



Fashionable outfits,
unique fabrics,
modernisation of
production: Bellegprom
enterprises combine
creativity
and innovation

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II ИГРЫ СТРАН СНГ
БЕЛАРУСЬ
2023

The President of Belarus,
Aleksandr Lukashenko,
signed decree
on preparation
and holding
of II CIS Games
in Belarus

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INTERNATIONAL

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Family of police officers Dmitry and Tatiana Gavrilenko, their children — Taisiya and Stanislav

Service in the police helped create a strong family

May 15th is Family Day in the Republic of Belarus, established almost thirty years ago. This is one of the most important and most difficult aspects of life for each person, which plays a decisive role in it. At the same time, it is no secret that the task of looking after the family is even more difficult in families where at least one, and even more so both spouses, wear uniforms. A married couple of employees of the Internal Affairs Directorate of the Gomel Regional Executive Committee — Dmitry and Tatiana Gavrilenko know this firsthand. And yet they are convinced that this mission is feasible and confirm this by personal example.



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A fair world order, sanctions weapons and sustainable development. Lukashenko sent a letter to Guterres in response to an invitation to the SDG Summit 2023.

There can be no sustainable development in the world without peace

The Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia of the United Nations Development Coordination Office (UNDCO) Gwi-Yeop Son visited Minsk and called the experience of our country in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) advanced. The guest noted that other European countries could also use it. Moreover, the UN expects that President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko will be able to personally share the experience of our country on the sidelines of the SDG Summit, which will be held in New York in September. A corresponding invitation to the Head of the Belarusian State from UN Secretary General António Guterres has been received. In turn, as reported in the press service of the Belarusian leader, Aleksandr Lukashenko sent a response letter.

In particular, the letter from the UN Secretary-General to Aleksandr Lukashenko says, "Halfway through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is time to face facts. Without a dramatic increase in commitment, solidarity and transformative action, we will miss the central goals of the 2030 Agenda to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and protect the environment. I count on your support in securing the breakthroughs our world desperately needs."

António Guterres noted that multiple crises of the past three years have dealt a serious blow to efforts to achieve the SDGs. Nevertheless, the changes envisioned remain possible and necessary. The letter says that SDG summit will be the



Aleksandr Lukashenko's speech at the UN in 2015

centrepiece of a number of events, including the Climate Summit, a high-level dialogue on financing for development, a series of meetings on healthcare, and a ministerial meeting in preparation for the Summit of the Future 2024.

"The SDG summit could be the moment when our world transitions from fear to hope and from deepening pessimism to accelerated action. I look forward to your personal participation in the summit and your contribution to making it a turning point for the SDGs," the UN secretary general noted.

In a response letter from Aleksandr Lukashenko to António Guterres, it is emphasised that Minsk fully welcomes the initiative to hold the summit, "We believe that the upcoming event is a

good opportunity to summarise intermediate results of our common efforts.

The Republic of Belarus is fully committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, they are effectively integrated into our national strategic documents. I am convinced that Belarus' experience in effective organisation of work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level will be interesting and useful for many others UN member states. We are undoubtedly ready to share it during the summit."

The Head of the Belarusian State also emphasised the importance of making the summit a source of ideas and initiatives that contribute to the elimination of problems on the way to achieving the SDGs,

"It is now clear that there can be no sustainable development in the world without peace. I said it back in 2015 when I was speaking at the UN summit that adopted the Sustainable Development Goals. You have also repeatedly voiced a similar idea... We treasure peace not only in our own land, but also on the regional and global scale. For the past few years we have been actively calling on all states to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on security in order to form the basis for building a new, fair world order.

Does it take a global catastrophe that will claim lives of millions of people for us to be heard?"

Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that the forthcoming summit should clearly

identify a mutual connection between peace and sustainable development, thus giving an impulse towards starting a global dialogue on security.

The Belarusian leader draws principled attention to sanctions pressure, which turns into a weapon, "A serious challenge to the common cause of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is unilateral coercive measures or sanctions. These voluntaristic actions that contradict international law and are enforced by a group of Western states, which is limited by its own self-interest and prejudices, directly destroy progress towards achieving the SDGs.

For example, how can poverty and hunger be eliminated if sanctions undermine global food security and therefore increase the scale of poverty and hunger to entire regions and even continents? Sanctions have become weapons. They are capable of killing!"

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — these are 17 interrelated goals developed by the UN General Assembly in 2015 as a 'the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all'. These goals have been called the 2030 Agenda. According to the Sustainable Development Report, in 2022, Belarus ranked 34th among 163 countries in the ranking of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Countries are ranked by an overall score that measures progress towards all 17 SDGs. Our country scored 76 points out of 100 possible. This score reflects the progress of the country as a whole in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and can be interpreted as a percentage of the achievement of the SDGs.

Deputy Chairman of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of Belarus, the national coordinator on reaching the Sustainable Development Goals Valery Belsky,

"Belarus has created a national architecture for sustainable development. Global goals are incorporated into national documents. This work is under constant control. A Council for Sustainable Development has been created, and there are national coordinates for sustainable development. Today we have accumulated a unique experience that can be used by our partners. In this context, all countries and states should be considered partners. The Earth is not such a large object of cosmic matter that we can somehow behave defiantly and expect that an irresponsible existence can provide us with the continuation of civilisation and a comfortable existence. Therefore, we must unite. And the Head of State, in response to Guterres, stressed the importance of the peaceful coexistence of peoples, the achievement of peace as the basis for all the Sustainable Development Goals... We do a lot and can show the world a lot... Issues related to digitalisation are very important. Today we are talking about the danger of artificial intelligence, cyber fraud, the loss of personal data due to the widespread development of digital services. These phenomena require a global assessment and global approaches. We are ready to participate in this process at a worthy level."

Chairperson of the National Statistical Committee Inna Medvedeva spoke about the best practices of our country, which was highly appreciated by the UN. First of all, we are talking about the monitoring of SDG indicators, which is conducted by the National Statistical Committee. By the way, Belarus was one of the first in the CIS to create the set of indicators itself and, together with UNDP and UNICEF, launched a national platform. Today, as part of national monitoring, we monitor almost 270 indicators, Inna Medvedeva notes, "Of these, 170 indicators correspond to the global ones. We made an assessment of progress (it was this that impressed the UN representative the most): according to the current state, progress in solving the tasks was observed in more than 62 indicators. **Moreover, the indicator targets set for 2030 are or will be achieved at the current level of effort on 80 indicators. We will make very high progress!"**

Here is a very important point, which Aleksandr Lukashenko mentioned in his response letter to the UN Secretary General and which the Chairwoman of the National Statistical Committee draws attention to, "The Sustainable Development Goals (our national list that we created) are effectively integrated into our national strategic documents. This was the key movement of our country. That is, not just an indicator for the sake of an indicator. They are all included in the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, the Programme for Social and Economic Development until 2025, as well as in regional programmes."

After getting acquainted with the Belarusian experience, Gwi-Yeop Son suggested that our country take a higher bar: that is, set tasks, goals and parameters higher than they are now.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Situation is not critical, but there are alarming factors

Details of Lukashenko's visit to Central Command Post of the Air Force and Air Defence Forces

During his visit to the Central Command Post of the Air Force and Air Defence Forces, President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko was reported on the organisation and performance of tasks of air defence combat duty

“No long reports are needed. Let’s look at what is happening around our country, primarily in the airspace,” the President said. “We very often discuss the security of our state, especially in the airspace. As I see it, the situation is not critical right now, but still there are alarming factors.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that the troops have been on high alert for several days already. As the Head of State was reported, they have been ready for action since Saturday, after the incidents.



The President continued, *“Three days [have passed] since the events occurred near us. I mean in the Bryansk Region, when four aircraft were shot down. We had to react to that. Since then, our troops have been placed on high alert. Therefore, I am interested in the situation around our country, as well as — naturally — the directions and prospects for the development of this situation. Brief [reports are enough], without intimidation — on what is happening, and what we expect in the short term.”*

Andrei Lukyanovich, the Commander of the Air Force and Air Defence of Belarus, talked to journalists after reporting to the Head of State. He informed that the troops are on duty in enhanced mode in light of the recent events taking place on the western and southern borders, including in connection with the NATO ongoing combat training activities led by the United States. “At the moment, additional forces and means are being attracted. 750-1,000 servicemen take up combat duty on air defence daily. Following the incidents in the Russian

Federation, the forces on duty have been ready for action; these include anti-aircraft missile troops, radio engineering and aviation,” Mr. Lukyanovich informed.

He added that combat duty is conducted in enhanced mode, and the same applies to security at all airfields and a number of facilities of radio engineering and anti-aircraft missile forces.

According to Mr. Lukyanovich, the President of Belarus pays much attention to the development and combat readiness of the country’s Armed Forces. “Our branch of the Armed Forces primarily focus on combat duty for air defence in peacetime. The Head of State has been reported on the forces and means involved in combat duty, and also on the results. We inspect the air defence forces on duty monthly, and the recent check took place on May 11th. Based on its results, our branch of the Armed Forces coped with the task. The results were confirmed by the materials of objective control,” he said.

Much attention is also paid to the issues of improvement, purchase of new models of weapons and military equipment. For example, the Air Force and Air Defence are receiving new Belarus-made radar stations Rosa and Vostok this year, and the purchase of new models is also planned for the future as part of the Armed Forces’ development plan until 2025. “We also expect to receive new anti-aircraft missile systems and new Su-30SM aircraft for aviation,” Mr. Lukyanovich added.

President’s merch range expanded — enjoying demand among Belarusians and guests to the country

The Pervyi [First] stores at Minsk’s Stolitsa and Zamok malls offer a new collection. The already beloved T-shirts, hoodies, baseball caps, bombers and shopper bags have been supplemented with waist and crossbody bags, as well as cases that could be ideal for headphones or be used as coin purses. Definitely, these new products will please fashionistas.

The SB. Belarus Segodnya reporter visited the Stolitsa store to see how sales are going. In short, clothes and accessories featuring the President’s quotes fly off the shelves.

The store was not crowded on early Saturday morning, and it was understandable: that was a working day, and most customers were supposed to come at lunch time. Sales consultant Marina had just been paid by a customer and was showing the new collection. Waist bags are available in two versions: made of fabric (grey and blue) and of genuine leather. Two models of crossbody bags, coin purses and waist bags are made of genuine leather in trendy colours: white, blue and beige. The novelties were produced by Galanteya,

the largest Belarusian manufacturer of leather goods.

The new collection prices vary from Br20 to Br95, and this is quite affordable for genuine leather products. In turn, a waist bag made of fabric costs Br55.

Meanwhile, men’s and women’s T-shirts were the most popular merchandise on the long May weekend — accounting for almost 90 percent of sales. Among the most popular Presidential quotes are ‘Take off your clothes and work’, ‘Facts on the table!’, ‘I’m a dictator, it’s hard for me to understand democracy’.

Regardless of the season, baseball caps are sold out well. A polo signed by Aleksandr Lukashenko is another popular model (especially among men). There was a period when absolutely all models were

purchased, and customers had to wait until a new delivery arrived from the factory. Interestingly, products for men enjoy a greater popularity, if to look at sales from a gender point of view. As assistants say, even if a woman comes into the store, most often she chooses products for a man.

Importantly, the clothing size range varies from XS to XXX (for women’s models of T-shirts), and up to 10X (for men’s).

Closer to lunch time, more visitors were coming to the store. Yelena and Diana — mother and daughter — arrived to Belarus from St. Petersburg. As they said, that was their first trip to the country, but they managed to fell in love with Belarus in just two days. The women had a rich programme, visiting the Nesvizh and Mir castles, walking around the Old City of Minsk. At the Pervyi store, they wished to buy gifts for their relatives and friends.

“I often watch Aleksandr Lukashenko’s speeches. I really like the way he talks. In Belarus, we are impressed by the order and organisation of everything: we look and realise that he is not just the President. He is real Batka [father]!” Yelena shared her impressions.

The woman admitted that it was the Belarusian leader who inspired her to travel to the republic. Therefore, Russian guests could not leave the Pervyi store empty-handed. They spent much time there, choosing what to buy for their numerous relatives since they liked all the



quotes. As a result, they bought several products — of different sizes and colours, with such quotes as ‘Take off your clothes and work’, ‘Don’t give away your beloved’, and ‘I’m a dictator, it’s hard for me to understand democracy’.

“I am a fan of Belarus and your President, so we choose the Pervyi,” Diana admitted. “We very much support the policy of rapprochement of our countries within the framework of the Union State, especially at present — when we face the sanctions pressure. We walked through the Stolitsa mall, bought linen goods, Belarusian cosmetics, and now we are going for meat and dairy products. It is very impressive that you provide yourself with all you need.”

Roman, from Minsk, said that he learned about the new collection from the Pul Pervogo Telegram channel, so he hurried to appreciate everything with his own eyes. The young man admitted that he already has several President’s merch models, “I will definitely come back for a bag! Evidently, the quality is very good.”

In turn, Svetlana came to the store for gifts for her friends: she bought a T-shirt, a hoodie, and a pillow. The lady is sure: everyone will appreciate her choice.

As the Pul Pervogo earlier announced, these are not all new products for the coming summer. It seems many more will be presented soon — and everything will be great, as is traditional.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



Defence in word and deed

The growth of information confrontation between the world's leading centres of power, the preparation and conduct by foreign states of the struggle in the information space: what else can threaten national security in the information aspect

By Svetlana Isaenok

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, "You know very well that the challenges that we are facing today are not a new story. We have been building our state for almost a third of a century, and we have constantly been subjected to ideological, informational, military and psychological threats. We are actually under this pressure from the collective West - Washington and its allies. The intentions are known: to destabilise society, change the constitutional order, bring the right people to power, obedient to the West. The level of technology used to achieve these goals is very high."

During a session on the information policy on May 31st, 2022

The world today is connected to and dependent on technology more than ever before. In 2021, there were more than 10 billion active devices connected to the Internet, and in 2030 this number will exceed 25.4 billion. In the current realities, not a single state can do without a comprehensive system for protecting its information security. The information aspect is becoming an arena of interstate confrontation. As a result of cultural and ideological expansion, mainly focused on consumption, historical truth is purposefully distorted, history is falsified, the cultural heritage of mankind, the traditional spiritual and moral values of peoples, their national identity, the institution of the family and the space of intercultural interaction are being destroyed. Electronic media have a comprehensive impact on socio-political and socio-economic processes, are used to provoke internal conflicts and the destruction of states. The draft National Security Concept of Belarus states that the information security aspect implies the state of security of the information space, information infrastructure and information resources from external and internal threats in the information aspect. From what and how will we protect ourselves?

RELEVANT OPINION

Sergei Klishevich, a member of the House of Representatives,

"In modern conditions, not a single war can do without information and psychological support. Before subjecting a country or certain territories to aggression, the population of these territories is subjected to massive information and psychological attack in order to intimidate society and mobilise Judas to assist the aggressor. In addition, the population of the aggressor's country itself is subjected to attacks by information and psychological weapons in order to obtain public approval of the actions taken. The events unfolding in Ukraine confirm this method of using these weapons in conflicts. And it has long been used against Belarus. All these threats are reflected in the new draft of our National Security Concept. It should be noted that the use of information-psychological weapons is characterised by numerous specific details and nuances, which requires the training of highly qualified specialists capable of organising opposition to it. In our case, the organisation of counteraction to such weapons is helped by the practical experience gained in 2020, when the active phase of the use of such weapons began against Belarus. With this experience, it is easier to develop effective strategies that can repel such attacks."

The main national interests in the information aspect are:

- implementation of the constitutional rights of citizens to receive, store and disseminate complete, reliable and timely information;
- preservation of national identity and memory of the heroic past of the Belarusian people;
- further development of a secure information environment and the information society;
- protection of society from destructive information impact;
- transformation of the information industry into an export-oriented sector of the economy;
- effective information support and support of state policy;
- reliable and sustainable functioning of national information systems and infrastructure, resources of subjects of information relations;
- development of international information co-operation based on the national interests of the Republic of Belarus;
- ensuring the safety of state secrets and other information, the distribution and (or) presentation of which is limited.

Internal sources of threats to national security in the information aspect are:

- dissemination of unreliable or deliberately distorted information capable of harming the national interests of the Republic of Belarus;
- the dependence of the Republic of Belarus on the import of information technologies, means of informatisation and information protection, their uncontrolled use in systems, the failure or destruction of which may harm national security;
- discrepancy between the quality of national content and the world level;
- active use of information and communication technologies to commit offenses;
- expanding opportunities for misconduct in relation to personal data;
- insufficient efficiency of information support of the state policy;
- low level of legal awareness and safe behaviour of users of information and communication technologies;
- Violation of the established procedure for handling state secrets.

External sources of threats to national security in the information aspect are:

- dominance of leading foreign states in the global information space, monopolisation of key segments of information markets by foreign information structures;
- purposeful activities of foreign states, international and other organisations, individuals that harm the national interests of the Republic of Belarus in the information aspect, primarily in the formation of a negative image of the state in the world;
- the growth of information confrontation between the world's leading centres of power, the preparation and conduct by foreign states of the struggle in the information space;
- preventing the distribution of national content of the Republic of Belarus abroad;
- wide dissemination in the world information space of samples of mass culture that are contrary to universal and national spiritual and moral values;
- the imperfection of the mechanisms of international co-operation in combating crime using information and communication technologies.

Killer parcel

Belarus was supposed to be shaken by explosions on the bright holiday of May 9th. The explosive devices were disguised as household appliances, which have been transported to Belarus from abroad. Mail parcels were collected by different people, who were told not to ask too many questions. The parcels had to be activated at specific times in order to cause casualties and stir up the situation in the country. Traces of the client behind the terrorist attacks lead to Ukraine. The State Security Committee (KGB) managed to prevent bloodshed and stop the attempt to stir up the country. This was stated by Chairman of the State Security Committee Ivan Tertel. All the details of the planning of the terrorist attacks were shown on the air of the TV channel ONT in the *Killer parcel* investigation film.



A number of terrorist attacks were supposed to go off in Belarus ahead of Victory Day and on May 9th. The KGB foiled these attempts.

By Darya Gotovko and Roman Rud

Explosives in household appliances — this has already happened...

According to the film, the parcels went through regular postal delivery services. In addition to the cooking appliances, in which the explosives were located, there were other things in the boxes, clothes — in order to distract attention. By the way, the Ukrainian special services wanted to eliminate the leadership of Crimea in the same way. However, after the assassination attempt on the peninsula failed, the main intelligence department of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry instructed a 23-year-old Belarusian Valery Vodin to carry out a similar operation in our country.

A homosexual and ardent white-red-white nationalist, he actively jumped at the rebellion in August 2020, and left for Ukraine in 2022, where he is now participating in hostilities as part of a unit called Kalinovskiy regiment. After receiving instructions from the Central Intelligence Office of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry, he will instruct his good friend, 29-year-old Victoria Volchek, to pick up a package containing cooking appliances with explosives. The parcel will arrive at the delivery point in the Kamennaya Gorka microdistrict of the capital on March 21st. Shelf life is a week. From here, the suspected Volchek will pick up the box of explosives. However, Vodin asked not only to pick up the cooking appliances. He needed them somewhere to hide for a while. The girl will not be able to fulfil the request to bury the cooking appliances. Then Vodin will find other helpers.

Parallels with the terrorist attack in St. Petersburg

His another friend, 24-year-old Anna Savochkina, will respond to the request. She is the same representative of the white-red-white nationalist community, like himself. Volchek gives the box to Savochkina, and she and her mother will go to hide the cooking appliances in the cemetery in

Kolodishchi. The film showed how a sapper later works at the same place and extracts them from the ground.

There were a quote: 'That sure as hell are explosive means'. During interrogation the suspect herself will say that she believed that the box may contain some kind of device for tracking, collecting information, or maybe some kind of wiretapping.

It is quite reasonable that the authors of the film draw clear parallels with the terrorist attack organised by Daria Trepova, which happened on April 2nd in St. Petersburg. Then Trepova will bring the figurine to the creative evening of Vladlen Tatarsky, where the war correspondent will die. After all, the Russian woman also 'thought that there was nothing wrong with her gift'.

The journalists of the TV channel ONT will remind you in the film that the terrorist attack in St. Petersburg was also organised by the Ukrainian special services. Their agents trained Trepova, who, on assignment, collected information, photographed and filmed videos of various objects. After completing the next 'order', the curators demanded a photo and a written report. And this is how it turns out: Savochkina will send the same report to Vodin — geolocation and route, photos of how she buried the cooking appliance, and a detailed location — how to find the hiding place.

When the first cooking appliance was already buried in the cemetery in Kolodishchi, the second one continued to be in Volchek's apartment. She was taken later by 29-year-old Andrei Grigoriev, Vodin's intimate partner. In March, Grigoriev will not refuse his lover a favour — he will take the cooking appliance and hide it in the Avtoremontnik-124 gardening company, which is next to Olekhnovichi. On the way there, he will send a detailed photo, video report and geolocation. Vodin needs this to report on the assignment to the Ukrainian curators.

The KGB reported that all the defendants in this case were detained and placed in a pre-trial detention centre. They pleaded guilty, co-operate with the

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"We must not get complacent. Yes, we won in 2020, God helped us. We were not gearing up for this. We could not even think that something like this could happen on this sacred land. But it happened. And it repeated in Russia. They however learned from our experience and nipped it in the bud. We must not get complacent. Neither we nor Russians. This is the most important thing today... Attempts to conduct terrorist attacks in Belarus is something absolutely new for us. It's not something we didn't expect, either. We were expecting it. Both I and the military. But anyway it still seems unbelievable to us. What I would like is to see our people stay united. People see everything. You just tell us in time (I always address the people with such a request) if you see a stranger that looks or behaves weird. Just give us a signal... The unity of security, military and law enforcement agencies as well as our people is of crucial importance today. This will make our life easier in the future."

During a commemorative event dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Khatyn tragedy on 22nd March, 2023

investigation and testify. They face punishment up to and including the death penalty. Although they could be exempted from liability if informed and assisted.

The explosive is of American make

Vladimir Atrashkov, Chief of the Central Office for Special Expert Evaluations of the State Forensic Examination Committee of Belarus, shared the following information in the film, "Our specialists have established that the mail parcels contain plastic explosive substances and electric detonators, which are sufficient for assembling several explosive devices. The examination revealed that the explosive can be classified as plastic explosive C4 of American make. This explosive is often used for carrying out terrorist attacks."

Moreover, the film emphasises that the explosives would have been sufficient for derailing several trains at once or for staging a terrorist attack among people celebrating Victory Day on May 9th.

What conclusions can be drawn from what you see? The methods used by the special services of Ukraine can already be called a well-recognised terrorist style. The explosion of the Crimean Bridge, where explosives were planted in rolls of building plastic film. A terrorist attack in St. Petersburg, where a bust stuffed with hexogen exploded. The cooking appliances with a deadly filling that appeared in the Crimea and Belarus. A drone with explosives in Machulishchi... And everywhere — obedient performers who were remotely controlled by curators from Ukraine. The latter will surely resort to their vile tactics more than once. So the capture of another group of failed terrorists should not lull us to sleep. They will not leave us alone, as the Head of State has repeatedly stressed. Therefore, it is especially important not to lose vigilance. And don't panic: the Belarusian special services have proven time and again that they are capable of protecting our citizens. So the Victory Day in Belarus passed quietly. No incidents. The State Security Committee timely prevented the attempted terrorist attacks on May 9th. It's even hard to imagine what would have happened if what had been conceived in Kiev had come true.

At the end of the *Killer parcel* film, its creators remind you: just let us know if you find yourself in a difficult situation, if you are drawn into criminal activity, if foreign intelligence services or other persons are trying to use you.

Telegram bot 'KGB of Belarus' @KGB_BY_bot is available for communication.

Your messages will help save not only someone's life, but also your own life...



Good clothes open all doors

Fashionable outfits, unique fabrics, modernisation of production: Bellegprom enterprises combine creativity and innovation

Everyone has different preferences, but few people are left indifferent by the clothes of domestic brands, which are produced by the enterprises of the Bellegprom concern: it's possible largely due to the trending styles, natural fabrics and excellent tailoring quality

By Olga Nevmerzhitskaya

Temptation with outfits

The Internet opens up endless possibilities for communication. Friends from Rostov and Tatarstan vied with each other to praise me the clothes of Belarusian production, produced at the Kalinka and Kupalinka factories. They say that the quality is excellent, the patterns are made in such a way that the dresses seem to be not from a store, but were tailored, while the prices are quite affordable.

According to the Head of the Art Workshop of Kupalinka Yelena Yefankova, the products of the enterprise, which specialises in the production of underwear and outerwear for children and adults, are really very popular in Russia, and now they are fighting for the hearts of fashionistas from Kazakhstan.

The spring-summer collection, which includes both homewear, bathrobes, pyjamas and nightgowns, as well as everyday outfits, of course, is already ready and is now going into mass production.

The company orders fabrics in Turkey, Uzbekistan, and also buys from our manufacturers.



The collection that we see has already been in Moscow at the Lingerie Show-Forum international exhibition and returned from there with a lot of pre-orders from various regions.

Acquaintance with demonstration models is both delight and sadness. We want everything and more: beige trousers made of wrinkled cotton, which is called slimsy, a T-shirt with and without a print, a light muslin dress in greenish-coffee tones... But we can't buy things until the models go into mass production. However, the wait is not long: every month from 70 to 90 new models are put into operation.

Deputy Director for Commercial Affairs of Kupalinka Olga Okostko emphasises that the demand for the company's products is increasing, and production volumes are growing right after it,

"In 2022, production volumes in-

creased by a quarter compared to 2021, and growth continues in the first quarter of this year. Exports for 2022 rised by 46 percent compared to the previous year, and we expect it to increase by 2.5 times in the first quarter of this year. The vast majority of production goes to Russia, and now we are also exploring Kazakhstan."

Linen, muslin and sewing

A new spring-summer collection was also prepared by the Kalinka garment factory. Its designers are working tirelessly.

"We expect that linen suits in different designs will become the hit of the season: jackets and vests with trousers, shorts, skirts. We try to make all models interesting. We are aimed at ensuring that a lady of any height, age and complexion can dress in our clothes. The collection includes a variety of dresses made of fairly dense chiffon, viscose suits, and many cotton items. Particular attention is given to bright blouses, shirts with short and long sleeves made of natural fabrics. Dresses and blouses made of white cotton embroi-



tery are the novelty of the season," Deputy Head of Marketing and Trade Department Natalia Gurinovich explains.

"In 2022, two more branded stores were opened, now there are 28 of them. In addition, an online store has started working, sales are actively going on. Now there has been some redistribution of revenue (which increased by 8.5 percent) — the share of exports has increased. Shipments to overseas markets account for 60 percent of production, up 7 percent from last year, and continue to rise. As a rule, clothes produced at Kalinka are sent to Russia to regular customers. We began to be sewn back at the end of 2022 in order to fulfil

all pre-orders of the spring-summer collection," Deputy Director for Economic Affairs reports Marta Golodok.

The company is satisfied with profitability, as well as with net profit, which has grown six times compared to last year.

Fabrics with unique design

Continuous modernisation, the acquisition of high-performance equipment — this is the main secret of the success of Mogotex, a manufacturer of innovative fabrics.

"The company manufactures fabrics for clothing and interiors, knitted fabrics, special and uniform clothing, home and technical textiles. In recent years, innovative fabrics for uniforms of law enforcement agencies have become more and more in demand. Thus, by order of the Russian Ministry of Defence, the company has developed a new model uniform for servicemen, which is distinguished by its multifunctionality and lightness. The novelty required the creation of a special material and finish, thanks to which such

wind, snow and rain. Textile materials doubled with knitwear are used for soft shell clothing, providing comfort in almost any weather conditions.

High-visibility signal fabrics are widely used in the textile market for overalls, which can significantly reduce the risk of injury at work when performing operations near the movement of vehicles, especially in conditions of limited or insufficient visibility.

"From year to year, the company is steadily improving economic performance. In 2022, the growth rate of marketable products amounted to almost 154 percent compared to 2021, the proceeds from its sale amounted to Br174 million, or more than 161 percent compared to the level of the previous period. Last year, Mogotex's exports increased by more than 50 percent. The company's products remain in demand abroad, despite all economic restrictions. Today, the company sells its product range in more than 12 countries around the world. The main volume of sales of goods under the Mogotex brand falls on Russia, which occupies 89 percent of the share of all exports. The second largest market for the company's products is formed by the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus — Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan," the company says.



Chairwoman of the Belarusian light industry concern Bellegprom Tatiana Lugina,

"The light industry demonstrates a positive dynamics of work in all indicators — both volume and quality, and in terms of exports, and the reduction of stocks.

Up to 75 percent of manufactured products are supplied to 50 countries. The export growth rate last year was 112.9 percent compared to 2021.

As before, the main sales market is Russia. In 2022, the export of Bellegprom enterprises to the Russian Federation increased by a third. The volume of deliveries of products to Asian markets has been significantly increased — the growth rate was 137 percent. Expanded presence in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Armenia. We entered the markets of Tajikistan, Hong Kong and Singapore. Exports to India increased many times, deliveries to China quadrupled. Work with African countries is being activated. The possibility of sewing uniforms for Zimbabwean schoolchildren from domestic polyviscose and worsted fabrics is being studied."

Profitable brilliance of diamonds

Demand is greater than supply: Belarusian superhard materials and tools are in demand both in the country and abroad

From space to jewellery. Belarusian diamond produced by the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus today is one of the best synthetic materials in the world. The idea comes from the 1960s, when single crystals of various compounds began to be grown in the centre. The technology is still in demand today, but with a different, more modern content. We are talking about the prospect of using diamonds and derivatives from this superhard material with Deputy Director General of the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences Oleg Ignatenko.

By Vera Arteaga

Belarusian land is rich in innovators

Today, equipment with diamond elements — cutters, drills — will not surprise anyone. At least they are in the spotlight. As a maximum, many are familiar with the reliability and durability of such equipment. But in our country they thought about it in the distant 1960s. Nevertheless, the main thing is that the technology itself, the school, has been preserved to this day, having been multiplied by new developments. And today, the interlocutor notes, it is successfully developing in the scientific and practical centre. Moreover, there is a total rejuvenation of personnel in the direction. So, seven out of nine employees are young people in the Laboratory of High Pressure Physical and Superhard Materials of the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences. And there is no staff turnover.

In addition, the Belarusian land is traditionally rich in innovators, Oleg Ignatenko emphasises, “It’s something at the genetic level. Even if young people do not receive the necessary knowledge at the university, when they come to our centre, they not only cope with the tasks set, but also do it creatively. Get know-how, a new development, a patent — such a question is not worth it. Given the situation on the outer circuit, much is expected from scientists today. Diamond technology is no exception. And problems, as they say, are easier to overcome together.”

That is why, Oleg Ignatenko notes, a consortium for superhard materials has been created in the country, which, in addition to the SPC, includes the Institute of Powder Metallurgy of the National Academy of Sciences, the Joint Institute of Mechanical Engineering and the Institute of Physics and Technology.

There are 11 full-fledged scientific and technical groups that work in the field of tools, “Today, at the level of the country, the Union State, we are not talking about competition between producers, but about co-operation, when everyone makes his own contribution to the common cause. This co-operation allowed us to reach a serious task. Now, in co-operation with the Economy Ministry, we are working on a pilot project, when science, represented by an engineering centre, is a locomotive for various areas of industry in the tool industry. One of the tasks of our centre is consulting and training of the country’s enterprises in this area.”

Strategic objective — to replace imports

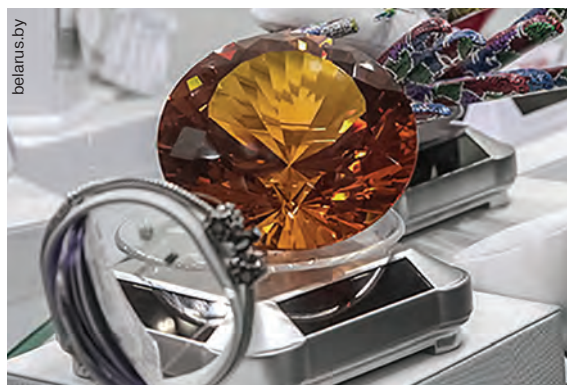
Today the Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus can do a lot. Even if we talk only about the topic of diamonds, which flaunt in the jewellery of fashionistas, and are also raw materials for creating a wide range of diamond tools that are in demand in the country and abroad. However, Oleg Ignatenko reminds, even the best equipment for their production



Single crystals of various compounds began to be grown here as early as the distant 1960s



Research worker Sergei Parshutich



needs to be replaced one day. After all, the tasks facing the organisation today are big.

Scientists are not sitting still. They improve technologies, nomenclature.

“We started producing tools — cutting inserts — for new turning centres. That is, we are ready to modernise the country’s profile enterprises,” Oleg Ignatenko notes.

By the way, today the SPC is a monopolist in the production of such products. For a long time, both in Belarus and in Russia, this product was imported. Therefore, today the need for import-substituting products is very high. In Russia, for example, the import of diamond tools at one time exceeded 90 percent. There are other pitfalls in this as well. After all, today an importer can set even an inflated price for a consumer enterprise. Such are the laws of the market in the absence of competition.

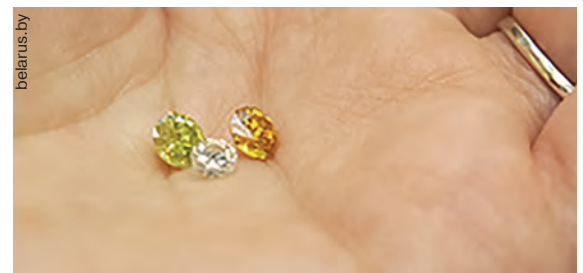
“But for Belarus, as long as our SPC exists, this does not threaten: the prices for the instrument here will be lower than in neighbouring countries,” Oleg Ignatenko explains.

In co-operation with enterprises, the materials science centre works on request. If an enterprise needs a tool that cannot be manufactured right now, the SPC introduces the task

into the development plan, the source says. The main consumer of the centre’s products from the public sector are machine-building enterprises, including MTZ, MMZ.



Oleg Ignatenko



Scientific-Practical Materials Research Centre of the National Academy of Sciences joined a consortium for superhard materials

“Today, thousands of positions of instruments are used throughout the country. We cannot master everything at once. Our first priority is to replace imports.”

Develop and grow

Small batches of products that the SPC is now producing are enough for the domestic market, says Oleg Ignatenko. But there is room for improvement and growth. Moreover, the products produced by the centre are extremely profitable. And only the SPC has such capacity in terms of the production of diamond powder in the country.

“We get a product worth \$2,000 from an initial powder worth \$30 per kilogramme. And if you then make a tool out of it, then the amount will increase to 10 thousand dollars,” Oleg Ignatenko notes.

Demand for Belarusian diamonds themselves, according to him, today is greater than supply, “Now we grow a stone of one and a half carats in 4 days. We are planning to produce 50 stones within the same period using the new technology. The production of powder materials will increase from 0.8 to 250 carats in three minutes. Up to 90 percent of such products are exported.”

That is why the SPC is seriously thinking about modernising, expanding production and developing new products. According to the plans, the modernisation will last three years and will cost Br57 million Belarusian. These funds, according to Oleg Ignatenko, are ready to be invested by private traders, “Our material is the best in the world. With the modernisation of equipment, we will be able to close the need for a tool up to a thousand positions at once.”

Another type of product that is produced here are diamond substrates, which, as part of microelectronic equipment, can operate in space. Traditional silicon substrates, according to the specialist, today faced the problem of overheating. Diamond analogues do not have such problems, “Such parameters are especially needed in conditions of open space, exposure to cosmic radiation. In addition, the development for the future can be used to improve the quantum computer. Also, substrates are already used today as detectors of ionising radiation.”



Students protest against rent prices

Students across Italy have been camping out in front of their universities to protest the exorbitant cost of renting accommodation

Last week, university rectors called for existing state property to be converted into student accommodation rather than for new residences to be built as an immediate solution to the problem.

Francesco Savino, Vice President of the Italian Episcopal Conference and Bishop of Cassano all'Jonio, said he shared the student protest.

"I share this gentle, civil protest that says to adults, and especially to those who have political responsibilities: do you realise that we can't manage?" said Savino.

Having to pay €800-900 for a room risks creating the conditions for a social revolt, added the prelate.

"It's a real, authentic protest, responding to an objective need. Let's try to lis-

ten to them," said the bishop. He added the issue will be the focus of the Bishops' Conference assembly in late May.

"We cannot ignore the questions being posed, we want to listen to needs, starting especially with young people," he concluded.

The government orders a census on vacant properties to help address the current rent crisis in Italy. Students have been camping in front of university buildings in protest against exorbitant rent prices.

A census is to be carried out of vacant properties so they can be made available for students in response to the current rent crisis in Italy, University Minister Anna Maria Bernini said.

"There is a problem in finding avail-

able properties in the provinces," Bernini told Radio 24. "I have asked for the co-operation of the state property administration, municipalities and mayors of metropolitan areas," she continued.

Meanwhile, the President of the Culture and University Committee Federico Mollicone of the Brothers of Italy (FdI) said the party would present a resolution.

"We must solve this problem that afflicts so many Italian students throughout the nation, to ensure the complete fulfilment of the right to study, an issue that has been neglected until now," said Mollicone. "In Milan a single room costs on average €628 per month, in Bologna €467 and in Rome €452 a month," he added.

Alzheimer's drug showed clinical effectiveness

Neuron: Lecanemab is clinically effective against Alzheimer's disease

Researchers have shown for the first time that a newly approved drug can neutralise small aggregates of beta-amyloid that float in brain tissue fluid and impair neuronal function.

In January, the US Food and Drug Administration approved lecanemab, an antibody-based drug for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease. In a phase III clinical trial, lecanemab slowed cognitive decline in patients with early-stage dementia.

Scientists suspect that the drug's positive effect may be due to its ability to bind and neutralise soluble beta-amyloid protein aggregates, also known as protofibrils. These small clumps can form in the brain and then coalesce into large amyloid plaques.

"The paper is timely because, for the first time in human history, we have an agent that can actually treat people with Alzheimer's in a way that could



slow their cognitive decline," says Dennis Selkoe, Dennis Selkoe, PhD, Co-director at the Centre for Neurologic Diseases at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston.



Dubai reveals first 3D printed mosque

The mosque will be located in Bur Dubai and will measure up to 2,000 square metres, accommodating 600 worshippers once completed

Dubai is known for its innovative architecture and ground-breaking constructions, and now it's set to add another first to its list: the world's first 3D-printed mosque. The project will be undertaken by the Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department (IACAD) and is expected to be completed by 2025. The mosque will be located in Bur Dubai, one of the oldest neighbourhoods in the emirate and will measure up to 2,000 sq.m, accommodating 600 worshippers once completed.

The use of 3D printing technology will revolutionise the way the mosque is built, with the construction process taking a total of two years. According to a report from Trade Arabia, the building's structure will take about four months to complete using a 3D robotic printer, with another 12 months required to fully fit it out with appropriate facilities. IACAD Director

General Dr. Hamad bin Sheikh Ahmed Al Shaibani explained that three workers will be required to operate the printer, which will print two square metres per hour.

One of the major advantages of 3D printing is that it drastically reduces the amount of construction material waste generated during the building process. Additionally, this method is more environmentally friendly than traditional construction methods. "The mosque represents the vision of our wise leadership," said Al Shaibani, emphasising the importance of this project for the people of Dubai and the wider Islamic community.

The mosque's construction will utilise a combination of raw materials and specially prepared concrete. This mixture will help to ensure the mosque's durability and longevity, with a building guarantee of 30 years.

Europe cuts funding for refugees

Mounting costs driven by the conflict in Ukraine are squeezing budgets in the European Union's eastern wing, prompting cutbacks on economic aid for refugees and government efforts to encourage those able to get jobs — as reported by Bloomberg

The source recalls that the Romanian authorities spent €500m to help refugees. Meanwhile, four months ago, Bucharest faced a shortage of money, so the Romanian government stopped allocating money to Ukrainians to pay for housing. So far, the Romanian government has approved a plan that will cut payments by 50 percent for 99,000 refugees from Ukraine.

Registering almost 1.6 million refugees in its borders, Poland phased out a housing subsidy of 40 Zloty (\$10) per person a day for able-bodied Ukrainians who can work. It's maintaining other payments, including a

monthly 500-Zloty per child subsidy and free schooling and health care, but it scrapped free public transportation.

The Czech Republic has paid about 23bn Koruna (\$1.1bn) for the roughly half-a-million refugees it's hosting. It's also about to shift from paying landlords to paying the refugees themselves for accommodation and is planning to reduce that at the end of the year for people who are able to work.

In late May, Slovakia ends the housing assistance programme, which allocated €12 per day for a child and €24 for an adult.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Righteous Sofia Slutskaya is prayed for healing, peace and new addition to the family

Defender of the faith, comforter of hearts

The ringing of bells announces the beginning of the church service. Strings of parishioners flock to the Church of the Holy Righteous Sofia Slutskaya in Minsk. Believers love this place for a special atmosphere of solemnity and peace. There are goodness and peace even in the singing of the choir. It is a great joy to be part of this. Bow to the icon of the saint, ask for help or thank — everyone chooses his own. Sofia Slutskaya protects and instructs even four centuries after her death. Legends still circulate about her spiritual feat.

By Olga Nevmerzhtskaya

From the Olelkovich family

Sofia was born into a noble family, she is the daughter of the Slutsk prince Yuri Olelkovich (a descendant of Grand Duke Olgerd). Sofia's grandmother is the famous Anastasia, who led the defence of Slutsk after the invasion of the Tatar Khan Bahadır I Giray. No less heroic was the fate of her granddaughter: "Sofia lost her parents early, at the age of two she became an orphan. And a rich heiress: she got the third part of the family fortune. When her uncles, Alexander and Jan-Simeon, died a few years later, the rest of the possessions of the Olelkovich family passed to the girl. Sofia has become the richest bride in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Then there was the issue of guardianship. But this is just the beginning of an exciting story," Father Dmitry, the priest of the Church of the Holy Righteous Sofia Slutskaya narrates about the intricacies of fate.

Many wanted to become guardians of the heiress. But the right was defended by relatives on the maternal side — the Khodkeviches. They brought up the orphan in strict Christian traditions. Sofia's father, by the way, was also a pious man. Like all Olelkoviches, he supported Orthodoxy in his lands, although the faith was persecuted.

Wealthy grooms claimed for a fabulously rich bride. The guardians married her to Janusz Radziwill, the son of the noble Krzysztof Radziwill, nicknamed Perun. It is worth mentioning: before, the bride was not asked what she wanted, and the existence of the marriage contract was hidden. Although some historians say that Sofia was treated more nobly: the 19-year-old groom often visited the Khodkeviches Palace in Vilna, where she lived. The newlywed, by the way, just turned 14 years old.

Marriage for peace

The wedding was scheduled, but the unexpected happened. Sofia's guardian quarreled with the groom's father, Krzysztof, because he wanted to keep part of the girl's inheritance for himself. And she herself,

according to rumors, opposed marriage. Litigation began. The situation was overgrown with rumors, people were waiting for bloodshed. Both sides were seriously preparing for war, "The troops of the Radziwills had already approached Vilna, where the Khodkeviches lived. Huge 20,000th regiment. Only 1,600 cavalries and 600 foot soldiers were preparing to meet them. A three-day prayer service was announced in churches and monasteries to resolve the situation," Father Dmitry explained.

Until the last moment, Sofia tried to reconcile the warring parties and, finding no other way out, nevertheless agreed to marry Janusz. As they write in her biography: 'In the name of peace, she accepted the feat of bearing the cross in marriage'. The parties withdrew any claims to inheritance, and the property went to the husband and wife.

At the insistence of Sofia, it was written in the marriage contract that their common children with Radziwill would be baptised in Orthodoxy. Unthinkable audacity! Uniatism was then spreading on the territory of Belarus. Janusz is a Catholic, so the chances that the girl will be able to pull it off were zero. But her will was carried out.

Soon, Prince Janusz went to Livonia to fight the Swedes. Then he was elected ambassador to the diets, became one of the leaders of the gentry uprising against King Sigismund III. Sofia had to spend a lot of time alone. She selflessly defended the Orthodox faith in her land. This is her feat and an example for us, Father Dmitry specifies,

"Sofia Slutskaya fought against the imposition of Uniatism, dealt with the problems of ordinary people, donated money to the poor and prayed a lot. Information has been preserved that the princess embroidered golden robes and priestly vestments as a gift to churches. During her lifetime, Slutsk became a refuge for all who are persecuted because of their faith."

their good mistress and her poor child. A few years earlier, Sofia had a son and a daughter, but they died in infancy. What led to the tragedies is unknown, but historians mention the poor health of the righteous woman.

Miracles began to happen at the tomb of Sofia on the territory of the Slutsk Holy Trinity Monastery. She was considered the patroness of sick women, especially women in childbirth. But



Righteous Sofia Slutskaya Icon

lage of Mikheyki was struck by lightning, and he stopped walking. The doctors couldn't help. The villagers told their parents that their poor boy Samuil will remain unmoving and sick. But a miracle happened.

Sofia appeared to the desperate mother in a dream and ordered that the child be brought to the Holy Trinity Monastery. He went home on his own! And this is after four years of paralysis.

Reverence through the ages

Sofia Slutskaya was included in the Assembly of Belarusian Saints on April 3rd, 1984 — with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia. Believers come to the Holy Spirit Cathedral in Minsk to bow to the relics [however, some of them are located in Slutsk].

Another relic is kept in the capital — an icon painted with paints with crushed precious stones. The image is in the Church of the Holy Righteous Sofia Slutskaya. Father Dmitry talks about it with special warmth, noting that his wondrous face seems to glow from within. There is a particle of her relics in the wall icon of Sofia Slutskaya, donated by parishioners.

The temple itself delights with beauty. It was built with donations from the residents of the capital in the early 2000s. People still come here for comfort and help. Believers turn to the heavenly intercessor and ask to convey their prayers to the Lord. Does he hear? Father Dmitry wisely answers, "The scriptures teach us that God and the saints always hear prayers and answer them if we deal with kindness and faith. The main thing is not to keep anger, envy in your soul, to let go of bad thoughts. Then miracles happen. For everything that is impossible for man is possible for God."



The Church of the Holy Righteous Sofia Slutskaya

Miracles of faith

The princess died young — during her third birth at the age of 25. The child also did not survive. The whole of Slutsk mourned for

everyone came to the place of rest for healing.

"Interestingly: at the end of June 1812, the townspeople made a procession with the relics of St. Sofia, waiting for the troops to approach. The soldiers in Slutsk did not kill or rob anyone. Only in the Holy Trinity Monastery did the French take away all the food supplies. However, who will argue that this is the least of the losses," Father Dmitry says.

That case is not the only one when intercession was asked by the whole world. In 1848, cholera raged in Slutsk. Residents again decided to seek help from their patroness. The authorities allowed the relics of the saint to be carried through the city, crosswise. The epidemic has ended.

Unusual events associated with the name of Sofia Slutskaya continued. Once a peasant boy Samuil Shilovich from the vil-



Inside the Church of the Holy Righteous Sofia Slutskaya

Heavenly gifts

In memory of People's Artist Vladimir Stelmashonok

Passing through Minsk, anyone, even those who are not at all interested in painting, will certainly come across the works of Vladimir Stelmashonok. Even just going down the subway. The People's Artist of the BSSR was a member of the team of authors who designed the Victory Square and Moskovskaya stations: he created a mosaic on Moskovskaya, and a stained-glass window on Victory Square... The writer's house on Frunze Street (and today it is a haven for Belarusian writers) was also designed by Stelmashonok, he was generally attracted to literature and poetry all his life like a magnet. The poetic lines of Kupala and Kolas in his thinking were intricately intertwined with embroidered stitches of folk ornaments — this became his trademark, personal concept, something that no one had done before him, and few could repeat and inevitably compete in skill and talent with the original.

By Irina Ovsepyan

Vladimir Stelmashonok was the first who seriously and consciously began the origination of the Belarusian pantheon of creators. At the time when the famous *Word about Belarus* was created, this almost iconic style, in which there was so much from Russian icon painting, from the images of Andrei Rublev, Dionysius and Theophanes the Greek, produced the effect of an exploding bomb. It was new. It was unusual. Nobody did that before. Against the background of the whitest, brightly patterned woven towels, there were dark faces, like on ancient icons, showed through: Euphrosyne of Polotsk, Kirill of Turov, Francysk Skarina, Symon Budny, Pyotr Mstislavets, Frantisek Bogushevich, Aloiza Pashkevich, Maksim Bogdanovich, Yakub Kolas, Yanka Kupala, Tishka Gartny, Vladislav Golubok... Stelmashonok depicted them, the saints, printers, poets all together — the guardians of the Belarusian land. And the painted tow-



Portrait of Grigory Shirma (1968)

els — these protective covers — frame their images in the same way as they framed the village iconostasis with embroidered linen fabrics.

It was the unity of folk culture with high poetry, holiness with enlightenment that inspired the artist all his life. All this splashed out far beyond the scope of socialist realism, breaking any restrictions, but after all, a true master cannot be limited by any canons and styles.

Vladimir Stelmashonok was born in Minsk in 1928, but he considered himself a villager, and his small homeland was the tiny village of Khimnoe near Osipovichy. His parents were from peasants, the revolution gave them the opportunity to study — and they gnawed at the granite of science at the workers' faculty, eventually becoming excellent doctors. And the little son was brought up in the wild: either in a village in the Mstislav District with one grandfather, or in Khimny with a second. It was here that he first showed his interest in the visual arts. Here Vladimir mastered the usual village crafts and until the end of his life he himself created intricate and unusual wooden frames for his works. Portraits of relatives and villagers, more than once depicted his



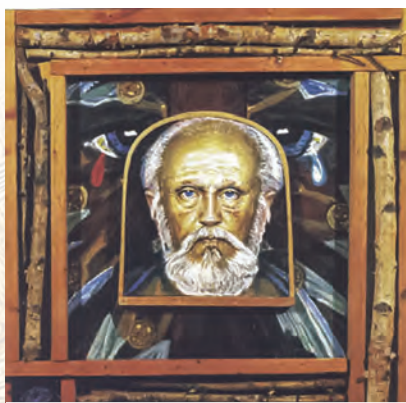
People's Commissars of the BSSR (1971)



Portrait of Yakub Kolas (1967)



Lenin with Youth. Vkhutemas. 1921 (1967)



Self-portrait (1993)

grandfather's hut, carefully reproducing images of childhood on canvas.

Like many Belarusian masters, he studied in Leningrad — this Mecca of artists of the 20th century. First, Mukhinka, where he was admitted to the faculty of artistic woodworking, then the former Tauride School, where he learned the intricacies of scenography, and, finally, the famous Repinka, its painting faculty.

After spending more than ten years in Leningrad, Vladimir Stelmashonok got ready and returned to his homeland. In Minsk, he took up teaching, joined the Union of Artists of the BSSR, got involved in work — participated in republican, all-Union and foreign exhibitions.

As a decorator, Stelmashonok had

no equal. But the portrait of Yakub Kolas brought real loud glory to him as an artist — the very famous half-length, where Pesnyar is depicted in a shirt open on his chest, against the background of eared bread... Not everyone appreciated Pesnyar in such a simple guise.

And a simple, self-made rustic frame, for which he was also reproached (why there is no richer frame!), is perceived quite differently over the years: as an integral part of the portrait, the final touch applied by the master already without the help of paints and brushes. Well, sometimes it takes years and decades for a simple viewer to comprehend the master's intention.

A textbook depiction of the folklorist and conductor Grigory Shirma, the writer Maksim Goretsky, an appeal to the heroes of Kolas... Stelmashonok was a magnificent portraitist — in his own special way, like a folk icon painter, putting all the simplicity and fullness of his feelings into the created image. As well as the schedule was excellent, although this side of his work is known to few. Created a great variety of landscapes of Minsk. Many images captured something that you cannot find today even in archival photographs: the artist loved his native city and returned to it from everywhere, no matter how he was persuaded to stay.



Yevgeniy Koktysh

Stelmashonok in the plein-air — it was an attraction and a theatre for everyone who happened to be nearby. He was not just a master, in his creative passion and rapture of what he loved, he also looked exactly the way a real artist should look in the eyes of ordinary people. Wherever he paints, a crowd of onlookers gathered

around, fascinated by how his brush flies, how recognisable images of the surroundings appear from under it.

He never lived the life of a private person — he did not allow himself to shut himself up in a studio, to settle in his own cosy little world, because he was highly ideological in his very essence.

Without hesitation, he took on a serious burden: he was twice elected chairman of the Union of Artists, he was a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and chairman of the Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on Culture. Together with Dmitry Likhachev, he developed a law on culture, according to which great attention was to be paid to aesthetic education and decoration of the urban environment. And in 1991, when the Soviet Union was cracking at the seams, Vladimir Stelmashonok without hesitation laid the keys to his Moscow deputy apartment on the table, leaving himself only a party card (whereas the majority did exactly the opposite), and again, as many times before, he returned to Minsk: what was happening before his eyes with the country was incompatible with the concept of conscience, which he carried through his whole life.

Oh, they called him many times and tried to get him abroad! In the American city of Trenton, they even awarded the title of honorary citizen in the hope that this magnificent master will be tempted and stay with them forever.

It was possible to settle down wonderfully, forgetting about any troubles and leaving behind the Motherland, which is entering the peak. But he once again turned around — and flew to Minsk, purposeful and faithful, like a bird, which from any of the warmest and most beautiful lands always returns to its native nest. And if the nest is destroyed, build it again.

'Fool', whispered those who all their lives have been looking for how to get better. And he took and gave his kin Osipovichy an art gallery and dozens of his works. In general, he gave it easily — greed, this common human ailment, bypassed him. However, birds are far from human vices: they have wings, love for their chicks and fidelity to nests, and they don't need more...

OFFICIALLY

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, signed decree on preparation and holding of II CIS Games in Belarus

On May 13th, the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, signed decree No. 134 On Preparation and Holding of II CIS Games in 2023, the Belarusian leader's press service reports.

The competitions will be held on August 5th-13th in eleven cities of Belarus in 20 sports. The decree establishes a number of preferences and benefits for participants of the Games and volunteers. Among them are visa-free entry to Belarus, exemption from the need to register on the territory of the country, free travel in public transport, exemption from income taxation in the amount of the cost of free meals, accommodation, logistics, transport and other support.

In order to stimulate the attraction of extra-budgetary sources of financing, sponsors of the Games are allowed to include the amounts of assistance provided as part of non-operating expenses.

The measures provided for by the decree will ensure high-quality preparation and holding of competitions, optimise the expenditure of budgetary and attracted funds.



Slow-acting ball

Another case of rigged games rumbled in Belarusian football

By Sergei Kanashits

At length the fox is brought to the furrier. Information about the first strings pulled by the Investigative Committee was leaked to the media at the beginning of the year, when top managers of the current champion of Belarus FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk were detained. There were many rumours, and on the sidelines, with each subsequent day, all the 'flavours' of a mess began to appear more and more clearly, forcing even the worldly-wise to frown. And here is the denouement: ABFF has published an official statement on its website. 'The Control, Disciplinary and Ethical Affairs Committee of the ABFF considered information received from the Investigative Committee of the Republic of Belarus that during the 2022 Belarus Football Championship among teams of the major league, the management of FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk organised rigged games, and also carried out illegal financial promotion of major league teams, after which disciplinary proceedings were initiated, in which more than 20 persons involved in the above events were interviewed.' What follows is a long enumeration of the measures that were taken

Former football player of the Belarusian national team Sergei Gurenko,

"If these were prearranged matches, rigged games, then everything is correct — the participants should be punished. If it was an incentive, then I don't see any crime or anything illegal here. Now, if the judge were thanked, it's another matter. But if, for example, a fan of the club says: 'Guys, play well, and I will bring pizza to the locker room for the whole team'. How will this be assessed? In my opinion, there are many black spots in this case. We have some guesses. After all, no one in the federation publicly explains what exactly the participants in the case were guilty of. They simply referred to the articles of the Disciplinary Code and did not describe in detail why there was such a punishment, what exactly each of the defendants in the case had done. Why was 50 points deducted from FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk, and only 30 from FC Energetik-BGU? Why not 100, 80 or 44? There are so many questions. I think the ABFF should figure out where the stimulation is, where the deliberate surrender of the match is, where the rigged game is. These are three different concepts."

Let's go the limit, as the famous master of aphorisms would say: never before and once again! Belarusian football has experienced several high-profile corruption cases in its sovereign period, the last of which, in 2016, affected many people and several clubs — its echoes are still heard. However, the new foul play scandal, the decision on which was announced last week in the football federation, has surpassed, perhaps, all the previous ones. Never before have clubs been subjected to such harsh sanctions and have not been deprived of already achieved medals.

FC Belshina Bobruisk head coach Albert Rybak,

"I can't understand why we were punished. We didn't surrender any games. If Gomza was involved in some kind of rigged games, then all the other players played honestly. The coaches did their job. No tricks. We also played fairly with FC Dinamo Minsk."

against the violators. And they, let us note, are unprecedented.

FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk turned out to be the main defendant, which suffered the most severe punishment.

Firstly, the club was deprived of the championship title won in the last championship and the right to represent the country in the upcoming Champions League season. Secondly, they received a huge fine of 10,000 base values (Br370,000). Thirdly, they were deprived of 30 tournament points in this year's championship. This

means that FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk, probably, may drop to the second division following the results of the championship, but it will not be easy there either, because in the 2024 season it will also have to start with a handicap — minus another 20 points!

The Control, Disciplinary and Ethical Affairs Committee unleashed a total attack on FC Energetik-BGU, the second main character in this incredible story: deprivation of silver medals from the last championship, minus 20 points in this championship, minus 10 points in the next one and a fine in the amount of 2,000 base values (Br74,000).

FC Belshina Bobruisk became the third victim: the same fine as 'students', as well as the deprivation of ten and five points in the current and upcoming championships.

Not without personal consequences, of course. Former Sports Director of FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk Vladimir Niederhaus has been declared persona non grata in Belarusian football. As well as former FC Belshina Bobruisk player Dmitry Gomza. Anatoliy Yurevich, the master of the Belarusian coaching department, also suffered a serious punishment: he was disqualified for 5 years and must pay a fine of 1,000 base values (Br37,000). It is curious

that quite recently Yurevich was approved as a state football coach and his task was to organise the work of mentors not only in his on FC Energetik-BGU, but also throughout the country.

In addition to these decisions, there is a whole list of people who have also been subjected to disciplinary and financial sanctions — these are organisation men, mentors and football players. Among the most famous are FC Dynamo Brest forward Mikhail Gordeychuk and FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk midfielder Nikita Korzun, who also recently defended the honour of the national team. Both are suspended for a year.

Following the resonant decisions of the Control, Disciplinary and Ethical Affairs Committee, the standings of the 2022 championship were revised (gold and silver were decided not to be awarded to anyone), as well as the list of teams that will represent Belarus in European cup tournaments. New input data, however, also leave questions.

It was announced that FC BATE Borisov will play in the Champions League, FC Dinamo Minsk and FC Isloch in the Conference League.

The winner of the Belarusian Cup should get the last European cup spot, but FC BATE Borisov

The Soligorsk club has voiced its position in response to the decisions of the Control, Disciplinary and Ethical Affairs Committee of the ABFF, depriving it of the championship in the 2022 season and the upcoming European cups.

"We inform you that at present the decisions of the Committee of Control, Disciplinary and Ethical Issues and the Licensing Committee of the ABFF, which relate to FC Shakhtyor Soligorsk, have not been officially sent to the club. We have the opportunity to study only publications on the official website of the association. After receiving these documents and their comprehensive study, the club will decide on an appeal in accordance with the regulatory documents of the ABFF," the statement says.

will play in the final against FC Torpedo-BELAZ Zhodino...

In recent years, Belarusian football has experienced many misfortunes. However, in order to begin the revival and the way up, apparently, it is necessary to completely and finally be cleansed of filth. There's no other way.



Aleksandr Kulevsky

On November 12th last year, Soligorsk's Shakhtyor defeated Bobruisk's Belshina — 4:1 — drawing a line under the 2022 championship, but it turned out that it all just started with it...



Anton Stepanishchey

Photo of the week

Pavel Konstantinov, an excavator driver at Vitebskgaz, creates models of various equipment from paper and cardboard

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On May 18th, 1998, Museum of Modern Fine Art was opened in Minsk. Its collection contains about 2,500 exhibits — works by

contemporary Belarusian artists. Classical painting, graphics, sculpture, arts and crafts, photos and posters are presented.

May 18th is International Museum Day. It was established by decision of the 11th General Conference of the International Council of Museums held in May 1977. By



collecting and storing monuments of material and spiritual culture, museums conduct a great deal of scientific, pedagogical and educational work. They teach us about our past and open our minds to new ideas — two crucial steps in building a better future.



May 19th, 1922, is considered Pioneer Day. The history of the holiday goes back to the distant 1922, when the All-Union Pioneer

Organisation was established. In Belarus, the organisation for children, adolescents and adults continues the traditions of the pioneer movement — the public association Belarusian National Pioneer Organisation.

May 20th is Day of Workers of Physical Culture and Sports in the Republic of Belarus. This day unites all those who choose a healthy and active lifestyle, rejoice in the success of Belarusian athletes and continue the good traditions of sports.

May 20th is World Bee Day. The holiday was established by a resolution of the UN General Assembly in December 2017 in



order to highlight the role of these insects in matters of pollination, increasing crop yields and, as a result, food security. May 20th was chosen as the date of celebration in memory of one of the outstanding beekeepers, innovators of this type of activity, the Slovene Anton Janša (1734–1773), considered one of the founders of modern beekeeping.



May 20th, 1873, is considered Jeans Birthday. The history of denim goes back over 200 years. More than one generation has grown up in

these practical pants. The first jeans were produced in America by a man named Levi Strauss in 1853. They were sturdy canvas pants with double stitched seams and plenty of pockets. On May 20th, 1873, Levi Strauss & Co received a sole license to manufacture trousers with studded pockets. Jeans soon

became fashionable clothing for people of all ages and classes.

On May 21st, 1908,

a Belarusian artist Mikhail Dovgiallo was born. He worked mainly in the genre of landscape. Among his works were: *Old Minsk, Botanical Garden in Minsk, Autumn, Golden Maple* paintings. He also painted still lifes and portraits. He died 1978.



May 22nd is World Biodiversity Day. It was proclaimed by decision of the 55th session of the UN General Assembly on the day of the adoption of the Convention on

Biological Diversity (May 22nd, 1992, Nairobi). The purpose of the holiday is to draw public attention to the problem of the irretrievable disappearance of many representatives of flora and fauna on Earth. Despite intense efforts over the past 20 years, the planet's biodiversity continues to decline, and the ecological balance is still changing.



On May 22nd, 1856, the State Tretyakov Gallery, the national museum of Russian fine arts of the 10th-21st centuries was opened. On this day, the collector, merchant and textile manufacturer Pavel Tretyakov purchased the first paintings to create a

museum of the Russian national school of painting. In 1881 the gallery was opened to the public. And in 1892, Tretyakov brought his collection as a gift to Moscow. At that time, the collection included 1287 paintings, 518 drawings and 9 sculptures. Currently, the collection of the Tretyakov Gallery includes more than 100,000 works of art.



May 23rd is World Turtle Day — an animal symbolising wisdom, wealth and longevity. This unusual holiday originated at the initiative of American Tortoise Rescue in 2000. The purpose of the holiday was to draw public attention to the problem of the death of numerous turtles due to the proximity to humans.



May 24th is Day of Slavic Writing and Culture in the Republic of Belarus. It is celebrated in honour of the Slavic enlighteners and preachers of Christianity Cyril and Methodius, who gave the Slavic world the Cyrillic script (863) and laid the foundation for Russian and other Slavic literatures.