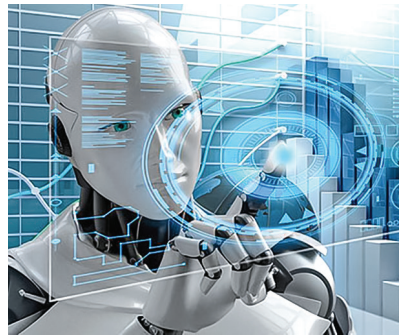




The 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition, prepared by the National Academy of Sciences, has started

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Scenarios that could shake the global economy and increase political tensions in the coming year

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INTERNATIONAL

The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

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Lohman Rashid with his daughter

A lesson in humanity

Everyone — both adults and children — live with anticipation in the Bruzgi transport and logistics centre. They aspire to the European Union — they simply have no way back. People go to the EU not only in the hope of escape from wars or in search of a better life: for many, this is the only chance to reunite with their families. Refugees are sincerely grateful to Belarusians for their support, food, clothing, medicine and medical assistance. Meanwhile, the residents of Poland are talking louder and louder about the fact that the dialogue between Minsk and Warsaw is the only civilised way to end the suffering of thousands of unfortunate people who are stuck on the Polish border.



Belarus does not dance

President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko gives an interview to the British media company BBC

The conversation lasted for about an hour. The interviewer was Steven Rosenberg, a leading international columnist for the BBC, who specialises in the post-Soviet space. The BBC production team has been working in Belarus for several days, including at the border with Poland. Belarus has provided unfettered access to all media outlets, including foreign ones, so that they could cover the situation with refugees. Meanwhile, neighbouring Poland continues to adhere to the policy of a complete information blockade.

BBC was one of many foreign media outlets that asked for an interview with the Belarusian Head of State, and the production team was invited to the Palace of Independence.

The conversation primarily tackled the situation on the Belarusian-Polish border; the British journalists were also interested in the details of the conversation between the Head of State and the Acting Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel, as well as Belarus' relations with the European Union and Russia.

Aleksandr Lukashenko openly and frankly answered all the questions asked, including once again debunking outright rumours common among west-

ern journalists.

The President answered a question regarding the recent incident at the Bruzgi border checkpoint, during which the Polish side not only used special gear and ammunition against refugees, but actually violated the state border.

Acts of brutality by Polish security officials against refugees, including pregnant women and children, the use of water cannons containing chemical impurities in the cold, flash-noise grenades and gas with toxic substances — all these and many other facts have been recorded and made public. However, the BBC columnist in his question noted only 'stones and sticks' in the hands of the refugees themselves.

"Steve, don't single one episode out of context. Now let's recount how it happened. The vast majority of the 2,100 people peacefully asked the Poles to transit their country to reach Germany. A Polish officer came up and began to explain (thank God, we filmed it, even his voice can be heard) that they need to go to the checkpoint and submit applications, and that the Polish authorities would consider them and so on. In other words, he actually sent them to that bor-

der checkpoint. They all left [the camp in the forest near the border] and rushed there," said the President.

Further, Aleksandr Lukashenko continued, there were no stones: the refugees knelt before the Polish officers. "They understood that the Polish guards would let them across and that they would take their applications. They knelt down, apologised for all the trouble and asked to be let through. But they were not. That's where it all that started," said the President. "The Poles used water cannons, in violation of all rules and regulations. What have we learned today? We have established that they used harsh chemicals, pesticides and herbicides. This is what cockroaches are poisoned with and weeds are destroyed. That's how it was. That is, take these episodes as a whole. And we will prove it to you because there is recorded evidence of it."

Aleksandr Lukashenko also drew attention to the fact that the Poles actually violated the state border of Belarus, using special gear and ammunition on its territory. "Why did they shoot into our territory? Do you know that even turning weapons towards the neighbouring territory is forbidden? Why didn't you write

about it? Why did you pour water with toxic chemicals for 100 metre deep into our territory [referring to the use of special gear and ammunition by Polish military personnel against refugees, including pregnant women and children]? It is a violation of the state border. I am telling you that as a guardsman. I was stationed at that border back in the day. I know every metre over there. You at least violated the state border. You threw flares into our territory," said the President. "And we were accused of supplying the refugees so that they could throw grenades. A Polish soldier took a grenade and didn't know how to handle it properly, so it blew up at his feet. And you blamed Belarusians."

The Head of State asserted that Belarus, in its turn, had taken measures to prevent weapons and ammunition from reaching the refugee camp at the border, "If I didn't control this camp, there would have been weapons over there a long time ago. Weapons are being smuggled here from Donbass via Ukraine. If you don't know it, then listen to me."

Aleksandr Lukashenko also did not rule out that in case of provocations, there could be a threat to the life of foreign jour-

nalists as well. "I cannot rule out the possibility that they could have shot some Matthew [CNN reporter Matthew Chance] or you [BBC reporter Steven Rosenberg]. What for? In order to later accuse Lukashenko of it, to put the blame for it on him," explained the President. "Why are you not talking about the charity, the sympathy that my people show towards these refugees?"

Aleksandr Lukashenko also voiced some new shocking details of the actions of the Polish security officials in relation to refugees, "They acted like fascists. As people were sleeping under the open sky, they used flashlights, sirens and so on. They flew a helicopter. The investigators reported that they used tear gas, water, toxic chemicals and helicopters flying at low altitude. What for? So that the helicopter's propeller would send those toxic chemicals deeper into our territory, to reach children... Why didn't the BBC report this on its channel?"

In an interview, the President also said that he is pursuing an independent policy and acts primarily in the interests of the Belarusian people.

The interviewer asked the Head of State why it is diffi-

'Crimes against humanity have no statute of limitations'

By Polina Konoga

Andrei Shved, Prosecutor General of Belarus:

— A legal analysis of the situation at the Belarusian-Polish border in connection with the repeated attempts of refugees to enter Poland's territory in line with international rules in order to transit to Germany has revealed the following.

To date, Polish officials have been blatantly violating the requirements of international law that determine the main civil and political rights of refugees, as well as Belarusian citizens. Attempts are being made and the inviolability of our state border is being violated. Other multiple wrongful acts against humanity are also being committed.

Representatives of the Polish authorities have repeatedly carried out and are currently carrying out illegal deportation, torture and atrocities against refugees. On their arrival at the state border of Poland, the security forces of this country carried out and are implementing inadequate and clearly disproportionate organisational and technical measures to prevent the passage of refugees to Germany. In particular, additional barriers were installed, paramilitary armed patrols and cordoning were introduced, threatening flights of aircraft, tanks, and other

heavy weapons were used in the immediate vicinity of peaceful refugees located on the territory of Belarus.

I would like to underline that refugees have repeatedly and publicly declared their status, goals, and route to Germany, of which the Polish authorities are clearly aware. Despite this, Polish law enforcement personnel have resorted to torture and other acts of violence, have used special equipment and ammunition, toxic substances, blinding lights, demonstrational shots in the air and explosions, physical force against peaceful and defenceless people, including at night.

Multiple examples of illegal deportation of refugees from Poland's territory, the use of water cannons and chemicals against refugees in air temperatures under 4°C, flares and gas with toxic substances were registered and documented on November 15th-16th alone. Including against women with signs of pregnancy and small children.

Preliminary results of forensic tests were received yesterday. They indicate that Polish authorities used potent chemicals with toxic and irritating effects, including deltamethrin (aka pesticide) and other substances, which have caused bodily injuries to at least 30 people in the form of burns, intoxication, abrasions, and bruises.

I would like to emphasise that there are underage individuals among the people hurt by the illegal and totally unjustified acts of aggression, torture and violence on the part of Polish officials. For instance, Briar Abas born in 2006, Sindi Sirana born in 2007, and women, including those who are pregnant. Bodily injuries were also caused to reporters from Belarus, Russia, Qatar and to Belarusian border service officers.

Each fact of the commission of criminal acts by Polish officials, including on the territory of the Republic of Belarus, is recorded, documented objectively and impartially during the investigation initiated on the eve of a criminal case on crimes against human security, committed by the Polish security forces and other representatives of the authorities of this country. Active measures are being taken and implemented to identify each official who has committed specific criminal acts against defenceless people.

Polish law enforcement personnel and other officials hide behind piles of razor wire, metal barriers, tanks, armoured vehicles and 15,000 military personnel, who are armed to the teeth. I'd like to emphasise that everything that has been mentioned and other cynical criminal actions, which are now being documented by Belarusian law enforcement agencies, have been committed on the direct orders or with the approval of



Andrei Shved

Poland's political leaders: Poland President Andrzej Duda, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak and other top-ranking officials.

Let me remind you that crimes against humanity, in accordance with international norms and rules, do not have a statute of limitations, and the perpetrators are subject to criminal prosecution.

Moreover, we have recorded multiple public statements from a number of Polish citizens, including government officials, who called for staging Poland's aggression against the Republic of Belarus. Such actions have constituent elements of the crimes described by Article 123 of the Criminal Code of Belarus, namely war propaganda. This is why the Office of the Prosecutor General has opened a criminal case, the investigation of which has been entrusted to the Investigative Committee of Belarus.

Relevant information on criminal acts committed by the highest officials of Poland will be sent for legal assessment to all international organisations, including the United Nations, the Council of Europe and others.

to someone else's tune

cult for the European Union to communicate with him. "I can answer the question of why it is difficult for you to talk to me. Because I don't dance to your tune. I am pursuing an independent policy both from you and from anyone — from the Americans, the British, the European Union. I work for my people," underlined the Belarusian leader.

He also noted that Belarus has always strived to live in peace and harmony with its neighbours. "Can you say I've bothered my neighbours? Did I arrange any fights with Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians, Ukrainians on the border? Never. Right here [in the Palace of Independence, where the interview took place] the summit of the Normandy Four on Ukraine was held and the war was stopped [yes, they still shoot there, but there is no war, they do not die in their thousands]," said the Head of State. "We've done everything. I always said that neighbours are given by God and cannot be chosen. Did we make any problems for Lithuanians, Latvians? Never."

At the same time, Aleksandr Lukashenko drew the journalist's attention to the foreign interference in the internal affairs of Belarus, "Why did you come into our house and try to destroy it last year? Why? What busi-



President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko and leading international columnist for BBC TV Steven Rosenberg during an interview

ness of yours is our election? We didn't meddle with the UK or America. You financed a mutiny last year. You did! You controlled the mutiny from Poland's territory. With Americans' backing. You came into our house. We didn't ask for you."

The President also warned against attempts to unleash a war on the territory of Belarus. "You should worship us. Worship! Because we fought against fascism. Seemingly in a coalition with you. Don't you remember? Do you remember the guy who would walk around and always smoke a cigar [UK Prime Minister during WWII, Winston Churchill] while ours smoked a pipe [the USSR leader, Joseph Stalin]? Don't you remember it?" asked the Head of State. "You still owe the Belarusian nation for World War Two. You still haven't paid up for the losses we've suffered. It's been less than 100 years since the beginning of the war but you've already stormed into this house once again and are trying to start a new smaller war."

"You have to understand that if we start a war here in Belarus, NATO and Russia will get involved. It will be a nuclear war," stressed Aleksandr Lukashenko.

Based on the materials of belta.by and sb.by

We must always remain human

While the European authorities continue their political games (not allowing human rights defenders and journalists to the border and hiding in every possible way the real state of affairs while demanding money from Brussels), many ordinary Polish citizens treat the innocent hostages of the situation with compassion. For example, caring residents of the Polish town of Siemiatycze began to collect humanitarian aid for refugees stranded on their border. The gathering was organised by our colleagues from the editorial office of the local newspaper *Kurier Podlaski*.

By Yulia Demeshko

How this aid will be transferred is still unknown, as the state of emergency is still in force in the border areas. However, the very fact of such solidarity and humanity towards people in trouble deserves respect. In an interview with *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the journalist from *Kurier Podlaski*, Anna Kondraciuk, said that at one time many residents of Siemiatycze worked illegally abroad, mainly in Belgium, some left for Brussels. This was back in the days when Poland was not part of the European Union. Moreover, no one took migrants to the forest. They were sent to the Zaventem Airport [Brussels international airport] and deported back to Poland. But the Polish authorities very quickly forgot about this. Maybe on purpose?

Now the Poles, who just humanely want to help refugees, fear that their help will be regarded as complicity in illegal border crossing. Therefore, most of them have asked to remain anonymous. But even these fears did not prevent citizens countrywide from sending parcels.

Residents of the border regions, having heard the tales from their politicians, were afraid to open their own sheds. They feared that refugees would be found

there. In fact, nothing bad happened to anyone, no one attacked anyone. However, as recent events show, things can be different. We refer to the beating and robbery of refugees near Hajnówka and the destruction of medical vehicles at the border.

However, the Polish authorities, no matter how much they want to, will not be able to hide their crimes. The Investigative Committee of Belarus is already conducting a check at the border on the use of special equipment against refugees. Recently, the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the UN Office and other international organisations in Geneva, Yuri Ambrazevich, during a meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, noted that an international organisation should record human rights violations by the EU states with respect to refugees. The head of the Belarusian diplomatic mission also said that recently our country has also conveyed its position on the refugee crisis to representatives of other international organisations.

"On the part of the leadership of the secretariat of international organisations, there are no claims or accusations against Belarus that our country is violating any norms of international law," adds Yuri Ambrazevich.

POSITION

UN Secretary General: 'Belarus is neither the source nor the cause of refugee flows'

In New York, the Permanent Representative of Belarus to the UN, Valentin Rybakov, handed over to the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, a personal letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus, Vladimir Makei, on the situation around refugees on the western borders of our country outlining the actual official position of Belarus on the steps being taken to resolve the crisis and assistance to refugees. The Belarusian diplomat informed the Secretary General in detail that Belarus is an exclusively transit country for migrants and drew the interlocutor's attention to some fundamental points. Valentin Rybakov said that the UN Secretary General promised to study all the materials presented, "He agreed that Belarus is neither the source nor the cause of those flows of migrants who transit through Belarus to European states." António Guterres also asked to convey his warm greetings to President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko.

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Solid groundwork for tomorrow

For nine months of this year, the gross domestic product totalled 102.7 percent. What is important is that the forecast for this period has been exceeded with good progress. In general, the economy is developing on a qualitative and balanced basis. High growth rates ensure the maximum fulfilment by the state of its social obligations. Industry has traditionally been the main contributor. In addition, the service sector is gradually recovering. We asked the Minister of Economy Aleksandr Chervyakov to analyse the results of nine months and conduct a SWOT analysis.

Interviewed
by Vladislav Sychevich

Growth drivers

— Despite all the negative forecasts of various experts, the Belarusian economy continues to develop dynamically while also demonstrating fairly good performance in the context of the pandemic. What is the reason for the growth and what are the drivers of growth today?

— Industry remains the locomotive of the economy. The industrial production index amounted to 107.9 percent.

In the processing industry, production gains have been observed in virtually all subsections. The top-10 goods with the largest gains are: serums and vaccines, integrated circuits, passenger cars, food and beverage equipment, internal combustion engines, televisions, electric stoves and electric built-in panels, as well as parquet boards and panels, knitwear and tractors.

Thus, we are growing not only at the expense of traditional commodity items, but also high-tech, innovative products, on which the stake has been made in the current five-year period.

I would like to note that as of October 1st, stocks of finished products amounted to 51.9 percent of the average monthly production volume. This is the lowest level for the indicated date since 2009, which testifies to real sales for 'real money'.

The prevalence of healthy trends in the economy is clearly illustrated by the positive dynamics in transport. In nine months, the gross added value of the industry grew by 2.9 percent due to the recovery of passenger traffic, with a slight slowdown in freight traffic due to the subsidence of pipeline transport. The leaders in the transportation of goods and passengers are railway, air and water transport.

Undoubtedly, the effectiveness of the Government's measures was the fixation of

the service sector in the green zone despite the pandemic. Over nine months it has added 2.9 percent. Information and communication, temporary accommodation and catering services, healthcare, education, creativity, sports, entertainment and recreation, and others have also seen positive growth. These rates make it possible to provide 1.2 percent of contribution to GDP growth.

— It's no secret that a reflection of the competitiveness of the economy is the demand for our products in foreign markets. What about exports?



— In January-September 2021, 64.7 percent of industrial production was exported — 5.9 percent up on last year. The increase in exports by 36.3 percent was due not only to the rise in prices (by 19.9 percent), but they received a noticeable increase due to the increase in physical volumes (up 13.5 percent). We are growing not only in energy products and raw materials, but also in complex technical products: trucks, tractors and truck tractors, motor cars, machines for harvesting crops, X-ray equipment and others.

At the same time, the traditionally positive contribution of services to exports remains. In January-September, these rose by 19.5 percent, mainly due to ICT, transport services, repair and maintenance services, financial and other business services.

As a result, the foreign trade

surplus is the best since 2012 standing at \$2.7bn — 1.7 times more than in January-September 2020.

Ultimately, however, the marker of economic efficiency is the financial condition of organisations.

Financial results for January-September 2021 are characterised by a significant increase in gross indicators. At the same time, on the whole, their dynamics are positive. Revenue increased by 23.8 percent, profit from sales — by 28.6 percent, net profit — by 3.5 times. The total damage to unprofitable

organisations decreased 5.2 times, and their number fell by 8.7 percent. The return on sales is 0.3 percent higher than last year amounting to 8.2 percent.

Reliable foundation

— What are the reserves for further dynamic development of the economy?

— The key development reserve in the short term is to stimulate domestic demand and increase consumption.

In January-September, the economy grew by 2.7 percent, while the real incomes of the population over eight months — by 2.9 percent. Thus, the state fully fulfils its social obligations. This means that it lays a solid foundation for increasing the contribution of domestic demand to future economic growth.

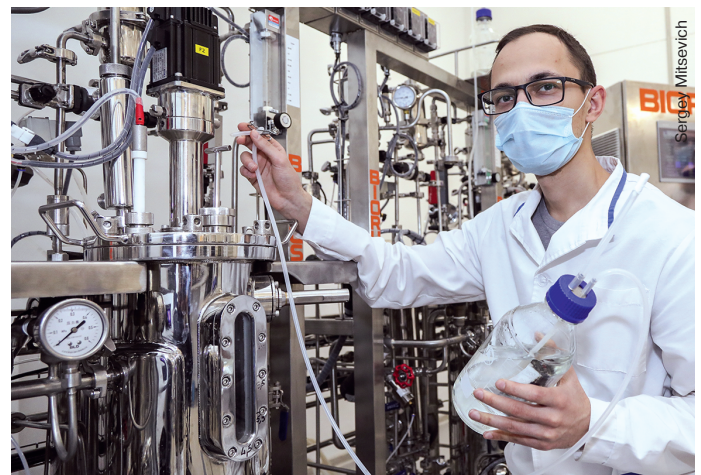
We are now witnessing a phase of increased demand in the



global economy, so during this period it is logical to increase production and sales. However, this requires resources. After all, the price for products directly depends on the cost of raw materials, metals, and energy carriers. Therefore, today the economy that uses the instruments of flexible monetary policy, primarily for its producers and consumers, has

and agricultural raw materials increased by 12.6 percent to reach \$4.7bn. We expect about \$6.1bn as an end-of-year result.

The remaining monitored reserves include the launch at full capacity of production facilities created within the framework of investment projects, whose products are competitive in the domestic and foreign markets.



more chances to 'skim the cream' from the growing world markets.

But for these plans to come true, an appropriate model of behaviour of economic agents, primarily the population, is needed. Therefore, it is extremely vital to stimulate consumer demand.

There is also potential in industries that have not yet left the red zone: construction and agriculture. Because of them, the economy received less than 1.2 percent, that is, if they worked at the level of last year, the economy would have grown by 3.9 percent. It is important, however, that people do not feel the negative impact of this dynamic. Firstly, housing construction should not stop. For nine months, more than three million square metres were commissioned, including 950,000sq.m — with state support. Secondly, the food security of the country is ensured. We increased the production of milk, eggs, flower products and raised more cattle.

In addition, we expanded export supplies and, accordingly, revenue. In January-September, the export of food products

New horizons

— Based on the above-mentioned, what can we say to those who predict the economy will fall?

— It can be stated that the main achievement of the nine months of 2021 is stable, outstripping forecast GDP growth (102.7 percent against the planned 101.1 percent) in the context of a double blow: COVID restrictions and sanctions pressure.

As part of the fulfilment of the Head of State's instructions, a number of industries retained the level of the first half of the year, and even grew in certain commodity items: tractors, TVs, trucks, paper and cardboard, etc. Other undoubted achievements include a positive balance of foreign trade, a minimum level of stocks, a decrease in overdue receivables, a reduction in the enterprises' debt burden, an increase in net profit and a decrease in the number of unprofitable organisations.

We know our capabilities and do everything necessary to apply them for further development and for the benefit of our citizens.

Terrible secrets of the earth



By Ruslan Proleskovsky

Prosecutor General of Belarus Andrei Shved visited the site of the discovery of mass graves of victims of the Nazi invaders in the Gomel Region

Excavations here are being carried out in connection with a large-scale criminal case of the genocide of the Belarusian people during the Great Patriotic War. In the course of the investigative actions, the burial places in which the Nazis hid the traces of their crimes are being established. One of these has been discovered this autumn in the forest of the Chenki forestry, near Gomel.

Having started the check, the prosecutors examined the archival files, including the interrogation protocols of the former police officers and guards of the transit prison in Gomel. It became known that civilian prisoners, as well as Jews from the ghetto, were shot and then buried in the forest. The information collected bit by bit helped to establish the exact location of the graves. In October, servicemen from the Defence Ministry's 52nd specialised search battalion began excavations.

Thirty-four burials have been identified. Only some of



them have been fully worked on. The remains of more than 300 people — men and women — were uncovered. Accompanying finds indicate their belonging to the civilian population. Among items found are keys, combs, eyeglass frames, ladies' mirrors, belt buckles, coins and other household items. Of particular importance are the following pieces of evidence: fragments of clips from a German Mauser rifle, as well as cartridges and bullets from

weapons that were in service with the Wehrmacht troops. The markings on the cartridges date from 1938-1943.

Specialists from the Gomel Region Directorate of the State Forensic Examination Committee — working at the excavation site — note that, judging by the nature of the injuries, people were killed with shots to the head. Moreover, the victims were on their knees.

There is not a single region on the territory of our country

where during the Great Patriotic War the total destruction of the population would not have been carried out. Andrei Shved noted,

“Almost every week, new, previously unknown places of mass extermination of people are revealed. Painstaking work is being carried out while an objective and impartial evidence base is being formed. We are also completing work with witnesses who witnessed the genocide. More than 12,000 people were questioned in Belarus alone. On instructions from the investigative group, the same actions will be carried out in the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Armenia, where people from the BSSR live.”

Moreover, according to the Prosecutor General, the possibility of creating an international investigation group is being worked out with colleagues from the Russian law enforcement agencies.

The scale of the tragedy that occurred on Belarusian soil was also confirmed by the Aide to the Defence Minister for Ideological Work in the Armed Forces — Head of the Main Department for Ideology, Leonid Kasinsky, “More than seven thousand burials have been registered on the territory of the country. This is twice as much as was indicated according to the data of the Soviet archives. For this reason, the numbers in the search group has been increased. One more search team was additionally recruited. It was also decided to extend the search period for these sites. The works will be carried out as long as weather conditions permit.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

The Belarusian public preparing the White Book chronicling the crimes of Poland and Lithuania against humanity



A public investigation of crimes against refugees on the Polish and Lithuanian borders has begun in Belarus. It was initiated by the Belarusian Society Znanie Republican State and Public Association, the Belarus Segodnya Publishing House and the Belarusian Union of Journalists.

The events on the border for several weeks in a row now have demonstrated the cruel and inadequate attitude of the Polish authorities towards refugees, as well as towards journalists, both their own and foreign. Physical force and tear gas were used against people, lights and noise, water cannons with an unknown chemical liquid were used in order to harm health, damage equipment and prevent journalists from recording the crimes that were committed at the border.

National Day of Belarus held at Expo 2020 in Dubai

The Belarusian Investment Forum was organised, with our country's delegation being headed by Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko. The programme included both a plenary part with presentations from key speakers and specialised panels: the Belarusian-Emirati



business forum in the format of a contact-cooperation exchange, a round table discussion with representatives of international investment funds, a session of signing memorandums and agreements, as well as negotiations and consultations of Arab businessmen with the National Agency of Investment and Privatisation and other forum participants.

The event aimed to create an efficient and result-oriented platform for establishing interaction between Belarusian and foreign companies from all over the world in various areas, including IT, agriculture and food processing, transport and logistics.

Historical and cultural landmarks to be designated with QR codes

This innovation is already being tried in the Kamenets District. A tourist route was developed for Kamenets, uniting the sights of the ancient town. Instead of a guide, QR codes will help tourists move along the route. The first point with information is located at the foot of the Kamenets Tower, and from there, the virtual guide will direct you to other interesting places. Stylised street nameplates have also appeared in the central part of Kame-



nets. The address on them is written in three languages: Belarusian, Russian and English.

It is planned to designate sights in other places of the Kamenets District with plates bearing QR codes. For example, in the town of Vysokoe, tourists are interested in the history of the palace and park complex, the former monastery of the Boni Homines, a Catholic church and an Orthodox church.

Industrial Park Development Company and Minsk Technopark sign a co-operative agreement

This was reported on the official website of the Great Stone China-Belarus Industrial Park.

The parties will liaise in informational and expert-consulting terms while also jointly organising and conducting various events: seminars, forums, master classes, pitch sessions, exhibitions, conferences, courses, contests and other educational and business projects on partnership terms.

The Industrial Park Development Company CJSC and Minsk City Technopark LLC already have a successful experience of collaboration, a striking ex-



ample of which is the international competition *Great Startup Challenge*, which took place in June this year and was one of the largest startup project competitions in Belarus. The parties also expressed confidence that the signed agreement will give a new impetus to fruitful interaction.

Meetings at Mount Vechernyaya

An extensive programme of scientific research and development at the station in Antarctica: Aleksei Gaidashov tells us about the tasks of the upcoming polar expedition

The main vanguard group of the 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition, prepared by the National Academy of Sciences, recently set off for the harsh continent. Polar explorers will not only engage in scientific research, but also continue working on the development of the infrastructure of the Belarusian Antarctic station. The scientists completed the creation of its first stage during the last expedition. The international inspection of our station has already noted its high manufacturability, safety and commitment to scientific research. On the eve of the event, the head of the Belarusian Antarctic expeditions, Aleksei Gaidashov, shared the details.

By Inna Gorbatenko

New snowcat and weather station

The 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition includes eleven people, many of whom have already been to Antarctica.

“The participants began their preparations in September,” says the head of the 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition, Aleksei Gaidashov. “They were vaccinated against COVID, trained in labour protection and undertook additional courses in related specialties — slinger, air vehicle operator, first aid treatment, fundamentals of health and safety and others.”

Deputy Head for General Issues and Logistics at the Republican Centre for Polar Research, Igor Pilshchikov, tells us about the route, “The composition of the expedition is divided into two groups. The main vanguard group of eight will travel to Antarctica by air. On November 19th, they flew to Cape Town. In the South African capital, as required by international sanitary protocol, the polar explorers will have a two-week quarantine in complete isolation. Only after that, on board the IL-76 aircraft, with the necessary cargo and scientific equipment, will they fly to the Russian Antarctic station Novolazarevskaya. From there, by a small BT-67 aircraft, as soon as the weather permits, the researchers will fly to the base of the Belarusian station near Mount Vechernyaya. This will happen approximately on December 7th-8th.

The second part of the team will get to Antarctica by sea. In early December, the remaining members of the expedition will leave St. Petersburg on board the Russian scientific expedition vessel ‘Akademik Treshnikov’.



The 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition includes eleven people, many of whom have already been to Antarctica



Polar explorers completed the creation of the first stage of the Belarusian Antarctic station



In total, the station has four snowmobiles, a tracked ATV and a light tracked all-terrain vehicle. A brand-new snowcat will be added to the fleet this season.

They will stop at the German port of Bremerhaven where they will receive the logistical support for their expedition. We are talking about a multifunctional snowcat capable of carrying various types of suspensions and able to assist in various tasks: from clearing snow drifts and preparing runways to transporting bulky heavy loads. Replenishment of the park with new equipment will significantly expand the research area and fa-



The infrastructure created enables the teams to plan the expansion of scientific activities over the coming years



The second part of the team will get to Antarctica by sea

ilitate the work of the expedition in difficult polar conditions.

Field of scientific interest

The scientific programme for the coming season is extensive, with polar explorers being engaged in a complex of scientific research under the programmes of the Academy of Sciences. These include ground-based and satellite-based atmospheric monitoring, ozone layer studies and satel-

lite measurements for the benefit of the national space programme. The results of studies of the impact of human activities on the Antarctic environment and the study of biological diversity promise to be no less interesting. Research will be carried out both with the use of ground-based, remote measuring instruments and with the use of drones and space satellites, including with the help of Belarusian-made instruments.

One of the experiments will

be carried out jointly with the Institute of Physiology at the National Academy of Sciences: they will test new orthopaedic inserts specifically for the shoes of polar explorers. Another experiment is to be conducted jointly with the Scientific Research Centre for Foodstuffs at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus. It concerns the influence of unfavourable weather factors on the quality and nutritional value of various food products during their long-term storage in Antarctica. The expedition members will test experimental dry starter cultures and concentrates of fermented milk mixtures — lapper milk, yoghurts and even dry ice cream. The expedition also includes a cook whose task is to provide polar explorers with a balanced and healthy diet, taking into account a limited range of products.

In addition to the main scientific programme, the polar explorers will take part in the im-

plementation of two international scientific projects: it is planned to jointly collect cores of bottom sediments in freshwater lakes with a German expedition in order to reconstruct the geological history of the development of this continent and an environmental protection project with Turkey.

With a residence permit

Polar explorers completed the creation of the first stage of the Belarusian Antarctic station. It consists of several sites. The largest is an eight-section laboratory-living module. Alongside three laboratories, it includes a surgical and outpatient section, living quarters, a bath complex and a laundry. The second is a three-section communication and navigation module. The station also has garage boxes with all the necessary equipment and a refrigerator module for storing deep-frozen products with a view to wintering.

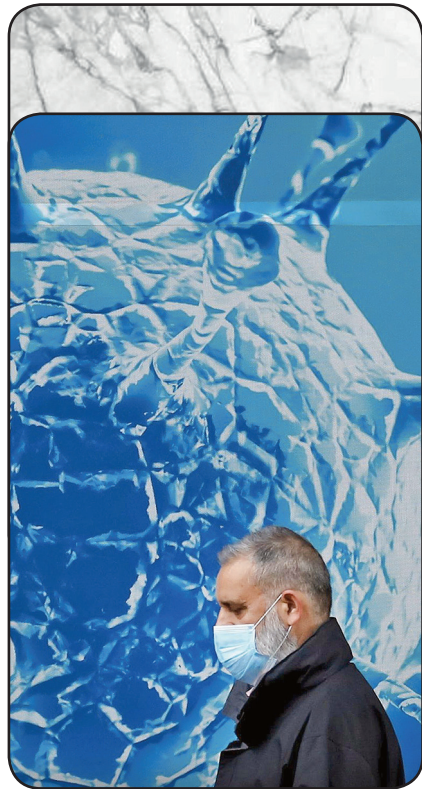
There are technological means of power supply, including a new complex of diesel power plant that provides the station with electricity. Moreover, each module has autonomous heat supply sources.

An incinerator installation has appeared at the station — equipment for the disposal of solid household waste and food waste. A press for crushing metal waste has also been installed, capable of compressing a cubic metre of metal waste to a cubic decimetre, thus enabling to save on waste transportation.

Another innovation is a modern satellite communication system that will provide access to the Internet and IP-telephony. The new satellite system Vsat will enable polar explorers to quickly transmit large amounts of scientific information to the Academy of Sciences and international scientific organisations while also participating in various online conferences, and — if necessary — using the capabilities of telemedicine.

The polar explorers plan to stay in Antarctica until mid-April. They will then be evacuated to Cape Town aboard the Russian ship ‘Akademik Fedorov’. The arrival of the staff of the 14th Belarusian Antarctic expedition to Minsk is scheduled for mid-May 2022.

Traditionally, November is known as the month of forecasts. It is during this period that the publications of expectations for the next year from various investment funds, banks and corporations appear. If you don't go into the weight of numbers and reports, then all the forecast estimates for 2022 can be broken down into several key trends in the political, economic, energy, social and environmental spheres. Let's consider them in more detail.



Struggle for leadership

According to the forecasts of the British media company, Economist Intelligence, the main political trends in 2022 will be built around the rivalry between the United States and the People's Republic of China. At the same

Global solitaire-2022

Scenarios that could shake the global economy and increase political tensions in the coming year



Negative economic processes in developed and developing countries (inflation, unemployment, bankruptcy of enterprises) because of lockdowns and the pandemic threaten a sharp surge in mass protests and an intensification of the struggle between citizens and the state.

The processes of the so-called 'erosion of the state' will gain momentum. State power in conditions of extreme instability will be unable to meet the needs of society in full, which will lead to demand for right-wing or left-wing radical parties and movements, as well as various underground organisations.

Against this background, the collective West is expected to further accelerate the processes of dividing the world into zones and the formation of real and regulatory boundaries between them, including by introducing additional restrictions on movement (tightening the receipt of vaccination certificates, visas, passports etc.).

time, special attention is paid to comparing the upcoming economic growth rates of the United States and China. This indicator determines whether Beijing has enough resources to overcome rivalry with the United States and take a leadership position.

The escalation of the struggle between Washington and Beijing for dominance in the world economy and control over world markets could lead to armed clashes or provocations in the Taiwan area or in the coastal waters in 2022.

At the same time, there will be a clear division of the world into countries that support and gravitate towards the economy of the PRC and states oriented towards the United States. We will see the further formation of the bipolar world.

In 2022, it is expected that the struggle between the United States and Russia for the European energy market, primarily gas, oil and nuclear, will intensify. An attempt by Washington to oust Russian energy companies from the EU could lead to a sharp rise in energy prices and the introduction of certain regulatory institutions (in particular, Brussels has recently proposed to consider the introduction of a market for hydrocarbon quotas). Next year, the US, together

A **As we see, the prospects for 2022 are not as rosy and peaceful as we would like. The struggle for the leadership of the main centres of power leads to the formation of a completely new world order. In these conditions, it is important for Belarus to preserve its national identity and statehood, not to allow itself to be lost in a difficult period of turbulence.** **♥**

with the UK, will strengthen projects aimed at preventing the formation of an economic and energy union between old Europe and Russia.

When lockdown leads to knockdown

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the overall growth rate of the world economy will be about 5.7 percent in 2021. A slight decline is forecasted for

next year at the level of 4.5-4.8 percent. The main centres of growth will remain the Asia-Pacific region with China's leading position, accounting for 5.6 percent in 2022 and 8 percent in 2021. The growth rate of the United States will be lower than that of the PRC and will amount to 3.5-4 percent. The reason for the differences in growth lies in different 'experiences' of dealing with COVID-19 and emerging from the pandemic. The decline in global growth rates in 2022 is associated with increased inflation and uncertainty in the economy of China and its main trading partners.

Supply chain disruption, an increase in energy prices and a super-soft monetary policy provoked a sharp rise in inflation in 2021 not only in the United States, but also worldwide. To contain negative inflationary processes, it may be necessary to raise interest rates and raise the cost of financial resources, which will inevitably affect the fall in the profitability of companies and, as a result, lead to a collapse in the US stock market.

The global rise in the cost of borrowed resources (loans, bonds, etc.) could provoke a wave of sovereign defaults in developing and poor countries with the collapse of their economies, sharp devaluation and hyperinflation.

Climatic whims

Next year, experts do not exclude a continuation of the rise in average temperatures on the planet. This will lead to a series of negative climatic phenomena, the consequences of which the states and their economies will not be able to cope with. As a result, humanity may face outbreaks of various viral diseases and massive loss of life. In conditions of natural and epidemiological disasters, there will be a transition of power from state bodies to military structures.

Hackers go to battle

In the context of a 'war of all against all' and the impossibility of waging a full-scale conventional war (with conventional weapons without the use of weapons of mass destruction), key geopolitical players will increasingly resort to massive cyberattacks on the enemy's infrastructure next year.

According to Economist Intelligence forecasts, this could eventually lead to an escalation of confrontation up to a global cyber war in 2022. Such attacks and war will be aimed at shutting down national electricity and energy networks, blocking the operation of transport, banking and financial systems, water, gas and heat supply...



The newest Russian fifth-generation fighter jet Su-75 (Checkmate) was the star of the Dubai Airshow 2021 international aerospace exhibition in the UAE

Aviation outlook

Dubai's biennial Airshow opened, showcasing an aviation industry hard-hit by the coronavirus, but on the mend

The 17th edition of the international show was the first major global aerospace exhibition to be held since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, in a sign indicating that the world has started to regain some of its normality.

This year, the event welcomed more exhibitors than ever before, including over 370 new exhibitors, and representatives from almost 150 countries. There were civil and military delegations from more than 140 countries and the event featured 20 country pavilions, including new additions from the Czech Republic,

Belgium, Brazil, Israel, and Slovakia. The global event welcomed more than 85,000 visitors this year.

Belarusian defence companies also took part in the expo via a joint stand of the State Authority for Military Industry of Belarus and via a business visit. Products and services of a number of Belarusian defence companies were demonstrated at the joint stand.

The products on display included mock-up models of air defence missile systems, rocket launchers, radars, radio warfare systems, and a universal

mobile command post.

Chairman of the State Authority for Military Industry Dmitry Pantus participated in the event for the sake of advancing military technology co-operation and assisting Belarusian defence companies with promoting their products in the United Arab Emirates and third countries.

On the sidelines of the forum, working meetings and negotiations were held between the head of the Belarusian delegation and the leadership of defence and defence-industrial departments of a number of foreign countries.

Russia's first anti-COVID drug registered

The first injectable drug for the treatment of coronavirus infection, Areplivir, has been registered in Russia. By the end of the year, the medicine will begin to arrive in hospitals in Russian regions.

"It will be available in the sale network from the beginning of December. And we will be able to supply it for the whole country, all regions of the country," said Piotr Bely, the Head of the Promomed Group of Companies.

As the company noted, Promomed was the first in the world to create an injectable form of favipiravir, despite the fact that the substance is an insoluble powder.

As specified by a multicentre clinical trial led by the RAS academician Dmitry Pushkar, the new drug is effective and safe for in-patient use.

According to Sergei Avdeev, the chief pulmonologist of the Russian Ministry of



Health and a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the emergence of an effective domestic antiviral drug for parenteral administration can turn the tide in the fight against the pandemic. Until now the only such antiviral drug was a foreign product, expensive and not readily available.

Sold for record price

A painting by Mexican artist Frida Kahlo has sold at Sotheby's auction house in New York for a record \$34.9m



made her famous. Rivera's face is shown above her distinctive eyebrows and dark eyes, from which a few teardrops fall.

"This is one of the most important works by Kahlo ever to come to auction and we're thrilled that it should be at Sotheby's," Oliver Barker, Sotheby's auctioneer and senior director, said as he opened the bidding.

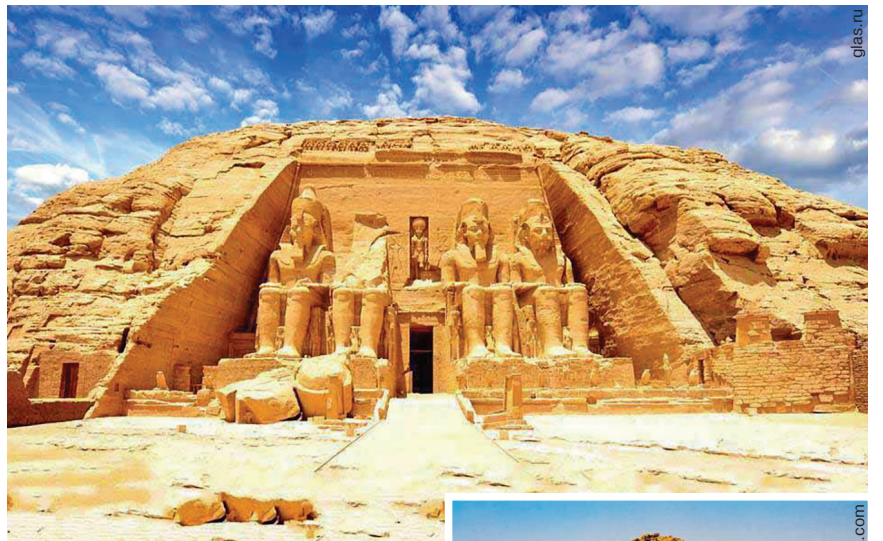
Kahlo, widely regarded as one of the greatest painters of the 20th century, was famed for her intimate self-portraits reflecting pain and isolation. Kahlo, who spent

long periods bed-ridden after a traffic accident in her youth, created some 200 paintings, sketches and drawings — mainly self-portraits — in which she transformed her misfortune into works of bold colour and emblematic strength.

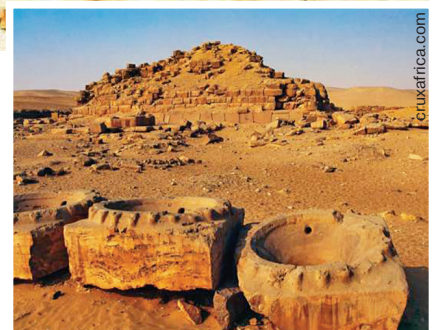
She lived from 1907 to 1954 and proudly promoted indigenous Mexican culture through her art. *Diego y Yo* last sold at Sotheby's for \$1.4m in 1990.

It is the highest price paid at auction for a Latin American artwork. The record had previously been set by a work by Diego Rivera, with whom Kahlo had a decades-long tumultuous relationship. His piece sold for \$9.76m in 2018.

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A team of archaeologists have found a sun temple dating back thousands of years, the 'biggest find' of the last fifty years in the realm of pyramids and ancient pharaohs



A sun temple discovered

Archaeologists unearthed an ancient sun temple in the Egyptian desert that dates back 4,500 years.

The remains were discovered under another temple at Abu Gurob. Ancient remains are believed to be one of six sun temples built some 4,500 years ago. Only two of these temples have been found to date.

Mission co-director Massimiliano Nuzzolo, an Assistant Professor of

Egyptology at the Polish Academy of Sciences' Institute for the Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures in Warsaw, said that ancient remains appeared to be from the mid-25th century BC.

Nuzzolo said it had been partially uncovered in 1898 before but mistakenly identified as part of an existing temple. The dig reveals that underneath the sun temple of Nyusera, the sixth king of the 5th dynasty in Egypt was another sun temple.

The blacksmith of happiness

In November, Belarus celebrates the Day of the Blacksmith or the national holiday of Kuzma — the patron saint of blacksmiths.

Despite the fact that modern industry has supplanted handicrafts, the profession of a blacksmith remains highly respected. A halo of mysticism and mystery still hovers around it while forged items today are expensive luxury items, beautiful, graceful works of art. The work of the blacksmith and his image are covered with myths and speculation. People considered the blacksmith to be a hero, in whose hands iron and fire become obedient. A strong, muscular man with a beard — this is how forge masters are usually portrayed. Some associate this stereotype with the appearance of the patron saint of 'iron spellcasters' — the Greek God Hermes. In fact, even a seemingly feeble person — either a man or a woman — can work with a hammer on an anvil.

By Natalia Tychko

Catch it in 30 seconds

The horn sounds like a hissing spell, the bellows inflate the power of his words, darkness rules in the forge while the hammer claps against the hot metal...

...Despite the numerous artistic images of the forge, where the master is streaming with sweat, the workshop is cool and dark. In the twilight, blacksmiths find it easier to determine the temperature of the metal by the colour of the heat. Two masters of artistic forging of the Dudutki Museum Complex — Aleksandr Chichko and Aleksandr Levitsky — are forging a fresh poker together. This is one of the most popular items among customers.

The blacksmith has from 30 seconds to three minutes to turn the malleable metal in the fire into a functional squiggle, so there is no waste of time here. Craftsmen mainly use steel since its approximate temperature during forging is a thousand degrees. The piece is laid on a strong anvil, the weight of which can vary from 100 to 250 kilograms, and the sonorous sounds of metamorphosis are alternately extracted from the steel.

There is a huge amount of finished products in the forge. Artistic forging assumes small things: they are mainly used for interior decoration. But, in my opinion, the most amazing thing



Aleksey Stolyarov



is a miniature forged ring designed for the thin finger of a beautiful girl. Jewellery requires precision: there is no room for error.

Bare hand on hot metal

Aleksandr Levitsky has been doing blacksmithing for about five years, and he held a hammer in his hands for the first time when he was six. His grandfather took over his training; from him, Aleksandr inherited the old forge in Dukora. Now he is engaged in its restoration. Alongside forging, Aleksandr continues blacksmithing traditions: for example, at weddings.

"In the Middle Ages, when there was no priest in the villages, young people came to the blacksmith. Together with them, he forged two nails, twisted them together and hammered them into the tree. It was a symbol of the unity of two lives," Aleksandr Levitsky plunges us into entertaining stories of distant times. "Now at weddings, a horseshoe and two hearts are most often forged, which are then tied. Such ceremonies are quite rare: in the five years of my work, I was invited only three times."

Aleksandr can truly surprise with his hand-forged metal: without a hammer, with his fist or palm. To do this, the guy heats up the workpiece, puts his hand in cold water and beats the red-hot metal with force. The spectacle is fascinating and frightening at the same time: the temperature of the product at this moment can reach a thousand degrees!

Hammer-forged humour

Blacksmithing also goes smoothly with the help of humour, which I can assert to. For example, the answer to the question 'What discount can you offer on a product?' may be 'There is an option of one hundred percent: you do not order anything, we do nothing'.

Aleksandr Levitsky debunks several well-established myths. For example, you often come across in literature: 'one respected blacksmith forged swords for an entire army'. In fact, it will take about a month to make one unit of such a weapon. And numerous apprentices often worked at the forge. Whole blacksmith workshops existed many years ago.

"The master must know some aspects of physics, but mostly chemistry. In artistic forging, this is not necessary, but in an armoury it will definitely come in handy," says Aleksandr Levitsky.

He easily cuts the air with a sword, not just for fun. There is a hardening method in which the item must be actively rotated. Most often, this is done for knives: they are tied to a wire and are rotated in the air at high speed.

"This makes the item more durable. Air enters the pliable heated metal, forming some porosity that is invisible to us," explains the master. "The best hardening of this type is Japanese. Therefore, in future I really want to visit this country and bring back another interesting technique."

In search of the lost: *Oshmyany on old postcards and photographs*



A small cosy corner in the north of the Grodno Region is a favourite place for those keen on history. Archaeologists and collectors of legends, as well as real gourmets come here for finds from different eras. Real coffee lovers and those with a sweet tooth will also find something to please them in this town. Few people know that people from Oshmyany pass on a unique recipe for gingerbread from generation to generation. We will walk along the quiet streets of a glorious place together.

By Marina Kuzmich, Vladimir Likhodedov

Paving the route to Oshmyany, it is difficult not to mark on the map the equally rich history of Golshany — which is only two dozen kilometres from the district centre. The famous place with the ruins of the castle of the Sapieha family, the Church of St. John the Baptist, the St. George Church will immerse you in an amazing atmosphere where fiction and reality are closely intertwined. The Belarusian writer

17th October Square is located. And next to it is another example of Belarusian unity, peace and mutual understanding: the Orthodox and Catholic churches rise on both sides of the centre. The synagogue building is located a little further along. There is also a functioning mosque. For a long time, people of different religions lived here on

the pseudo-Russian style in the form of a cross by the architect A. Polozov.

There is a synagogue next to the square. The building is the same age as the church, built in 1912. Outwardly modest, but inside, under the ceiling, there are frescoes depicting the sky with golden stars.

In historical sources of the second

place: in Novye Oshmyany. Now it is the centre of a modern town. The ancient part — Starye Oshmyany — was transferred to the Franciscans, who erected a church and a monastery here. During the years of the Reformation, there was a Calvinist collection here. The town was one of the most famous centres of Calvinism.

During the wars of the mid-17th and early 18th centuries, Oshmyany was once again destroyed and reborn. Apparently, it's favourable location at the



Oshmyany beauties. 1922.

Vladimir Korotkevich was once inspired by legends about its former inhabitants. Having written the famous historical detective story *The Black Castle of Olshany*, he celebrated this area throughout the world. Local residents today will tell guests about the White Lady and the mysterious Black Monk, who, according to the residents of Oshmyany, love to walk in the vicinity of the castle today.

Lovely girls from Oshmyany in an old photo could well have been such storytellers. Just look at their colourful images! However, the current inhabitants of the town are no less elegant. One could be convinced of this during the events for the 680th anniversary of Oshmyany, which was celebrated this year. Although you can hardly believe that Oshmyany is almost seven centuries old since everything is so bright and modern here. Meanwhile, on the Day of People's Unity, the town has acquired one more attraction. State Flag Square was opened here. It is symbolic that the height of the flagpole was 17m in memory of the date of the reunification of Belarus in 1939.

In the very centre of Oshmyany the



Oshmyany. Wooden Orthodox Church. Early 20th century.



Oshmyany. Church and market square. Early 20th century.

the neighbouring streets and always found a common language with each other.

The tallest building in Oshmyany is the Church of the Archangel Michael. The temple is the first to appear when entering the town. High five-tiered hipped-roof towers on the sides of the main facade create a feeling of lightness, soaring above the ground. The main entrance is decorated with a triangular portico with the inscription 'Te Deum Laudamus', which means 'Thee, O God, we praise'. The church was built in the 1900-1910s. More than once during the hard times of war it was destroyed and rebuilt again.

The Church of the Resurrection of Christ has been leading its history since 1873. At one time, it replaced the old church, which stood on the outskirts of the town and was so small that it could not accommodate everyone. The temple with a large internal space was built in

half of the 19th century, there is the opinion that Oshmyany existed as early as 1040, when Yaroslav the Wise carried out a campaign in these lands. Historians also differ in versions about the origin of the name of the city of Oshmyany. It is believed to be derived from the word 'okmyanes', which means 'stone'. According to another version, the town got its name from the word 'oshmyanes', that is, 'edge'.

There is evidence that the first mentions of Oshmyany date back to the 11th century. Then the town is noted in the chronicles in the 14th century, when the crusaders attacked this territory. It is known that already at that time there was a wooden castle.

In 1413, Oshmyany became part of the Vilno Voivodeship. A hundred years later, the town was again destroyed, then began to be rebuilt. At the beginning of the 16th century, houses began to be built in a new



Oshmyany. Orthodox Church. The beginning of the 20th century.

crossroads contributed to rapid recovery and development.

Oshmyany's symbol is a bull whose image is captured on the coat of arms of the town. In addition, on modern symbols there is an image of a hand with scales, symbolising the equality of all before the law. The golden shield directed to the West suggests that the residents of Oshmyany will be able to defend the whole of Belarus from foreigners.

The Oshmyany area is also unique for its nature. Picturesque views of forests, meadows, bordered by quiet rivers, delight everyone who comes to these lands. It is noteworthy that the Struve Geodetic Arc passes through the territory of the district near the village of Tyupishki.

...When you are in Oshmyany, do not forget to taste Golshany gingerbread before walking along the streets of the town. Baked by local culinary experts according to a unique old recipe, they will bring delicious treats to your trip. This round-shaped pastry symbolises the sun. Residents of Oshmyany say that prosperity and well-being await everyone who tastes the fragrant 'treat' in the future.

Photo from Vladimir Likhodedov's personal collection

New challenge

Sergei Rutenko chaired the Belarusian Tennis Federation

By Tatiana Pastushenko

Multiple winner of the Champions League, European Super Cup, gold medal winner of the Slovenian and world club championships, silver medallist of the European Youth Championships... These are not the only titles of the famous Belarusian handball player Sergei Rutenko. After completing his sports career, he worked in the Belarusian Handball Federation and tried business. Now Rutenko has accepted a new challenge, becoming the Head of the Belarusian Tennis Federation.

The candidacy of a handball player for this position was proposed by Sergey Teterin, who has headed the federation since 2017. Explaining the decision, he said that he was looking for a person who could become a leader. First of all, he drew attention to tennis. But, since many of our outstanding tennis players have left, and he didn't want to interrupt the work of the young coaches, he



took a closer look at other sports. This is how Rutenko's candidacy arose.

"He is a sociable person, known not only in our country, but also far beyond its borders. He has experience in the handball federation," explained Sergei Teterin. "I thought: why not? World practice shows that there are many such examples. In America, the coach of the volleyball team went to the football team. Those in hockey left for volleyball and achieved results. Sergei Rutenko is young, ready

to work. He can bring something new."

Rutenko himself remarked that as an athlete and a person who cares for our sport and wants to do something for it, he could not refuse this offer,

"For my part, I will make every effort, I will try to use all my experience and the contacts that I have in order to preserve what has been done in tennis and build on it."

Sergei Teterin presented tennis rackets to Sergei Rutenko. The handball player,



answering the journalists' question about the experience of playing on the court, admitted that while living in Spain, he played paddle — a kind of tennis common in Latin countries, therefore he cannot say he's completely removed from the sport.

"But once again I want to note that I did not come to a coaching position. I'm not going to teach the kids to play tennis. I have administrative and managerial functions, where other skills are needed. I am confident that I can bring something new and help the federation, which has had a lot of success."

Sergei Rutenko says that there is a lot of work ahead, and it will be interesting. But the first and main task for the new chairman of the Belarusian Tennis Federation is to get acquainted with the regions. Rutenko plans to visit them personally: he wants to hear from people working in the field, to learn about their problems and wishes. And from this he will build for the future.

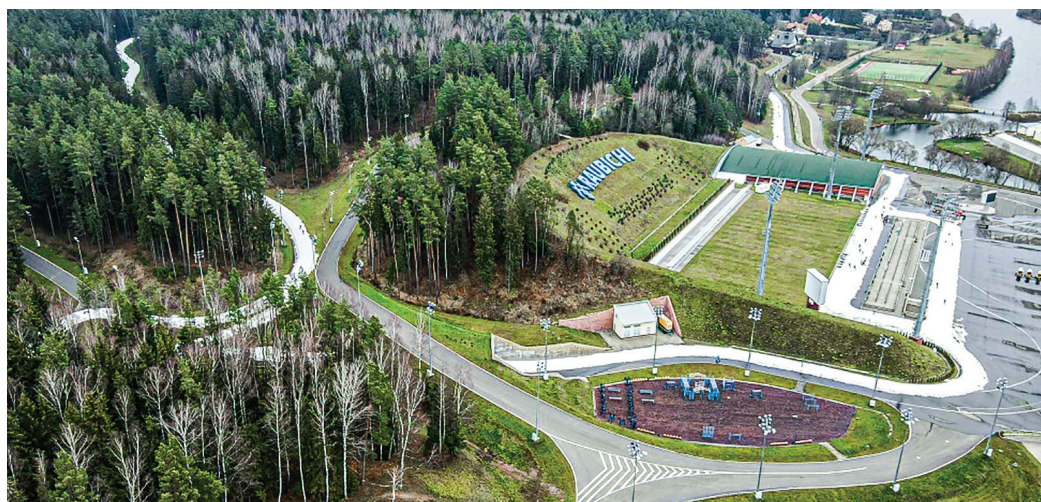


By Tatiana Pastushenko

The winter season has started in Raubichi. In past years, at such a time, athletes in our country could only dream of going out on the snow; they had to go abroad for training before the season. This year, everything is different: about a hundred biathletes and skiers are already training with might and main in Raubichi, where a two-kilometre track has been laid.

Snow in Raubichi is the result of an experiment, which was decided by the complex. Deputy Director of the Republican Centre for Olympic Training in Winter Sports Raubichi, Leonid Karas, says, "We wanted to try to prepare the snow and see how it will keep. At the end of February, we began to create reserves: about

13-14 thousand cubic metres of snow were shot with cannons, and in March it was transported to the site near the ice rink and covered with sawdust. Of course, it melted over the summer, but this is inevitable. When it got colder, we



On the first snow

Biathletes and skiers took to the snow in Raubichi

created the first 300-metre-long loop near the coaching exchange, and at the weekend we finished the two-kilometre track."

Before deciding on the experiment, our specialists studied foreign experiences. A delegation from Finnish Kontiolahti came to Raubichi and held a seminar and presentations. Several years ago, Leonid Karas himself travelled to Finnish Imatra to see how snow is collected there; the climate in this city is more similar to the Belarusian one.

"The principle of snow storage is the same everywhere, and losses in summer are practically at the same level. Even in Ruhpolding, where a separate capital structure with concrete walls and drainage is set aside for snow storage, the losses are the same as ours: 35-40 percent," he explains.

Today in Raubichi the youth national team in cross-country skiing, groups of biathletes and Paralympian athletes train; about a hundred people can work on the track at the same

time. State biathlon coach Yuri Albers says that this is a great help for our athletes.

"Going out for snow preparation is now problematic: firstly, the coronavirus pandemic imposes its own restrictions, and secondly, it is expensive. In Raubichi we have a circle about two kilometres long with ups and downs, flat areas. Yes, the terrain on this track is not the most difficult, but it is suitable for ski training before the season — these are excellent conditions for growing athletes to train."

Belarusian winters do not always treat us to frost and a lot of snow. In the recent past, there were seasons when national competitions had to be postponed or cancelled altogether, since it was impossible to hold them due to the lack of snow. Now the forecast is much more optimistic. The snow cannons were first turned on recently. As soon as stable sub-zero temperatures are established, they will be restarted. The plans are to expand the track and add snow, if necessary.

ARENA

● Three awards from the world forum

The Belarusian national trampolining team claim two gold and one bronze medal at the 35th FIG Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in Baku.



Ivan Litvinovich, Aleh Rabtsau, Andrei Builau and Aliaksei Dudarau won gold in the men's team tournament. Tokyo Olympic champion Ivan Litvinovich brilliantly coped with a difficult programme and received 61,225 points. The leader's start was supported by Aleh Rabtsau who was awarded 60,290 points. Meanwhile,

Andrei Builau — the debutant of the adult world championships — received 59,175 points. In total, Belarusian athletes earned 180,690 points, which guaranteed them a victory.

The Belarusians also distinguished themselves in the synchronised jumping duets, with Aleh Rabtsau and Andrei Builau taking first place on the medal podium.

Another medal was earned by Aleh Rabtsau, who claimed bronze in the men's individual competitions.

Aleksandr Lukashenko congratulated the members of the national trampolining team on their excellent results at the World Championships.

● First star of the match

Belarusian forward Yegor Sharangovich helped the New Jersey Devils defeat Tampa Bay Lightning in the NHL Championship. The match ended in favour of Lindy Raff's trainees with a score of 5:3 (1:2, 0:1, 4:0). Yegor Sharangovich was the first star of the match. Spending 15 minutes 19 seconds on the ice, he scored a double and an assist, winning 50 percent of the face-offs and thus finishing with '+1' plus-minus statistic.



● WADA Independent Observer Team formed for the Beijing Games

A team of nine people will oversee key testing processes, from sampling to storage conditions. Each day during the Games, members of the Independent Observer Team will visit various competition venues to observe the implementation of the anti-doping programme.

The group will also be tasked with providing an assessment of the laboratory, including the application of a therapeutic use exclusion procedure. A team of independent experts will meet on a daily basis during the Games to compile a report.

Photo of the week



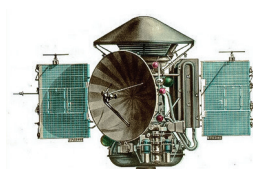
Frost on a November morning

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



November 26th is World Information Day. It is held on the initiative of the participants of the World Information Science Forum and the International Informatisation Academy (IIA). Information is almost the main value in the modern world. Everyone knows the famous phrase: 'Whoever owns the information, owns the world'. Moreover, its number is growing every day.

On November 27th, 1701, Anders Celsius (1701-1744) was born — a Swedish astronomer and physicist, as well as author of a large number of works in astronomy, physics and geophysics. His name became widely known thanks to the centigrade thermometer he proposed in 1742.



On November 27th, 1971, the Soviet interplanetary spacecraft 'Mars-2', launched on May 19th, 1971, reached the surface of Mars. 'Mars-2' was the first man-made object to reach the surface of the red planet.

The Minsk Times

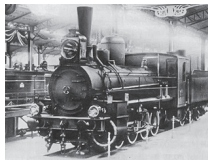
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On November 27th, 1991, the Cherven District Museum of Local Lore was founded. The exhibits include archaeological findings from the 13th century from the settlements near the villages of Turets and Gorodishche, materials about the war of 1812, the uprising of 1863-1864, objects of peasant life and tools of artisans of the 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as photographs, documents, personal belongings of participants of the October Revolution of 1917, the First World War and the Great Patriotic War.



On November 28th, 1871, the Smolensk-Minsk-Brest railway was put into operation. 698 artificial structures were built on the road, including 135 metal bridges. The highway was part of the historic Moscow-Brest railway 1,100km long, passing through the Moscow, Smolensk, Mogilev, Minsk and Grodno provinces.



On November 28th, 1881, Aleksandr Rozin was born — a Belarusian geologist, corresponding member of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, professor. He explored peat massifs in the Gomel Region, deposits of quartz sands, chalk,

phosphorites, rock salt, first mined at the Davydovskaya structure. He was one of the organisers of the geological survey in Belarus. He died in 1942. He was posthumously awarded the USSR State Prize for his participation in the discovery of potash deposits in Belarus.



November 28th is World Compassion Day (WCD). The initiator of this humane holiday was the Indian poet, journalist and public figure, Pritish Nandy. The main idea of the day is the promotion of a lifestyle based on non-violence in its broadest sense: non-killing, no harm to all living things (people, animals, plants). On this day, supporters of compassion call on the world community to support peace, love and mutual understanding.

On November 29th, 1951, Aleksandr Gvozdkov was born — a Belarusian sculptor, who works in monumental and easel plastics. His works include *The Portrait of a Father*, *Birth of a Flight*, monuments to painters Marc Chagall, Ivan Khrutsky, People's Artist of Belarus Georgy Dubov and others.



November 30th is International Computer Security Day. In proclaiming this day in 1988, the American Association for Computer Machinery intended to remind all users to protect their computers and all the information stored in them, and to draw the attention of manufacturers and users of equipment and software to security problems.



November 30th is World Pet Day. It is dedicated to all animals domesticated by people and serves as a reminder to all mankind of the responsibility for 'our smaller brothers'. It is not surprising that the motto of this day was the words of the Little Prince from the work of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry: 'You become responsible, forever, for what you have tamed', which are addressed to all people.

December 1st is World AIDS Day, celebrated in accordance with the decision of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the decision of the UN General Assembly, adopted in 1988. The day has become one of the most important international health days and a key opportunity to raise awareness, pay tribute to those died from the disease, and celebrate achievements such as expanding access to treatment and prevention.



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