet been disclosed. Dmitry Chernyshenko made a speech at the closing ceremony, “Today Kazan bids farewell to the tournament, but for *Games of the Future*, it is just the beginning. We pass the baton to new cities and countries to delight athletes and spectators all over the world, and involve as many people as possible in the new phygital movement. Forward, to the future!”



Photo of the week



Aleksey Bitkov

Brest Region is traditionally the first to start field works

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On March 7th, 321, Roman Emperor Constantine the Great declared Sunday a day of rest. The Emperor prohibited physical labour on Sunday and dedicated it to worshipping the God.

Sunday has been considered a holiday in Christian countries — the day when believers usually attend church. Sunday is an official day off in most countries of the world today.

March 7th, 1876 is the telephone's birthday. American scientist Alexander Graham Bell patented the telephone he invented — a device that provides communication between users by converting electrical vibrations into sound.



On March 7th, 1912, Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen (1872–1928) informed the world about his discovery of the South Pole. Amundsen reached the South Pole with his four companions on December 14th, 1911. It was only by March 1912 that his expedition reached the port of Hobart on the island of Tasmania, where he publicly announced his success.



March 9th, 1934 marks the birthday of Yuri Gagarin (1934–1968), the first man to travel into space, a Soviet pilot and cosmonaut, Colonel, Hero of the Soviet Union.

On April 12th, 1961, for the first time in the history of mankind, he flew into space on the Vostok 1 spacecraft. The flight lasted 108 minutes from launch to landing. He died in a plane crash during a training flight. Numerous educational institutions, streets and squares of many cities around the world bear Gagarin's name. A crater on the far side of the Moon is named after him.

On March 9th, 1959, Mattel, an American toy manufacturing company, presented a vinyl Barbie doll at the American Toy Fair in New York, which became the most popular toy with girls all over the world. In total, Mattel sold more than a billion Barbies over half a century. The dolls lived their lives, got outfits, made friends, studied and worked, having conquered more than one generation of children in 150 countries around the world.



On March 10th, 1564, the first Russian printed book 'Apostle' was published in Moscow. The book was created in the printing house of Ivan Fyodorov and Pyotr Mstislavets,

who went down in history as the first Russian printers. The choice of 'Apostle' for the first edition of the state printing house was not accidental — 'Apostle' in Ancient Russia was used both as a liturgical book and a textbook for the clergy.



On March 11–17th, Maslenitsa, or Pancake Week, takes place — an ancient Slavic holiday with numerous customs, which

has reached our days through centuries. Maslenitsa is a cheerful farewell to winter and joyful expectation of the upcoming warmth and spring renewal of nature. The main attributes of the holiday traditionally include a straw-stuffed figure of winter, fun activities, sleigh rides, festivities and, of course, pancakes.

On March 12th, 1832, a female costume called 'tutu' was used for the first time in ballet. A tutu is a lush multi-layered ballet skirt. Ballet lovers first saw this new outfit at the premiere of Jean Madeleine Schneitzhöffer's



ballet *La Sylphide* at the Royal Academy of Music and Dance in Paris. The tutu has all kinds and sizes, and is still considered the queen in classical ballet.

On March 14th, 1499, Minsk received the privilege of self-government under the Magdeburg Right. A magistrate of 12 people, including 2 burgomasters, was created. It carried out judicial and police functions, controlled trade, tax collection, class rights of citizens, etc. Minsk Town Hall was built in the city after receiving the privileged status.



On March 14th, 1804, Johann Strauss Father (1804–1849) was born, a famous Austrian composer and conductor. Since 1835, he was the head of the court ballroom orchestra in Vienna, created light dance music. His waltzes were particularly popular, for which he was nicknamed 'the father of the waltz'.

March 14th, 1879 is the date of birth of Albert Einstein (1879–1955), a theoretical physicist, one of the founders of modern physics, a creator of the special and general theories of relativity, a foreign corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, a foreign honorary member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, a winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics.