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we are

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In the year of 100th
anniversary of
Belarusian cinema,
we remember
film director
Vladimir
Korsh-Sablin

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Anton Stepanishchev



Drones help to grow crops with greater benefit in Vitebsk Region

Drone of great capabilities

The President of Belarus has repeatedly drawn attention to the need to introduce best practices in agricultural industrial and other areas. In this regard, drones stand out. They have significantly facilitated the work of border guards, rescuers, surveyors, environmentalists, among the rest.

The Mazolovogaz branch of Vitebskoblgaz (Vitebsk regional gas enterprise) and the Vitebsk Zonal Institute of Agriculture at Belarus' National Academy of Sciences in Tulovo have experience in using drones in Vitebsk Region agriculture. Moreover, they have already calculated the efficiency of using smart devices compared to conventional technology. → 5



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Any provocation on the state border will be suppressed by force of arms



Commander of the Northwestern Operational Command Aleksandr Naumenko reported that at present the situation across Belarus' northwestern border remains difficult and tensions are likely to escalate. A testimony to that is the construction of engineering structures, including anti-tank ditches and firing positions across Belarus' border, as well as material supplies and ammunition that are being amassed in warehouses.

The neighbouring side has obviously beefed up state border security in the northwestern operational direction (NWOD). Thus, the total number of troops involved in protecting their border with Belarus at that section is about 3,200 people, including up to 2,800 people in Lithuania and up to 500 in Latvia.

The number of military contingents of NATO countries stationed in the NWOD in order to perform various tasks amounts up to 7,700 people on the territory of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Military units and divisions of NATO joint armed forces, including in the Baltic States and Poland, are engaged in operational and combat training.

Aleksandr Naumenko noted that the Quadriga 2024 exercise is currently being held in a number of countries, including Lithuania and Poland. As part of the ongoing exercise, three battalions (German infantry and mechanised battalions and a US tank battalion) are deployed at the Pabradė Training Area, which is located 15 km from the state border.

At the same time, the battalions stationed at the Pabradė Training Area may be used to carry out provocative actions near the state border with the involvement of sabotage and reconnaissance groups and illegal armed formations.

Aerial reconnaissance of Belarus is also underway. On average, 4-5 reconnaissance aircraft sorties are recorded daily. Currently, 132 combat aircraft from the NATO air force group are based in the NWOD.

Aleksandr Lukashenko visited the checkpoint, where he inspected the performance of tasks by the motorised rifle unit.



During the working trip, the President answered journalists' questions

According to the Head of State, when developing the army, the focus should be on how modern warfare is conducted, as well as on the specifics of combat operations. Belarus has marshy and forested terrain; therefore, in addition to advanced high-precision weapons, the army also needs conventional weapons and skilful actions of the military personnel in the field.

"We should not forget that in any war, the main task is solved by ordinary soldiers with conventional weapons," the President emphasised.

Electronic warfare systems are also important, including for fighting drones.

Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that back in the day Belarus did not abandon conventional weapons, which, as evidenced in practice, are in demand and effective in modern military conflicts. Nevertheless, Belarus has modern air defence systems that are capable of hitting enemy air targets.

During the conversation with journalists, Aleksandr Lukashenko commented on the allegations on Russia and Belarus' plans to attack the West.

"It is complete nonsense. Today we show them that we are not going to attack them. We are building a defence system here," the Head of State assured. "What war against NATO troops are they talking about? We do not need it. Yet, they are waiting for it. They are provoking us to respond. Take the recent sending of sabotage groups across the Ukrainian border through Belarus. Why are they doing this?" Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out that NATO forces, including military personnel from the United States and Germany, are

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has made a working trip to Oshmyany District, Grodno Region.

During a visit to the site, where measures are being carried out to check the combat readiness of formations and military units, the Head of State instructed to respond harshly to possible provocations on the border on the part of the neighbouring states.

"I will say this publicly — any provocation must be suppressed by force of arms. Those who violate the state border will be destroyed," Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed.



Photos by Belta and Vajyar

currently stationed at the Pabradė Training Area in Lithuania.

"They are foreigners to that country. Do you think that Germans and Americans will defend Lithuania in case of a clash with Belarusians and Russians? Such things have never happened before. And they are not going to do that. With the first slightest predicament they will run away from the battlefield — and it will be the right thing to do. Their land is in Germany and the USA. No mercenaries will solve any issue in this case," the Head of State underlined.

The President spoke in a similar vein about the situation on the part of Ukraine and mentioned talks about the deployment of French military personnel there, "There are 120,000 Ukrainian soldiers close to our border now. They want to take them away and send them to the war against Russia. And here, they want to deploy French or NATO troops on our southern border. This will benefit us as they will not defend Ukraine the way Ukrainians are defending it now.

We are not going to fight against them. I have always said and continue to say — we do not need anything which is not ours, but we will not give away what belongs to us. This is our logic. Why do we need to stand head-on and fight against each other? We are just being dragged into it and provoked, while the interested parties are far away. They would then come here, to the ashes, print dollars and restore these lands, but not in the interests of our peoples. Neither Lithuanian, nor Polish, nor Belarusian ones.

The Head of State was asked whether Belarus needs to take any additional security measures after the tragic events in Moscow Region. Aleksandr Lukashenko replied that currently, all necessary measures ensuring security are already implemented in our country when organising mass events with the participation of a large number of people. Another important aspect is to ensure that facilities are equipped with video cameras. Thus, thanks to their availability, it was possible to track and identify the car with terrorists near the Crocus City Hall.

After the tragedy, some media outlets did not rule out the possibility that the terrorists were going to hide in Belarus through Bryansk Region. Aleksandr Lukashenko categorically denied these assumptions, "They could not go to Belarus. Their handlers — we have suspicions about some of them, I will call Putin to share my suspicions — knew that it would be a very bad idea to try to enter Belarus, because as soon as a part of the Russian region switched to an enhanced security regime, we immediately did the same in our country. In the very first minutes, the Chairman of the KGB [State Security Committee], who is engaged in anti-terrorist activities, reported to me that we had activated our units according to the combat situation. In particular, the Interior Ministry's forces were involved, roadblocks were set up, including on the border with Russia, the KGB staff, the State Border Committee, and some military personnel were involved. That is why there was no chance they

could enter Belarus. They realised it. So they took a turn and headed to the Ukraine-Russia border," the Head of State clarified. According to the President, the operation to detain the perpetrators was carried out on a high professional level.

The Head of State emphasised the effective and harmonious interaction between Belarus and Russia after the terrorist attack.

"The interaction between Belarusians and Russians is worth a lot," Aleksandr Lukashenko gave his assessment.

The President explained that immediately after the terrorist attack, the special services of the two countries acted in line with the established algorithm, as determined by the Presidents of Belarus and Russia.

"Bortnikov and Tertel got in touch, they jumped into action, they reported to us. From that moment on, the issues that concerned us, the President of Russia and the President of Belarus, were raised repeatedly during our communication," Aleksandr Lukashenko noted. As soon as the Heads of the two states received information from the intelligence services that the car with the terrorists was moving in the direction of Bryansk, it was agreed that Belarus would block its section of the road that could be used by the criminals, and the Russian side would do the same on its section."

During the conversation with journalists, Aleksandr Lukashenko also spoke about the flight of the Belarusian cosmonaut to the ISS, "It is not just the image. This is a whole industry. I am rejoicing together with you that we have reached the pinnacle in space. We have truly become a space power."

The Head of State thanked the Russian side and Vladimir Putin personally for assisting in the preparation and organisation of the Belarusian cosmonaut's flight and resolving financing issues.

When communicating with reporters, the President also pointed out,

"Belarus is the world's most peace-loving country. We only want peace. There is no need to rebuke us by saying we are going to fight against the West. Similarly, no one in Russia is going to fight with NATO. However, if they try something in this direction, the answer will be instantaneous. We will all rise up like Brest Fortress."

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

The goal is to ramp up trade turnover to half a billion dollars

The Head of State, Aleksandr Lukashenko, met with the Governor of Russia's Orel Region, Andrei Klychkov



The President warmly welcomed the head of the Russian region in Belarus, noting that this was his first visit to our country. The Belarusian leader expressed hope that thanks to the geographical proximity, it will be possible to establish more intensive co-operation. If necessary, logistics opportunities will be found for this purpose.

Aleksandr Lukashenko reminded that in early March, the Belarusian Government appointed Chairman of the Brest Regional Executive Committee Yuri Shuleiko as the new person assigned to Orel Region — a pro-active, goal-oriented person who is able to do a lot to develop interaction with the Russian region.

Speaking about trade and economic collaboration, the Head of State proposed to take the volume of mutual trade turnover for 2023 as a reference point. That figure was very impressive — a quarter of a billion dollars.

“I think we can reach \$500m in the near future, within the next three years. This is quite achievable. You will have to work hard for that, though,” the President emphasised. “Traditionally strong economic sectors of Orel Region, such as agriculture, microelectronics, and the investment sector can act as driving forces of growth. We have a high level of development in all these areas. Therefore, the alignment is possible and we will do everything to achieve the maximum effect.”

The agenda of the Orel Region delegation's visit to Belarus envisages meetings at the Government level, tours to major domestic enterprises, and exchange of experience in regional development. Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed that there were no closed topics in relations with the Russian region, and that Belarus was ready to provide its products and was open for closer co-operation. Given the development level of Orel Region, Belarus is also willing to adopt the best practices in certain industries. Moreover, the parties already have experience in bilateral co-operation — a plan of measures for 2024-2026 has been

signed to implement the Agreement on Co-operation between the Government of Orel Region and the Gomel Regional Executive Committee.

According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, the Belarusian National Biotechnology Corporation deserves special mention — it is a unique project for the production of compound feeds, amino acids and pre-mixes, “We also produce a wide range of veterinary medicines. We have developed highly productive technologies in pedigree animal breeding, poultry farming, dairy production and many other industries. If our products are in demand in your region, we will be glad.”

Another promising area for co-operation is construction. The President proposed to build a landmark turnkey facility in Orel Region, “We can also offer services in the field of capital repairs, design, engineering surveys, supply of modern building materials and elevators, assistance in gasification of regions and much more of what you need.”

The Head of State stressed that this is a far-from-complete list of areas, on which Belarus and Orel Region can work more efficiently, “We are ready to co-ordinate and collaborate with you in all areas at any time. We can work with you more efficiently, intensively and show other regions how much small Belarus can do for huge Russia.”

At the same time, the President drew attention to the challenging situation unfolding in Russia's Orel Region,

“They will not let you live and work peacefully in the near future, either — there is nothing to count on. Therefore, we have to solve the tasks of protecting civilians and critical infrastructure in the most difficult conditions. If there is anything we can help you with in this regard, you can approach us and we will be pleased to help,” the Belarusian leader pointed out.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by



Andrei Klychkov

113 percent against 2022. In monetary terms, the region produced 182,000 Russian Roubles of products per each resident — 3.2 times more than the Russian average figure. In 2023, 5 million tonnes of grains, legumes and oilseeds were harvested, while the crop yield exceeded 50 centners per hectare,” he underlined.

Addressing the Belarusian leader, Andrei Klychkov called the creation of joint ventures an important point in the development of co-operation. “I completely support the task that you outlined: to double our mutual trade, enabling us to develop more actively, regardless of any sanctions. We finished last year with growth for all socio-economic indicators. Our industry is working stably and last year's agricultural results also saw an increase of

ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO APPROVED STATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME FOR 2024

On March 29th, the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has signed Decree No. 119, approving the state investment programme for 2024, the Belarusian leader's press service reports

In total, 120 objects are registered in this year's state investment programme, 41 of which are scheduled to be put into operation. It is also planned to begin financing the construction (reconstruction) of 16 new facilities, including 4 road construction facilities, 2 family-type orphanages, 2 hospitals, and 4 infrastructure facilities.

About Br2.1bn is earmarked to finance the facilities included in the programme, of which more than 80 percent is to spent on the implementation of state programmes: Roads of Belarus, People's Health and Demographic Security, Ensuring Law and Order, Agricultural Business, Border Security, Education and Youth Policy, Housing Construction and others.

State capital investments and funds from the National Development Fund are distributed to social facilities, including healthcare, education, culture, and sports facilities, alongside water deferrisation stations and rental housing, including for military personnel.

ALEKSANDR LUKASHENKO SIGNED LAW ON RESPONSIBLE TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has signed the Law On Responsible Treatment of Animals, sb.by reports with reference to the Belarusian leader's press service

The document is aimed at protecting animals from cruelty, as well as ensuring the rights and legitimate interests of individuals and legal entities in their treatment of animals.

In particular, the law provides for establishment of general rules for treatment of animals (companion animals, laboratory and service animals, as well as animals used in cultural activities and sports); giving the Government the authority to determine the list of companion animals to be registered and the procedure for their keeping at home; outlining the enhanced requirements for the maintenance of dangerous dogs (owners of such dogs will be required to take special courses and get a certificate); prohibition of visits with companion animals (except guide dogs) to grocery stores, health and education organisations, cultural, infrastructure and sports facilities; restriction of the sale of

animals to minors; obligation of nurseries to chip the offspring sold (dogs, cats). At the same time, the right to chip pets is established for owners of companion animals.

A mechanism is also being established for temporarily restricting the right of ownership of an animal and its withdrawal for violation by the owner of the conditions of treatment of an animal that caused harm to the health of citizens, animals or property.

The law defines the requirements for establishment and operation of temporary detention facilities, shelters and hotels for animals. In particular, the placement of such objects in residential buildings is prohibited, and conditions for keeping animals and their transfer to new owners are established as well.

The main provisions of the law come into force on January 1st, 2025.

The President's visit to the area in Oshmyany District, where measures aimed at checking the combat readiness of formations and military units are taking place, was not only of an inspection nature. The Head of State made a number of crucial statements that were at first glance related to the military-political and international situation. However, they also reflect the current trends in the internal development of our country.

Cohesion. Security. Confidence

Popular sovereignty is about security and defence



By Vadim Gigin, Candidate of Historical Sciences

A unique response model

All commentators, even those with an unfriendly attitude to us, paid attention to President's confidence when he was speaking about the situation in Belarus. The President's confidence is based on a deep knowledge and understanding of the processes taking place in our society. Belarus has built a unique model of responding to various challenges, which includes legal, security, political and economic measures.

The constitutional institutionalisation of the Belarusian People's Congress became one of the key decisions to improve the entire state-public mechanism. Currently, the nomination of delegates of this supreme body of popular sovereignty is underway. The President focused on the work of the Belarusian People's Congress during his conversation with journalists in the framework of the visit to a military unit in Oshmyany District. The Head of State listed the questions that should be included in the agenda of the first meeting of the Belarusian People's Congress. As is known, it will take place at the end of April. The representative forum will open with a report by the Head of State on the situation in the country and the world.

First of all, organisational and personnel issues need to be resolved at the meeting — to elect the chairperson

BELARUSIAN PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

Numbers and facts

- Composition — 1,200 delegates (maximum quantity), including:**
 - deputies of the House of Representatives
 - members of the Council of the Republic
 - from local councils of deputies — 350 people (maximum quantity)
 - from civil society — 400 people (maximum quantity)
- Term of office — 5 years**
- Sessions take place:**
 - BPC — at least once per year
 - BPC presidium — at least once every six months

and the presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress, to determine the composition of the Supreme and Constitutional Courts, the Central Election Commission, as may be required, as well as to approve the tasks for the country's economic development for the five-year period.

There is another topic that is attributed by the Basic Law to the competence of the Belarusian Peo-

THE MAIN POWERS OF THE BELARUSIAN PEOPLE'S CONGRESS

The Belarusian People's Congress is the highest representative body of the people's power of the Republic of Belarus, which outlines the strategic areas for the development of society and the state, ensures the inviolability of the constitutional system, the continuity of generations and civil harmony.

The BPC makes decisions on the approval of:

 Main directions of domestic and foreign policy	 Military doctrine	 National security concept	 Programme of socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus
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The Belarusian People's Congress:

- hears the annual address of the President of the Republic of Belarus to the Parliament of the Republic of Belarus;
- proposes amendments and additions to the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus;
- proposes holding republican referendums;
- has the right to consider the issue of election legitimacy;
- decides on the removal of the President of the Republic of Belarus from office in the event of a systematic or gross violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus or committing high treason or another serious crime;
- has the right to introduce a state of emergency or martial law on the territory of the Republic of Belarus if there are grounds provided for by the Constitution of the Republic of Belarus, and in case of inaction of the President of the Republic of Belarus on these issues;
- on the proposal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, previously agreed with the Presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress, elects
 - Chairman, Deputy Chairman and judges of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Belarus,
 - Chairman, Deputy Chairmen and judges of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus,
 - Chairman and members of the Central Election Commission,
 - dismisses them from office on the grounds provided for by law;
- approves the list of people's assessors of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Belarus;
- on the proposal of the President of the Republic of Belarus, decides on the possibility of sending military personnel, employees of paramilitary organisations, and other persons outside the Republic of Belarus to participate in ensuring collective security and activities to maintain international peace and security;
- sets public holidays, feast days and memorable dates.

Source: Law of the Republic of Belarus No. 248-3 dated February 7th, 2023 'On the Belarusian People's Congress'.

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"The Military Doctrine and the National Security Concept are strategic issues on Belarusian People's Congress agenda. Nothing could be more important now. This is the main thing. The first meeting primarily deals with personnel issues. The chairperson will be elected and the presidium of the Belarusian People's Congress will be determined. Maybe we will have time and will be able to make appointments to the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, and the Central Election Commission. All this has already been brought to the level of the Belarusian People's Congress from the President. The judicial branch of power is being transferred from the President to the Belarusian People's Congress. That is, we are moving in a democratic direction."

During the inspection of the measures on checking the combat readiness of formations and military units in Oshmyany District, on March 26th, 2024

ple's Congress. It is of paramount importance at the moment. Its discussion and the subsequent adoption of the appropriate decisions will certainly cause an international buzz.

This refers to the National Security Concept and the Military Doctrine of the Republic of Belarus. That is, the delegates of the Belarusian People's Congress will have to clearly outline the military and political course of our country taking into consideration the current extremely challenging conditions, when the world is on the verge of a full-scale global war.

Democracy in action

The Belarusian political process is based on a solid legal framework, which has been significantly updated in recent years. Let us turn directly to the text of the Constitution. Paragraph 29 of Article 84 states that the President 'shall impose martial law on the territory of the Republic of Belarus in the event of a military threat or attack, declare full or partial mobilisation with the submission of the adopted decision within three days for approval by the Council of the Republic'. Everything is clear — the Head of State is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. At the same time, the Belarusian People's Congress has great powers to respond to any crisis situation. Again, let us quote the Basic Law.

Paragraph 10 of Article 89 (3) gives the supreme representative body of popular sovereignty the right, on the proposal of the President, to make a decision 'on the possibility of sending military personnel, employees of paramilitary organisations, and other persons outside the Republic of Belarus to participate in ensuring collective security and activities to maintain international peace and security'. All the i's have been dotted and all the t's have been crossed. Our republic remains presidential, which makes it possible to ensure unity of command not only in peacetime, but also, most importantly, in the event of any external challenges and threats, including military ones. Along with that, democratic principles are enshrined in the need to receive approval of the Council of the Republic, as well as of the Belarusian People's Congress on a wide range of questions. This ensures the full legitimacy when taking decisions that affect the fate of the country and every citizen.

The described system of ensuring national security is also important for another reason. The increased role of civil society places a special responsibility on all of us. Now the thesis that national defence is everyone's business is not just a slogan. It is fixed in the specific mechanism of interaction between all branches of government, both at the republican and local levels, political parties, public associations, and citizens.

In this sense, the improvement of the political system plays no less a role than the strengthening of the Armed Forces. The army and other law enforcement agencies make part of society, they feel our support. Therefore, the past elections, the upcoming Belarusian People's Congress, the coherence of actions by all subjects within domestic policy are also sections of the front, only a political one. After all, we are all fighting our common struggle for our native Belarus.

Drone of great capabilities

The President has repeatedly drawn attention to the need to introduce best practices in agricultural industrial and other areas. In this regard, drones stand out. They have significantly facilitated the work of border guards, rescuers, surveyors, environmentalists, among the rest. The Mazolovogaz branch of Vitebskoblغاز (Vitebsk regional gas enterprise) and the Vitebsk Zonal Institute of Agriculture at Belarus' National Academy of Sciences in Tulovo have experience in using drones in Vitebsk Region agriculture. Moreover, they have already calculated the efficiency of using smart devices compared to conventional technology.

By Anna Naumova

You can see everything from above

In order to get acquainted with the fleet of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) of the Vitebskoblغاز Unitary Enterprise, we are going to the village of Buyany, Vitebsk Region. In 2022, an educational and practical centre for precision farming was opened on the basis of the Mazolovogaz agricultural enterprise. For the third year, the DJI AGRAS T30 drone will circle over the farm fields. "It is a real hard worker here," Aleksandr Korol, a 24-year-old Chief Agronomist-Agrochemist of Mazolovogaz branch noted with a smile. "After graduating from the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy, I got to Mazolovogaz. Here, I saw live how smart technologies they had talked about a lot at the university — autopilots in cabins of tractors and combine harvesters, agri drones — are applied in the agro-industrial complex. On behalf of my native enterprise, I learnt to become a UAV operator."

The introduction of drones at Mazolovogaz began with a multispectral drone. The images obtained by the drone from above demonstrate how winter grains have overwintered. This approach differs drastically from the conventional going around the fields. "We can see the exact full-scale picture," the hereditary agrarian continued. "The boundaries of the areas that need to be replanted are plainly visible, including in hard-to-reach areas, where tractors simply cannot get close in early spring — otherwise, you will get bogged down."

In order to align crops developing in different ways, drones carry out spot-on treatment with a stimulating drug CAM [carbomide-ammonium mixture] on the farm. The AGRAS T30 tank is designed for 30 litres. Drone production per day is about 70-110 hectares. One filling is enough for six hectares, when working with concentrated drugs. The drone comes with three batteries, each with enough charge for 12 minutes of operation.

It is convenient that drones can work at night. Special sensors copy the terrain and keep the set height. Thus, the height when flying over winter grains and rapeseed is 2.5 metres. At Mazolovogaz, they used UAVs at night for desiccation of rapeseed — that is, to dry out the crop. In rainy 2022, 300 hectares of crops were treated on the farm, dried from the air around the clock. The efficiency of rapeseed desiccation with the help of drones is close to one hundred percent. The ground sprayer, when carrying out the same treatment, touches crops, which results in the 15-20 percent falling-off. In contrast, the drone minimises losses.

Drones are also indispensable in the fight against Sosnowsky's hogweed. For Vitebsk Region, which suffers from this dangerous plant more than other regions, the topic is very relevant. At Mazolovogaz, the green 'terminator' is successfully confronted by drones even in hard-to-reach places. Over the past year, the farm treated 10 hectares with foci of hogweed.



Anna Savelenok, Ivan Chekalov and Polina Minova

In aid of science

On April 12th, Cosmonautics Day, the flight season will be opened at the Vitebsk Zonal Institute of Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus in Tulovo. The company, which is engaged in seed production, has about 1,500 hectares of its own land. The purchased Belarusian drone with the prefix 'agri' is of great help.

Deputy Director for Commercial Affairs Sergei Kolotkov shared the details, "A small drone, which we use to monitor fields, appeared in our company about four years ago. At the end of last summer, it was joined by an intelligent agricultural complex A60-X."

"This drone with a 20-litre tank was purchased from the China-Belarus JV Aviation Technologies and Systems. While the state registration was being done, the device was being tested in the fields," Oleg Ravbis, Scientific Secretary of the Zonal institute, continued the topic. "The National Academy of Sciences of Belarus allocated the funds for the necessary purchase. Together with the charging station, the drone cost us around 80,000 BYN. It is cheaper than imported analogues, while its characteristics are no worse."

Thanks to the A60-X, it is possible to treat up to 80 hectares per day from the air. A useful purchase in Tulovo will most likely be sent first for herbicidal treatment on a grain area. Also, they will engage the drone to study the use of fungicides on potatoes. The scientific work of one of the Institute graduate students is dedicated to this topic. Oleg Ravbis added, "Original seed production is an expensive and complex process. When cultivating high quality potatoes (super elite), any contact with the wheels of agricultural machinery is extremely undesirable. This may damage the prototypes or infect them. The drone is a real find for us!"

Three specialists of the Vitebsk Zonal Institute have been trained as operators of civilian UAVs. Among them is 28-year-old Ivan Chekalov, Head of Department for Grain and Leguminous Crops, "I did not expect that studying at the DOSAAF Training Centre in the capital would be so captivating."

An agronomist by education, Ivan has discovered a completely new sphere of 'high flight' for himself. The most interesting thing was learning how to make a flight map, as well as the basics of safety.

Aerial manoeuvres over the field are not always predictable. Technology is a tricky thing. The drone might collide with an obstacle, such as a tree or a bird. The service centre that, in case of necessity, will help to return 'wings' to the Tulovo 'bird' is located in the Great Stone Industrial Park. The purchase of necessary parts and technical support in Russian are guaranteed.

The routes of the flying assistant are



Anton Stepanishchev

born not in the field but in the office, on the computer. A young agronomist shows colourful maps on the monitor, "Last spring, we digitised the fields with an accuracy of 2-3 centimetres. The terrain, site boundaries, pillars — everything was taken into account. Of our 1,500 hectares, we plan to treat a third with the help of the agri drone.

Conducting chemical treatment by drone is 2.8 times more efficient than using a tractor. After all, the wheels of machinery take out of crop rotation up to 10 percent of the land plot. Therefore, the use of drones is about beautiful fields and greater preservation of crops."

Young agronomists Anna Savelenok and Polina Minova study flight maps. "We study in absentia at the Belarusian State Agricultural Academy and are keenly interested in new developments in agriculture. Agri drones are the future," Anna assured.

Polina, a 21-year-old young specialist, continued the topic, "If offered, I will willingly study to become a UAV operator. Agronomy is in my genes, from dad and mum. I love my profession. Modern technologies that are coming to the agro-industrial complex make the industry more attractive for young professionals."

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ СПУТНИКОВЫЙ ТЕЛЕКАНАЛ

24 БЕЛАРУСЬ

INTERNATIONAL SATELLITE TV CHANNEL

Международный спутниковый телеканал «Беларусь 24» вещает в странах ближнего и дальнего зарубежья на белорусском и русском языках круглосуточно. Основными задачами телеканала «Беларусь 24» являются широкое информирование иностранных граждан, а также белорусов зарубежья о событиях и достижениях Беларуси, формирование положительного имиджа Беларуси на международной арене.

International satellite TV channel «Belarus 24» broadcasts in the countries of near and far abroad in the Belarusian and Russian languages around the clock. The main tasks of the «Belarus 24» TV channel are to inform foreign citizens, as well as Belarusians abroad, about the events and achievements of Belarus, and to form a positive image of Belarus in the international arena.

- Информационный контент канала доступен на английском и польском языках в формате бегущей строки.
- Более 100 стран с охватом зрительской аудитории более 200 млн. человек.
- 500 кабельных и мобильных операторов, интернет-провайдеров и телекоммуникационных компаний во всех сегментах вещания.
- 1950 информационных обзоров и новостных дайджестов и более 260 проектов собственного производства.

- Information content is available in English and Polish in the form of scrolling text.
- More than 100 countries with audience coverage is over 200 million people.
- 500 cable and mobile operators, internet service providers and telecommunications companies in all broadcast segments.
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The labour market is taking an exam

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

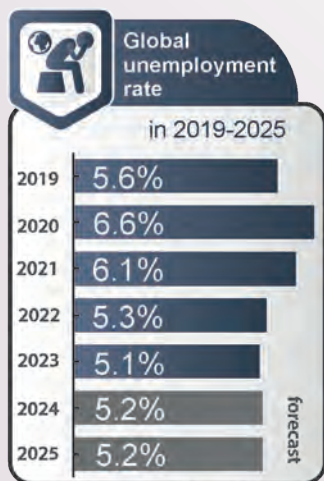
“We must create a just society. Those who studied well and graduated from university or did not graduate but have gifted hands and are good specialists — the country can provide with a place where they can earn. We have time. We have good teachers and mentors in production. Go for it! I will repeat — the salary is to be earned. This is a fair approach.”

From the Address to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly, on March 31st, 2023

By Aleksandr Nesterov

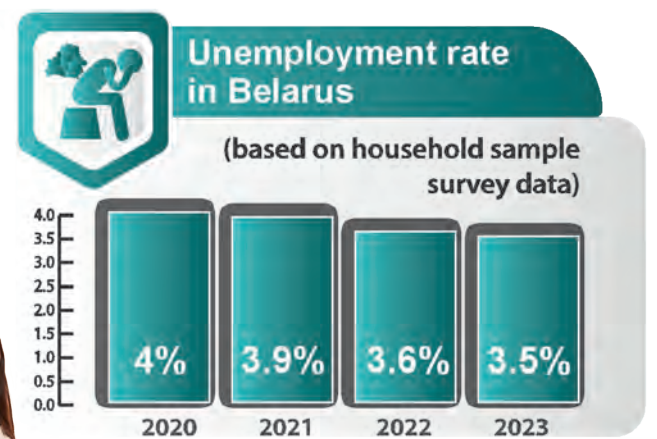
The global labour market is restless

At the very beginning of the year, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) issued an alarming statement — the unemployment rate in the world will grow in 2024. Experts are also concerned about growing social inequality. Where do the problems stem from, one would think? The global unemployment rate fell from 5.3 percent to 5.1 percent last year, and indicators of job shortages and labour force participation improved, as well. Nevertheless, the authors of the ILO report World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2024 warn about the instability of the situation. They even predict a deterioration in the prospects of the labour market outlook and a worsening global unemployment situation. According to their forecasts, the level of the latter will rise to 5.2 percent in 2024. As for the current incomes of the popula-



Employment in Belarus and around the world — the best place to be is where we are

The major tasks of the socio-economic development of the country set for 2023 were completed. What we have now is an evident outstripping growth in household incomes and effective containment of inflation. In addition, Belarus maintains a high level of employment. According to the Ministry of Economy, the number of part-time employees has decreased by more than 2.3 times and the number of downtime has been curbed by 2.7 times. This means that Belarusians can look confidently to the future, unlike residents of many Western countries, where the labour market situation is far from as rosy as some might think.



tion, they decreased even in most G20 countries in 2023; the real wage growth was observed only in China, Russia and Mexico, India and Türkiye.

The unemployment rate in high-income countries stood at 4.5 percent in 2023. Compare it with the Belarusian 3.5 percent (see the infographic) and it will immediately become clear — the grass is not always greener on the other side of the fence.

According to ILO experts, the poverty rate among the working population in the world will grow. The COVID consequences also contribute to the overall picture. The report notes that as a rule, people who have returned to the labour market after the pandemic do not work as many hours as before, and the number of their sick days is much higher.

According to the ILO Director General, Gilbert F. Hounbo, the ‘imbalances are not just a temporary aspect of pandemic recovery but rather structural’.

“Falling living standards and weak productivity combined with persistent inflation create the conditions for greater inequality in the world. And without greater social justice we will never have a sustainable recovery,” Hounbo emphasised.

The growing imbalance

It is stormy now in a once stable and prosperous Europe.

A month ago, the news appeared with reference to a report by EURES, the European Employment Services network and platform, claiming that the European Union is currently suffering from a major labour market imbalance. There is an acute shortage of personnel in some industries, and unemployment is growing in some areas. The main problems are the digital transformation of the economy that requires retraining of personnel in new technologies, the transition to a climate-neutral economy where abandoning fossil fuels simultaneously creates and eliminates jobs, and the decline in the working-age population. The shortage of personnel is experienced by healthcare, IT, construction, and mechanical engineering spheres. Brussels puts a stake on optimising the recognition process for qualifications obtained outside the European Union. Thus, the EU is planning to more actively attract staff from other countries. At the same time, Western officials do not reveal what lies in store for local people in terms of job opportunities.

By the way, data from The 2024 Survey of Economists published earlier by the Financial Times newspaper indicate that most experts believe that the European economy is in recession. FT respondents rated the labour market outlook as gloomy — they believe that the unemployment rate in the Eurozone will rise from 6.5 percent in October 2023 to 6.9 percent by the end of 2024.



A time of possibilities

The labour market of our country currently boasts the lowest unemployment rate in recent years.

It amounts to 3.5 percent, while employers declare the availability of almost 135 thousand job vacancies. It means there are no grounds for an increase in the number of unemployed people.

Based on a household sample survey, Belstat has confirmed the data of Belarus’ Ministry of Labour and Social Security regarding the unemployment rate. For the record of skeptics: the calculations were carried out in accordance with the methodology of the International Labour Organisation. Another point — according to the statistics, the employment rate of the country’s population, which is the employment ratio to population aged 15-74 years, amounted to 67.3 percent last year. The difference in figures between the year 2023 and 2022 (67.7 percent) is minimal, which also testifies to the stable situation on the Belarusian labour market.

Also significant is the fact that the growth of average wages outstrips the inflation rate. The latter stood at 5.8 percent at year end 2023, while real wages across the entire country went up by 11 percent.

“Salaries have been growing both in the real sector of the economy and among public sector employees who make 20 percent of workers performing public services in education, healthcare, culture, social servic-

es,” stressed Minister of Labour and Social Security Irina Kostevich. “This is a confirmation that the high-quality and efficient operation of the economy makes it possible to fully increase incomes, ensuring the appropriate growth, including for the categories of citizens to whom the state has obligations.”

The current economic situation does not cause any serious concerns, either. The major drivers of growth in 2023 were industry, construction and trade. These industries are also the main customers of personnel. A number of employers experience a shortage of labour resources, which is largely due to a shortage of skilled workforce. The labour market demand pattern is characterised by stability and consistency.

Ensuring effective employment of the population remains one of the priorities of Belarus’ social policy. The State Employment Service provides free-of-charge services to both job seekers and employers. Its work can be considered quite effective. Moreover, the Employment Service has been predicting the demand dynamics for certain professions for a number of years in order to enable the assessment of employment opportunity, if necessary. In particular, experts have suggested that in 2024, there will be good employment prospects in Minsk for car drivers, bricklayers, head cashiers, house painters, operators of computer-controlled machines, cooks, metalworkers, etc. As for office employees — accountants, engineers, teachers, economists, legal advisers, and doctors will be in high demand.

The facets of social justice

According to the results of a large-scale study carried out in 2021–2022 by a group of scientists led by French economist Thomas Piketty, author of the book *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, 10 percent of the richest people on the planet own 52 percent of world income, while the poorest half of the world population makes up only 8.5 percent. Global wealth inequalities are even more pronounced than income inequalities — the poorest half of the population owns only 2 percent of wealth, whereas 10 percent of the rich possess 76 percent of the global total. Thus, economic inequality persists. Moreover, after the COVID-19 pandemic and the onset of the confrontation between the Global South and the collective West, the situation began to worsen worldwide.

By Anton Popov

Moving backwards

Many experts believe that humanity has returned to the beginning of the 20th century on the issue of inequality. While the 1900s indicators were considered progressive against the backdrop of the events happening at that time, the current data indicate that the world is facing a sharp recession.

According to the World Bank, the global gap between the rich and the poor was shrinking noticeably from 2000 to 2019. The Gini Coefficient, a statistical index for the degree of social stratification, averaged 0.39 in the 2000s, and decreased to 0.38 in the following decade. Let us remind that the closer the figure is to zero, the smaller is the gap between the poor and the rich.

However, the pandemic and the beginning of the military and political crisis reversed the emerging positive course. The number of people living below the poverty line increased, while the key beneficiaries of the pandemic, the wealthiest segments of the population, pulled even farther away from the middle class than they were back in 2019. The world's middle class, in turn, sank — for the first time in 30 years since the end of the Cold War, it significantly declined.

The overall impact of the pandemic can hardly be overestimated. As UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stated, commenting on the worsening inequality in the world, "Entire regions that were making progress on eradicating poverty

Why economic inequality is growing around the world and what is the positive experience of Belarus in this regard



and narrowing inequality have been set back years, in a matter of months." The income of low-skilled workers sharply decreased. The shutdown of enterprises due to the rampant infection deprived them of their jobs overnight, while highly qualified specialists, especially those engaged in industries related to the use of computer technology, were able to switch to remote work relatively smoothly and painlessly and retain earnings at the same level.

The spread of COVID-19 came as a shock to many countries. Robert Morris Sapolsky, a renowned American neuroendocrinologist and author of *The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst*, pointed out in his interview with *Forbes Life* that in most Western countries, the pandemic became a perfect reason for the repeated aggravation of the already existing inequality and violence; it highlighted the degree of inequality in Western countries, as well as the degree of inequality between states.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) negatively assesses the prospects for

overcoming inequality, linking this with increased unemployment and impoverishment of the working population. Based on the ILO's 2024 *World Employment and Social Outlook* report published in January, the number of unemployed people will increase by 2 million. According to the report data, the number of workers living in extreme poverty grew by one million in 2023. It can be assumed that the pace of impoverishment will continue this year, since the negative conditions affecting the global economy show no signs of disappearing.

The lords of life

According to the law of conservation of energy, nothing can arise out of nowhere or disappear into nowhere. Therefore, globally produced assets, which do not fall into the hands of the poorest segments of the population, flock to the several percent of super-rich people. It is their continued prosperity that experts predict in the coming decades. The forecast by the World Inequality Lab has revealed that by 2070, 0.1 per-



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"A socially oriented economy has been the foundation of our state policy for three decades already. This policy is successful, and the people support it. Judging by all the indicators that characterise social inequality, Belarus belongs to the countries with the best welfare. We have created a state without oligarchs. We have prevented the concentration of capital and property in the hands of one person. All our national riches belong to the people."

From the Address to the Belarusian people and the National Assembly, on March 31st, 2023

expert organisations suggest increasing the income tax for multimillionaires as a possible solution to the problem of the growing gap between super-rich and extremely poor social groups.

The effectiveness of this method is questionable, though. Firstly, everyone vividly remembers the consequences of such an initiative in France — after the introduction of super income taxes, owners of large businesses rushed out of the country in different directions. Secondly, there are enough off-shores and quiet tax havens in the world where billionaires can sit it out while transferring capital to the grey zone.

Our recipe

It is worth noting that there are models of social and state structure in the world that make it possible to significantly reduce the gap between people with different income levels. The Belarusian system is one of them.

According to the statement of Deputy Economy Minister Tatiana Brantsevich, the Gini Coefficient for Belarus was 0.276 by the end of 2021, which was the lowest index among the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation countries, as an example. The share of the population below the poverty line has dropped 10 times over the past 22 years and is now at the lowest level in the entire EAEU space.

In the autumn of 2020, the *Vedomosti* newspaper published an article exposing the main fakes spread by fugitive Belarusian oppositionists about the Belarusian economy. Based on the official statistics, the authors calculated that the income of 10 percent of the richest Belarusians exceeds the income of 10 percent of the poorest Belarusians by 6 times. For comparison: in Poland and Sweden — by 7.3 times, in Latvia and Lithuania — by 11 times, in Russia — by 15.4 times.

Inequality in the modern world is one of the major problems, which, nevertheless, has faded into the background in the light of pressing political and military issues. Meanwhile, the stability of the state system as well as its ability to resist external pressure depend on the level of social justice. Too large a gap between the rich and the poor or its constant growth, which is even worse, provokes destabilisation and makes the country vulnerable. Therefore, it is crucial to make every endeavour in order to eliminate inequality both country wise and globally.

cent of the world's mega-rich elite will own a third of the world's wealth. In comparison, it had access to only 19 percent in 2021. It is believed that, given the current state of affairs, we will know the name of the first dollar trillionaire by the mid-2030s.

Experts from Oxfam International, an anti-poverty advocacy organisation, have estimated that, if current trends continue, it may take 230 years at best to eradicate poverty.

Do the rich pay less?

Against the background of such blatant inequality, ideas of restoring social justice by openly rebelling against the super-rich elites inevitably appear among the population. We have recently witnessed social unrest and instability in Europe and the United States, where protests by farmers deprived of a way to earn a living, or riots by the urban marginalised poor who have not been able to assimilate into an alien environment are the first signs of growing discontent.

Many political forces and

INEQUALITY

Under the sign of the cornflower

The Directorate of the *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk Festival* has announced the programme of the 2024 arts forum. Rock hits, dancing until morning, jazz organ performances — scan the QR code, study the programme and choose what appeals to you the most.



The main events of the 33rd *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk International Festival of Arts* will be held from July 11th to 14th. Children's and adult song contests will traditionally become the cherry on the cake. This year, the cornflower holiday over the Dvina River is going to be full of pleasant surprises again. Interesting ideas allow *Slavianski Bazaar* to remain fashionable and modern, while preserving the main thing — its soul.

In addition to traditional programmes in the Summer Amphitheatre, such as the opening and closing concerts of the forum, *The Union State Invites* concert, the contest of young pop song performers, *Chanson* concert, KVN comedy show, the audience will be able to appreciate a new feature — the *Guests from the Future* project. It involves the participation of about 3,000 people: children, youth, bloggers, tick-tockers.

The programme of the *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* is abundant with soloists — Oleg Gazmanov, Dmitry Malikov, Stas Piekha, Sergey Lazarev,



Lyubov Uspenskaya, Vladimir Presnyakov Jr., Victoria Aleshko, Yaroslav Sumishevsky and Ani Lorak will perform concerts at the Vitebsk Concert Hall. The venue will also host a plastic performance by Egor Druzhinin. The *Dream Dance Fest* project will delight the audience with all the variety of the

dance palette — from folk dance to technical contemporary.

Here is great news for fans of rock music, which returns to the Summer Amphitheatre. The Symphony Orchestra of the National State Television and Radio Company will perform for the first time during the big rock panorama.

Another innovation that the organisers have introduced at the request of the audience is a dance floor with Dushevnoye Radio in front of the Vitebsk Concert Hall. The best groovy hits inviting to burst into dance will be played there until the morning.

The festival programme of the Vitebsk Regional Philharmonic will consist entirely of jazz music. It is noteworthy that for the first time in forum's history, jazz will be played on the organ accompanied by percussion instruments. This is another bright touch to the rich musical palette of the *Slavianski Bazaar*. Within its framework, a new tradition of twinning festivals will be established.

The theatre programme is also up to the mark. A landmark premiere is waiting for the audience at the Yakub Kolas National Academic Drama Theatre. The mastermind of the Theatre Laboratory, Professor of GITIS [the Russian Institute of Theatre Arts] Alexander Barmak will bring *Hamlet* to Vitebsk, which will be performed in the Belarusian language for the first time.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

Fence disrupts ecosystem

The March mission of experts from UNESCO and the International Union for Conservation of Nature confirmed what the Belarusian side had been saying for a long time: Poland's construction of a fence along the state border on the territory of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha causes irreparable damage to a unique natural site — as noted by representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

By Aleksandr Nesterov

The fence on the border with Belarus, passing through the Belovezhskaya Pushcha — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — was built by Poland in 2022, causing natural indignation among scientists, ecologists and other environmental specialists.

Belarus sounded the alarm on all available international platforms, and it was decided last year that UNESCO would send a monitoring mission to the site.

In March, the head of the natural heritage department of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and an IUCN employee, a specialist in the field of wildlife, visited the transboundary natural site, accompanied (from the Belarusian side) by representatives of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha National Park, the Belarus President Property Management Directorate, the State Border Committee, the State Control Committee, scientists from the National Academy of Sciences and two universities, alongside experts from environmental organisa-

tions and representatives of the public. "Belarus' concerns about the deterioration of the state of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha ecosystems due to the negative impact of the barrier structure erected by Poland on the Belovezhskaya Pushcha territory have been confirmed," said First Deputy Minister of Natural Resources Aleksandr Korbut following the results of the mission. "Four aspects of the negative impact have been identified both by the Belarusian side and international experts." Firstly, this refers to blocking the mi-

gration routes of animals which results in the impoverishment of the gene pool of their population. The passages made in the fence for small animals are too small and have little functionality for large animals. Secondly, the risk of penetration by invasive alien plants and even natural ecosystems has increased. This primarily refers to the Canadian goldenrod. Thirdly, a serious problem is the destruction of ground cover during construction work and the cutting down of the adjacent strip of relict forest and individual trees on the Polish side of the Belovezhskaya Pushcha. Finally, fourthly, there is a violation of the hydrological regime in sections of some rivers which has already led to forest flooding, and the situation will only get worse in the future.

The Ministry of Natural Resources regrets to note the indifference of the Polish side to environmental issues. The Western neighbours did not even respond to the invitation to liaise, at least as part of the current monitoring mission. Meanwhile, as Tatiana Kononchuk, the Head of the Main Department for Environmental Policy, International Co-operation and Science of Belarus' Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, reminded this is not the first visit of UNESCO experts to the Pushcha. For example, in the decision of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee based on the results of the 2018 mission, the Belarusian and Polish sides were recommended to strengthen interaction on the protection of a single site and adopt a joint management plan. Minsk sent invitations to its neighbours, but received only silence in response.

Now Belarus expects that the 46th session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee — to take place in July in Delhi — will adopt a decision that objectively and reliably reflects the current situation in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha.

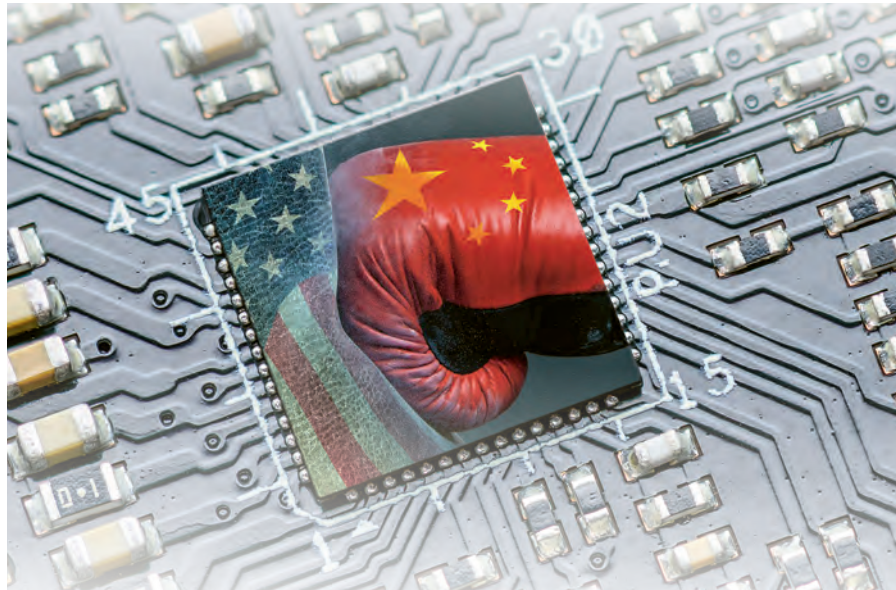
This should be a document offering specific recommendations to the Polish side to eliminate the causes of the negative impact of the erected fence on the Belovezhskaya Pushcha.



Chip is no rescue ranger

Washington, trying to maintain its dominance on the planet, is leading to an aggravation of the situation in Asia, with China being the primary target of all kinds of American attacks. The clash is ongoing both in politics and in the technological sphere. The intensification of the struggle is due to a change of roles — it is the People's Republic of China now that sets global trends, while the United States is trying to prevent Chinese companies and the public sector from consolidating their achievements and moving further.

Global shifts — China is gaining momentum and crowding out the United States in the field of high technologies



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"We are very interested in China being a strong power, so that China develops. This is not only our interest: the whole planet is interested in this, since a huge number of talented and hardworking people live here [in China]."

During the talks in Beijing with Chinese President Xi Jinping, on December 4th, 2023

By Anton Popov

The passion of networks

In March, the driving force of the confrontation was the situation around Washington's attempt to take the ultra-popular TikTok short-form video-sharing social network under its control, or, in case this attempt fails, to ban the resource on the entire territory of the country. The idea does not shine with novelty, though. As the owner of the Oval Office, Donald Trump tried to remove the app from all American online stores. There were signed decrees banning Americans from doing business with ByteDance (TikTok creator) and Tencent (WeChat messenger creator). However, before it came to practical implementation, the year 2020 came and the US president did not have time to proceed on the issue before the scandalous presidential elections in November. Joe Biden, in turn, who typically for Democrats views Russia as a much greater threat to America than China, put the idea of banning TikTok on the back burner.

Yet, as the election nears, the Biden administration has decided to start hyping up the Chinese theme, especially considering the fact that the current owner of the White House failed to hold constructive talks with China's President Xi Jinping in San Francisco.

Thus, Washington has predictably cracked down on TikTok with its total global audience of 1.21 billion users, 170 million of whom live in the United States. Realising that the US would not be capable of creating anything similar in terms of functionality, number of subscribers and, most importantly, popularity, the American authorities have conceived to simply take away the local segment of the social network from the owner company. The trial balloon was launched in Montana, where Governor Greg Gianforte banned TikTok from January 1st, and prohibited the Apple App Store and Google Play Store from offering the app for download to customers.

A new round of struggle for minds and hearts has led to the fact that the US House of Representatives has passed a bill forcing ByteDance to sell the American segment of TikTok to local IT companies within six months, or else it will face a total ban throughout the United States, like it was done in Mon-

tana. Biden, if approved by the Senate, has already promised to sign this bill. The Chinese Foreign Ministry rightly noted that this step would 'undermine the confidence of foreign investors, including from China, in the North American country'. The official representative of the Ministry, spokesman Wang Wenbin, stressed, "This kind of bullying behaviour that cannot win in fair competition disrupts companies' normal business activity, damages the confidence of international investors in the investment environment, and damages the normal international economic and trade order." Ordinary citizens of the United States are not impressed with the TikTok ban, either.

Americans are massively recording videos accusing the authorities of arbitrariness.

Why is Biden fighting social media? First of all, Washington is dealing this way with Internet platforms that are not under its control. After all, the November elections are on the horizon.

The fact is that American companies cannot create their own TikTok analogue, which unnerves the elites and, above all, the Democrats, who are losing influence on the traditional youth electorate.

At the time when Trump is actively gaining ground with voters under the age of 30, as well as African- and Latin Americans, the Democratic Party does not have a tool that would allow it to regain advantage in these social groups. That is why it is twisting the arms of the ByteDance management, compelling the company to divest its ownership of the business.

When sanctions make the sanctioned stronger

Equally heated battles are unfolding in the field of semiconductor manufacturing, which is another important front

of the China-US high-tech rivalry. The chip war between Beijing and Washington has been going on for years, and its next round began in October last year, when new export restrictions were imposed on the supply of semiconductors to the People's Republic of China. The ban applies to chips used in the developments related to artificial intelligence, as well as equipment for the production of the most advanced microcircuits. By doing so the United States is trying to artificially limit the development of high-tech sectors of the Celestial Empire's economy and to prevent the penetration of cheaper and more powerful processors from China into the US market.

Same as in the situation with sanctions against Belarus and Russia, the anti-Chinese ban has become a classic 'shot in its own foot'.

On the one hand, American chip manufacturers such as Nvidia have suffered. One of its main markets was China, and now powerful processors cannot be supplied there due to the newly imposed sanctions.

On the other hand, the dynamically developing Chinese industry needs more powerful chips. In this regard, China, which is already trying to develop import substitution programmes, has accelerated the rate of development and procurement of domestic products. Thus, it is known that Baidu bought Huawei's AI chips worth several million dollars, as an alternative to Nvidia amid US export restrictions. Another giant, Tencent, is actively looking for local suppliers. Scientific work does not stand still, either. In December 2023, ChangXin Memory Technologies made a technological breakthrough in the field of semiconductors, presenting a revolutionary concept of a transistor required for the development of a 3-nanometre processor. A week earlier, Hua-

wei upset its competitors by introducing a laptop with a 5-nanometre processor, whereas previously it was believed that Chinese companies did not possess such technologies. Moreover, according to media reports, the major Chinese manufacturer of SMIC chips is about to launch mass production of such semiconductors displacing Taiwanese and Americans from the market.

Unable to deal any serious blow to the Chinese semiconductor industry on its own, the United States has traditionally decided to attract European and Asian allies to this end. In early March, Bloomberg reported that Americans were putting pressure on Germany, the Netherlands, Japan and South Korea to make them further tighten restrictions on the supply of equipment to China for the production of even 28-nanometre chips, not to mention newer models. Tokyo is also required to stop selling special chemicals to Beijing. That is, Washington aims to disrupt the work of all semiconductor-related industries in China, not just the production of smartphones.

The United States seeks to curb investments in the Chinese economy and take control of supply chains, or even disrupt them altogether. A Chinese high-tech product has been declared a threat to the US national security, based on which the White House puts forward absurd and irrational demands on China. However, Beijing is not a whipping boy. In fact, restrictions for it are primarily growth drivers that enable faster import substitution and access to wider markets. An additional trump card for China in this situation is the fact that the United States is heavily dependent on supplies of a wide range of goods and services from the Celestial Empire, which allows having an effective counterargument to every attack by the US authorities.



WORLD

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In light of the approaching anniversary, it is worth remembering the names that stood at the origins of national cinematography. On March 29th, film fans celebrated the birthday of one of the founders of Belarusian cinema, People's Artist of the BSSR and USSR Vladimir Korsh-Sablin. The director shot films of various genres, worked as the artistic director of our film studio, brought many talented ideas to life and helped others.



By Valentin Pepelyaev

Chronicler of the era

In the year of 100th anniversary of Belarusian cinema, we remember film director Vladimir Korsh-Sablin

Famous ancestors

The future film director was born in Moscow on March 29th, 1900 in the family of the famous publisher, Vladimir Sablin. His grandfather was a prominent theatrical figure, Fyodor Adamovich Korsh, the creator of the first private theatre in Russia — the Russian Drama Theatre, now the Theatre of Nations is located in this building.

After graduating from the Moscow real school, Vladimir worked in his grandfather's theatre for some time, having reviewed the entire repertoire. As the legend goes, Fyodor Korsh was so impressed with his grandson's talent that he allowed Vladimir to use his famous surname on stage. The young actor was a seeker by nature: he also worked in theatres in Simferopol and Melitopol.

The Red Army volunteer

During the Civil War, Vladimir volunteered for the Red Army. He served, among other things, as an assistant in the cavalry, adjutant to the regiment commander. His military service is an extremely impressive episode in his biography.

After the war, the young actor worked at the Kazan Drama Theatre. In 1923, he was invited to the Yalta Film Studio as a military consultant to shoot a film dedicated to the events of the Civil War. At that time, the cinema did not arouse much interest in him, but the cinema itself, like some invisible force, firmly decided to draw Vladimir into its embrace.

In tandem with Pyryev

Since 1925, he worked as an assistant director and actor at the Goskino film studio [the USSR State Committee for Cinematography] in Moscow. Film director Yuri Tarich, the husband of his maternal aunt, offered his nephew to try his luck in the cinema once again, inviting him as an actor and his assistant in the new film *The Wings of a Serf*. In 1926, Vladimir Korsh-Sablin and Ivan Pyryev, the future director of the legendary films *The Swineherd and the Shepherd*, *Cossacks of the Kuban* and many others, became assistants to Yuri Tarich again. At that time, Tarich began filming *Tale of the Woods* at the newly organised Belgoskino film studio. In this film, Korsh-Sablin also played the role of an adjutant.

Friendship with Dunaevsky and discovery of Smirnova

The same film *Tale of the Woods* featured for the first time the arrangements of Belarusian folk and soldier songs by Isaac Dunaevsky, whose friendship Korsh-Sablin retained for life. The composer wrote music for almost all of his films — the next one was *Seekers of Happiness*. In the comedy *My Love* that also had music by Isaac Dunaevsky, the director revealed for the big cinema an outstanding actress, Lidiya Smirnova.

By the time she met Korsh-Sablin, she had got somewhat disappointed in cinema, like Boris Babochkin. The role of Shurochka in the film became her star ticket to the profession.

It is amazing how fresh and easy *My Love* by Korsh-Sablin looks today. It is often shown on different TV channels. It was in this film that the song *Do Not Call for Love* by Isaac Dunaevsky, which became extremely popular, was played.

The fire years

The Great Patriotic War occupies a special page in Korsh-Sablin's biography. From June to November 1941, he was the director of the Lenfilm studio and at the same time the platoon commander of the workers' fighting squad from the Petrograd District Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). From December 1941 to June 1943, he was the director of the Central United Film Studio, which operated in Alma-Ata. From June 1943 to October 1945, he was the director of the Soyuzdetfilm studio, the director of the Central Documentary Film Studio and at the same time the head of the film group at the headquarters of Belarus' partisan movement. For managing the front-line film group, he received the *Partisan of the Patriotic War 1st degree* medal. Together with Nikolai Sadkovich, Korsh-Sablin became the author of the full-length documentary *Liberation of Soviet Belarus*. His post-war film *Konstantin Zaslunov* was awarded the Stalin Prize.

At the same time the head of the film group at the headquarters of Belarus' partisan movement. For managing the front-line film group, he received the *Partisan of the Patriotic War 1st degree* medal. Together with Nikolai Sadkovich, Korsh-Sablin became the author of the full-length documentary *Liberation of Soviet Belarus*. His post-war film *Konstantin Zaslunov* was awarded the Stalin Prize.

A taste for literature

Korsh-Sablin made a heartfelt film about the revival of the village titled *The New House*. The film-essay *The Girls Sowed Flax* turned to the scenes of a modern collective farm life. Vladimir Vladimirovich promoted Belarusian literature in his creative work in every possible way. He was friends with many writers, and filmed plays by Kondrat Krapiva *The Skylarks are Singing* (in liaison with Konstantin Sannikov) and *Who Laughs Last*. Based on Yakub Kolas trilogy *At the Crossroads*, he shot the film *The First Trials*.

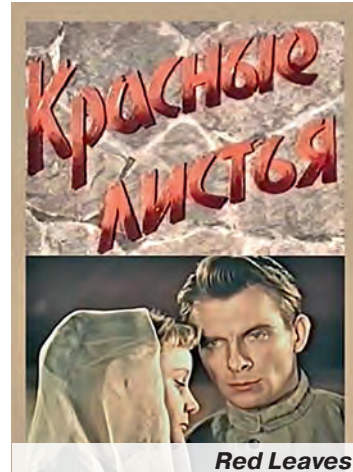
Every film director is a son of his time. And Korsh-Sablin responded wholeheartedly to all its challenges and problems... It is not strange that for him, a witness to many historical events, a participant in several wars, the historical-revolutionary and military themes were especially close. They were reflected in his feature films *The Fire Years*, *Konstantin Zaslunov*, *Red Leaves*.



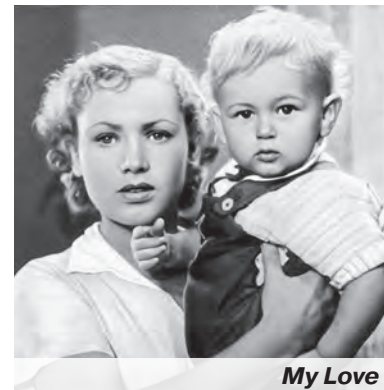
Red Leaves



Производство Tale of the Woods



Red Leaves



My Love



Konstantin Zaslunov



The Wings of a Serf



Moscow — Genoa

SCALE IN EVERYTHING

Vladimir Korsh-Sablin, together with Pavel Armand, took part in the creation of a large-scale film by director Alexei Speshnev *Moscow — Genoa*, dedicated to the first steps of Soviet diplomacy in the international arena. The film won an award at the All-Union Film Festival and the State Prize of the BSSR in the field of cinematography.

The setting of the film *Remember This Day* by Korsh-Sablin took the audience back to 1917, as well as the last work of the master — the historical drama *The Fall of the Empire* (in this work, Nikolai Kalinin became the co-director).

Korsh-Sablin was the artistic director of Belarusfilm during two periods: 1945-1960 and 1969-1974, and headed the Union of Cinematographers of Belarus from 1957 to 1974. In his personal life, there was

always a beloved woman nearby — Nadezhda Brilliantshchikova, who used to be the wife of writer Mikhail Zoshchenko.

Vladimir Korsh-Sablin passed away on July 6th, 1974. He was buried at the Eastern (Moskovskoye) Cemetery in Minsk. One of the streets of our capital is named in his honour; memorial plaques are installed on the house where he lived as well as on the façade of the Belarusfilm studio. The high humanistic message of Korsh-Sablin's works, his ability to work with actors, and the visual culture of the frame have defined for many years the face of Belarusian cinema, which is moving towards its 100th anniversary.

Keep it up!

The hockey players of Dinamo Minsk demonstrated a very bright, but no less controversial season to the audience. Loud victories and amazing games were followed by frustrating defeats, which made the feeling of incompleteness and slight bitterness the main aftertaste to the KHL Championship and the Gagarin Cup playoffs. Perhaps the only player who should receive no performance complaints and who covered the entire distance on an incredibly high and consistent level was Alexei Kolosov. Once a green, callow youth, whose goalie gear seemed way too loose for him, have grown into a real professional in a four-year period of playing for the 'Bison' club, having become one of the best goalkeepers in the league. Therefore, it did not come as a surprise that after the end of the season at Dinamo Minsk, the Philadelphia Flyers, who had signed Kolosov to a three-year contract, called the net-minder to their camp, presumably putting a serious stake on the skill and reliability of the talented Belarusian in the near future.

By Sergei Kanashits

Who knows, maybe in many years Alexei Kolosov will be remembered in Philadelphia with the same reverence as Bobby Clarke and Eric Lindros, the NHL mega-stars who made a name for themselves playing for the club. In any case, Kolosov's potential is very high. Last season, Alexei played 42 regular season matches for Dinamo Minsk at a stable level and produced first-class goalkeeping performance in several matches. It is not surprising that the fan poll carried out by the Dinamo club at the end of the championship showed that it was Kolosov who was recognised as the best player of the team. This year, Alexei has played 47 matches for the 'Bisons' with 90.7% of saves, four shutouts and a reliability coefficient of 2.39. This is the eighth indicator in the entire Kontinental Hockey League, which is extremely high, taking into account the overall rating of the team. The recognition has found its hero again — Kolosov was called the best 'Bison' of the year. Such laurels for a goalie are a rarity and a great honour.

The fact that Philadelphia Flyers is experiencing the biggest



Alexei Kolosov is flying overseas to become the first NHL goalie from Belarus

issue with the goalkeeper position, which has been the Achilles' heel of this team for years now, and is actively looking for a solution gives Kolosov an additional chance to demonstrate his skills and make himself known in the NHL. Felix Sandstrom, who is currently considered the main goalkeeper of the Flyers, clearly has not been at his best lately. The Swede has been in the squad since 2021, but his statistics on goals conceded are getting worse with each new season. The career of Carter Hart, who was seen almost as a goalkeeper messiah for the Flyers, is also going downhill — a unique talent, who was predicted to have the most stellar future, has been past his prime for three years now. In January, he even requested and was granted an indefinite leave of absence from the club, from which he has not yet returned.

It is noteworthy that the Flyers have had bad luck with goalkeepers at all times. Perhaps, the brightest goalie in the club's history was their recent general manager Ron Hextall, who earned a scandalous reputation. He holds the record for most

penalty minutes by a goalie having accumulated more than 100 penalty minutes three seasons in a row, the loudest example of this guy's aggression being his notorious attack on Chris Chelios, when Hextall suddenly attacked an opponent and began to punch him with a goalie blocker. The Flyers also had Russian goalkeepers. Thus, Ilya Bryzgalov, with whom they signed a 9-year contract for \$51m, did not live up to the expectations, and the deal was later recognised as one of the worst in the NHL history. Ivan Fedotov did not fly to Philadelphia at all — the story of the CSKA goalkeeper's conscription into the army is still fresh in everyone's memory. The Flyers then put a stake on Kirill Ustimenko, a native of Gomel, but he never managed to move beyond playing for the farm club of the main team. Perhaps only Sergei Bobrovsky's experience in the Philadelphia Flyers can be considered successful — the two years spent there became a brilliant springboard for his great future career. Why shouldn't Alexei Kolosov follow in his footsteps?



Alexei Kolosov demonstrated a consistently high level in the playoff matches against Dynamo Moscow, yet his reliability did not help the 'Bisons' overcome the first round of the Gagarin Cup

ALEXEI KOLOSOV'S RECORDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- He became the first Belarusian goalkeeper to enter the CHL Import Draft — in the summer of 2020, he was selected 22nd overall by the Erie Otters in the first round.
- In the 2020/21 season, he made history as the youngest goalie of Dinamo Minsk during his time in the KHL. Kolosov played his first game on October 22nd, 2020, when the 'Bisons' met with Dynamo Moscow. At that time, he was 18 years and 291 days old.
- On October 28th, 2020, he secured a shutout win for Dinamo Minsk and became the youngest shutout author in the club's history (18 years, 9 months and 24 days old).
- In the summer of 2022, he became the first net-minder from Belarus selected in the NHL Draft — the Philadelphia Flyers selected Alexei in the third round, 78th overall.
- In May 2021, he made his debut at the World Cup as a member of the Belarusian national team. Entering the ice on May 24th in a match against the Czech Republic, he became the youngest goalkeeper of the national team at the World Championships. On the day of the game, Kolosov was 19 years, 4 months and 20 days old.
- He is the only Belarusian goalkeeper who took part in the KHL All-Star Game twice and was recognised as the best Dinamo Minsk player in the KHL season twice in a row.

Kolosov calls Andrei Mezin his idol in hockey — this legendary Belarusian goalie kept the net of the Belarusian national team intact for many years and became one of the heroes of the 'miracle on ice' when our team sensationally defeated the Swedes in the quarterfinals of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City. Mezin also played in the US and came back without fulfilling his dream — he did not make it to the NHL.

"I can single out two of the NHL goalkeepers: Andrei Vasilevskiy from the Tampa Bay Lightning and Ilya Sorokin, who plays for the New York Islanders," Alexei Kolosov said after last season. "Vasilevskiy has a very unconventional style of play. He has a great physique in the first place: he is tall and very flexible. He can block the puck, which he does not even see, by intuitively setting a trap. Sorokin is a more systematic goalkeeper, a classic one."

Alexei treats the fact that he was selected by the Flyers in the NHL Entry Draft with philosophical calmness, "I was driving home after an evening training session when I started receiving calls with congratulations from my agent, a club representative... To be honest, I did not have any priority as to the clubs that were choosing me — I do not really cheer for anyone in the NHL. I just monitor the actions of goalkeepers. Now, however, I sometimes watch the results of the Philadelphia Flyers, out of curiosity."

— **What do you think it takes to play in the NHL? What is the main difference between the NHL and the KHL?**

— *There is no particular difference. A lot of guys go to the NHL from the KHL, and vice versa. Everyone knows how to play. The speed is higher in the NHL, of course. Yet, a professional hockey player should have all qualities honed — both physical and psychological. If a player is completely ready, there will be no problems.*

Alexei Kolosov believes that the time has come, and he is ready for a new challenge. The fans are also excited and hope that everything will work out for their favourite. Vitaly Pinchuk, a Dinamo Minsk striker, does not cast a doubt on Alexei's ability to succeed in the NHL. "Lyokha [short for 'Alexei'] can do anything! He just needs to brush up on his English. Apart from that, I do not see any other obstacles. But it is no big deal — the main thing is to memorise the phrase 'I'm hungry' in English to say when he wants to fortify himself with food, and he will be fine!" Vitaly noted jokingly.

Keep it up, Alexei! The country believes in you.

ARENA

Results of the Belarusian Table Tennis Championship

In Minsk, Ulyana Miashchanskaya defeated Tatsiana Chakavaya with a score of 4:3 in the decisive match of the women's singles. Lizaveta Tsimashkova won a bronze medal, beating Dzyyana Likhhtarovich — 4:2. In doubles, Ulyana Miashchanskaya and Lizaveta Tsimashkova became the best.

The men's championship title was won by Andrei Tsiarokhin, who beat Pavel Platonau in the final with a minimum margin of 4:3. The bronze medal winner

was Heorhi Kunats, who prevailed over Nikan Shutau with a result of 4:2. Pavel Platonau and Ilia Kortchinski clinched gold in doubles.

Run fast, shoot accurately

The Russian Biathlon Championship was held in Tyumen. Belarusian athletes also participated in the tournament.

Representatives of the Belarusian delegation climbed the podium four times. Hanna Sola won the women's pursuit. Stsiapan Danilau became second in

the mass start. The Belarusian quartet consisting of Hanna Sola, Dzinara Smolskaya, Dzmitry Lazouski and Anton Smolski claimed victory in the mixed relay. In the men's relay, the Belarusian team of Mikita Labastau, Dzmitry Lazouski, Stsiapan Danilau and Anton Smolski became third.



Photo of the week

Yegor Yermilitskiy



White storks that have returned to their homeland from wintering grounds are settling their nests

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.

On April 4th, 1833, the first complete edition of *Eugene Onegin* novel in verse written by Alexander Pushkin came out. The entire circulation of 5,000 copies sold out in just one week after the publication.



It was a sensation for that time. According to Pushkin's own calculations, it took him 7 years, 4 months and 17 days to write the novel. For many people, thanks to literary critic Belinsky, it became an 'encyclopedia of Russian life', the 'most beloved child' of the poet's fantasy.



On April 4th, 1932, American biochemist Charles Glen King isolated vitamin C (ascorbic acid) for the first time. This

vitamin is very important for the vital activity of the human body. It plays a major role in the formation of collagen, which is necessary for the growth and repair of tissue cells, gums, blood vessels, bones and teeth, and also contributes to the iron absorption in the body.

On April 5th, 1722, the expedition of Dutch Admiral Jacob Roggeveen discovered a land called Easter Island. The explorers



were amazed by the sight of black and red-skinned natives and giant stone statues up to 20 metres high, 'moai', placed along the shore. Today, Easter Island is the territory of Chile in the southeastern Pacific Ocean, and Moai is one of the main attractions and a tourist lure.

On April 6th, 1896, the first modern Summer Olympics started in Athens, Greece. Two years earlier, the International Olympic Committee had approved Pierre de Coubertin's proposal to revive the tradition of the ancient Greek Olympics. The programme of the first Games included nine sports —

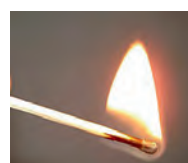


classical Greco-Roman wrestling, cycling, gymnastics, athletics, swimming, shooting, tennis, weightlifting and fencing.

April 6th, 1483 marks the birth of Raffaello Santi (1483-1520), Italian painter and architect of the High Renaissance period, one of the world's greatest painters, graphic artists and architects. As a classic representative of the Umbrian school, he reflected the ideals of that era in his creative works. The artist's paintings are considered treasures of the world's best museum collections.



April 7th is Geologists Day in the Republic of Belarus. Geological research in Belarus began to be conducted at the end of the 18th century by expeditions of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society. Belarus got its own geological survey in 1927, when the Geological Institute was founded in Minsk, which later became part of the Belarusian Academy of Sciences.



On April 7th, 1827, the first friction matches were sold — English pharmacist John Walker sold the matches he invented to solicitor John Hixon. The first matches

consisted of a mixture of Berthollet's salt, white phosphorus and glue. It was quite by accident that Walker came up with his invention. As he was stirring chemicals in a pot, a lump formed on the end of the mixing stick. In order to remove it, he struck a stick on a stone floor and it burst into flames.

On April 8th, 1766, the first fire escape was patented — it was just a wicker basket on a pulley and chain. The need for this invention



arose due to the construction of multi-storeyed buildings, to provide a safe means of escape for residents of upper floors in case of fire. The invention of the fire escape not only facilitated the work of professional rescuers, but also helped save many lives.

On April 9th, 1934, Leonid Ossendovsky (1934-1990), a Belarusian painter and teacher, was born. He worked in easel painting. The theme of modernity occupied a



significant place in his creative work: paintings *May There Be Sun, Belarusian Oil Exists!, Dozhinki [harvest festival], Soligorsk Miners,*

Ballad of the Mother, and more. He is the author of the *Minsk Cauldron* diorama for the Belarusian State Museum of the History of the Great Patriotic War in Minsk.

April 11th is the International Day of Liberation of Prisoners of Nazi Concentration Camps. In 1945, amid the defeat of German fascist invaders by Soviet troops in World War II, the prisoners of Buchenwald concentration camp led by the International Camp Committee raised an armed uprising. As a result, they managed to seize control of the camp and keep it until the arrival of the allied US troops.

