



Belarus has become a full-fledged member of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation

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The Victory Monument in Minsk marks the 70th anniversary: the history of the symbol of national memory

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Jubilee edition of Alexandria Gathers Friends Festival was even more vibrant and large-scale

Friends gathered together

The most popular folk holiday of the summer took place on a grand scale last weekend. The bright and heartwarming festival, which is traditionally held in the small homeland of the President of Belarus, turned 15 years old. Every year, the celebration surprises with its creative magnitude. The 15th national holiday — *the Kupala Night Festival (Alexandria Gathers Friends)* — has updated the attendance record. Last year, the festival was visited by 80,000 people, while this year the audience interest has surpassed 96,000. The cosy agrotown on the banks of the Dnieper River gathered not only guests from all regions of Belarus and neighbouring regions of Russia. For the first time, our friends from Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Irkutsk, Magadan and Ulyanovsk regions of the Russian Federation celebrated *the Kupala Night* together with us. In total, visitors from more than ten countries came to Alexandria. Guests were delighted to try national cuisine, take part in unusual competitions, see exhibitions, enjoy film screenings, lively pop star performances and a spectacular air show, as well as benefit from unique photo zones that ensured an array of photos for social networks. It was a real kaleidoscope of impressions! → 4



Belarus has become a full-fledged member of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO)

The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, has taken part in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation summit in Astana, Kazakhstan

Completing the procedure for Belarus' accession to the SCO as a member state was the main item on the summit's agenda for Belarus.

Aleksandr Lukashenko called it symbolic that Belarus joined the SCO in the year when it marks the 80th anniversary of liberation from the Nazi invaders. "This is a wonderful gift to the Belarusian people," said the Head of State. The President also thanked the heads of the SCO member states for their unanimous support for this decision.

The Head of State named the areas that Belarus will highlight as a full-fledged member of the organisation, and assured that the country is ready to work shoulder to shoulder with the new chairmanship — China will take over the SCO chairmanship from Kazakhstan — to implement joint priority projects.

International security

"We strongly believe that in the 21st century it is imperative to build genuine and indivisible global security. That said, the countries of the global majority should take the lead, since the self-obsessed and self-centred West has failed to do this. Today there are no leaders there who are capable of making important decisions on their own," Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed out.

Economy

The Head of State remarked that the SCO partners have come up with mutually beneficial projects in energy, transport and logistics, finance and industrial co-operation. "If we develop clear-cut



rules on our platform, everyone will benefit from this, including those outside the SCO region of responsibility," the Belarusian leader noted.

Food security

"We have the power to demolish the walls of the unipolar world, feed people, and eliminate discord and conflicts stemming from social inequality, food and resource shortages," the Head of State emphasised.

International standing

"We will make every effort to ensure that our organisation is gaining more weight, and the number of its allies and supporters expands," Aleksandr Lukashenko assured.

The President noted that many Belarusian ideas have already received international support.

Mutual enrichment of cultures

"Belarus is fully aware that the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation is not only about security, economy and trade. It is also a platform for mutual enrichment of cultures, which will certainly bring our peoples closer," the Head of State stressed.

Later, President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko took part in the SCO Plus format of the Summit in Astana on July 4th. The theme of the meeting was *Strengthening Multilateral Dialogue — Striving for Sustainable Peace and Development*. "I strongly believe that our unity and cohesion will be the best response to challenges in global politics. To do this, we must join forces in the organisation's area of responsibility. For this purpose, we need to create Greater Eurasia," the Belarusian leader stated. The President also outlined several steps in this direction.

Adopting the Eurasian Charter

The Head of State suggested developing a concept for *the Eurasian Charter for Diversity and Multipolarity in the 21st Century*. The idea of the charter was put forward at the international conference held in Minsk in October last year.

The Head of State remarked that the conference in Minsk had already become an annual event focusing on regional security. "Invitations to attend the Minsk conference, which is due this autumn, have already been sent to top officials of your ministries of foreign affairs. I would very much like representatives of your countries to participate in discussions on the charter. We believe it should be held at the level of heads of state."

Aligning integration processes

The President urged to give a bigger priority to various integration processes on the Eurasian continent.

In this regard, Aleksandr Lukashenko called to waste no time and take action fast. "Today people in the world are confused and in the dark. The UN Secretary-General has just said that the world should be bracing for more conflicts. People need direction and certainty. The SCO can do this. Yet, this must be done quickly, because time is not on our side. Today's situation is

different from what we had after the Second World War and the Cold War," the Belarusian leader underlined.

Reducing dependence on the U.S. dollar

Aleksandr Lukashenko suggested stepping up practical interaction across the entire agenda of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation. The Belarusian leader proposed starting with finances. "As a matter of priority, Belarus suggests developing a mechanism for bilateral payments using national currencies and setting up a joint financial institution of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation," the President stated.

Making digital technology more accessible

Another proposal concerns closer liaison in the area of digital technologies that are becoming part and parcel of our life. "This refers to those digital technologies that benefit people and the economy, not the artificial intelligence that we are anxiously awaiting. Everyone should be able to benefit from technological progress, not just Western countries and transnational corporations," the President clarified.

Contributing to the common cause of the SCO countries

Aleksandr Lukashenko assured that Belarus is ready to make whatever contribution it can to the common efforts of the SCO member countries in such areas as industry, trade, science, culture, and education.

The President believes it would be a great idea to set up an AgroSCO exposition at Belarus' largest agricultural exhibition *Belagro*. "We will be glad to see all the countries of the SCO family in Minsk, as well as the presentation of the SCO Demonstration Base for Agricultural Technology Exchange and Training," the President emphasised.



THE PRESIDENT OF BELARUS HELD A NUMBER OF BILATERAL MEETINGS IN ASTANA

• President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko met with Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the SCO Summit. Xi Jinping congratulated Aleksandr Lukashenko on Belarus' acquiring a new status within the framework of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation. "We will definitely facilitate further stable development of our relations," Xi Jinping stated. The Chinese leader added that the parties intend to go forward in this direction by leaps and bounds. "I am very glad that you are about to become the presiding country in 2025. It means I will have an extra opportunity to visit the People's Republic of China next year. I have noted down your initiatives that you promote within the Shanghai

Co-operation Organisation: global security, global development, global civilisation, global control of artificial intelligence. You have already noticed positive and negative aspects of artificial intelligence. We support all your initiatives by all means, particularly the key initiative to resolve the Ukrainian crisis. This initiative is consonant with Brazil's initiative," the President of Belarus pointed out.

• President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko met with Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif. The Belarusian Head of State suggested finalising and approving a bilateral co-operation roadmap. Shehbaz Sharif renewed his invitation to the Belarusian Head of State to visit Pakistan. "I will try my best to visit Pakistan by the end of the

year," said the Belarusian leader. "There will be a number of bilateral events this year. The joint intergovernmental commission is to convene in September. Our prime minister is set to attend the meeting of the SCO heads of government in Pakistan in October. I will really appreciate it if you find time to meet with him. At this meeting we could finalise our action plan going forward. You and I could approve this plan — the roadmap — during my visit to Pakistan before the end of this year," the President offered.

• The President of Belarus met with Türkiye President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.

• President of Belarus Aleksandr Lukashenko met with UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

• The Belarusian leader and President of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khürelsühkh had talks on the go.

• There were a lot of assumptions about Aleksandr Lukashenko's negotiations with Russian President Vladimir Putin. All speculation was dispelled by the *Pul'Pervogo* Telegram channel, "*The Presidents of Belarus and Russia had a detailed conversation on July 3rd, which continued on July 4th. The busy Astana agenda did not prevent, and the leaders talked five times during the day. We advise everyone not to worry — Lukashenko and Putin remain in constant contact.*"

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‘The winners bequeathed to us to live and build a future for new generations. We will not let them down’

On July 3rd, Belarus held large-scale celebrations to mark Independence Day and the 80th anniversary of liberation from Nazi invaders. Festive events took place in all regions of the country. The parade in Minsk was one of the central events. It featured more than 5,000 military personnel, as well as over 300 units of wheeled and tracked vehicles as part of the mechanised column. The pilots demonstrated spectacular aerobatics. Forty-seven items of modern combat aircraft of the Belarusian and Russian Air Forces flew over the Hero City of Minsk.

The President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, addressed important words to all Belarusians.

The Head of State reminded that the last battles for the capital city of Belarus fell silent exactly 80 years ago, on July 3rd, 1944.

Orsha and Bykhov. At other countless big and small military lines on the way to the capital city of our Motherland — Moscow,” the Belarusian leader said.

“We admire the will power of Soviet women, the elderly and kids, who fought on par with men and worked at the homefront in order to provide for the front

from the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were passing along Pobediteley Avenue on that day.

“We all have learnt the main lesson from the Great Patriotic War — Nazism is an absolute evil. There is no justification and no forgiveness for the crimes of the Nazis. Not then, not now, not in the future!” the President emphasised.

The Head of State pointed out that these words are addressed to those who sow enmity again, throwing its seeds on our lands, who are ready to drag their peoples into a new bloodbath. “Those in the high offices in Washington calculate the benefits by selling weapons and driving the Ukrainian people into poverty, moving towards their main goal. It has not changed for centuries, though the information guides are being improved,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stated.

The President drew attention to some historical parallels, “At the beginning of the last century, the Slavs were accused of not being able to properly manage their natural resources and territories, which for some reason should belong to the entire world community. Now we supposedly have the ‘wrong’ democracy. At that time, the role of the ‘teacher’ was assumed by Hitler’s Germany. Today, the entire European Union, led by the United States, is trying to ‘teach’ us.”

“We know the true goals, we know who is behind every provocation on the state border of Belarus, behind every terrorist threat to the civilian population. We know because we are working proactively, we are more vigilant than ever. We have learnt all the lessons of the Great Patriotic War. We have only one teacher — our history of winners. Therefore, today we will also walk the path of pride on the ground and across the sky for the true heirs of the Great Patriotic War heroes, those who put on military uniform at such a dangerous time. We will walk in the name of peace,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed.

Belarus strengthens and develops its Armed Forces and improves the military organisation of the state for the sake of peace, the President added.

“Our people should know and see that everything and even more is being done so that the army, as well as the territorial defence forces and the people’s militia, are ready to defend the country,” the



Commander-in-Chief said. “And you know that they are ready! We talk a lot about weapons, armaments, ammunition, but the main asset is our people. As soon as they felt the aggravation of the situation on our southern borders, military enlistment offices and units, our military and generals immediately received thousands of calls from ordinary people, asking to take them into the army and give them weapons in order to defend their Homeland. No need. Work quietly. We have a lot of work ahead of us. We, people in uniform, are able today to protect our country and prevent any provocation on its state borders.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko particularly underlined that the parade shows the strength of Belarus-Russia Union State strategic partnership, interaction with the CSTO member states, and military co-operation with the People’s Republic of China. “This is a sign of our readiness to stand in line today to protect historical memory, values, and our sovereignties,” the Head of State accentuated.

The President stressed that we are all united by the Great Victory over the common enemy — the countries of the Hitler alliance. “It teaches us to protect the world by any means of deterrence.



Aleksandr Lukashenko repeated that people are our main asset, “These are soldiers and officers — heroes of our time — who are already demonstrating courage and fortitude. Our parade is a recognition of the professionalism and dedication to duty of the military, border guards, fighters and special services officers who do everything to prevent provocations from unfriendly countries from escalating into a full-scale military conflict.”

According to the Head of State, less than 5 percent of representatives of Belarus’ Armed Forces are taking part in today’s parade; all the rest are at a combat post.

“We are immensely grateful to them. We know how difficult it is. However, no one else will complete this task. That is what we are designed for. The Belarusian people nurtured us to do our job properly,” the Belarusian leader stressed.

The inspection of the joint regional group of Belarus’ and Russia’s troops, the first training of non-strategic nuclear forces for our country showed that the level of defence capability of our Union State is as high as ever. This guarantees that our voice — the voice of our allies and partners in defence of a multipolar and just world — will be heard. Our parade will lead to a peaceful future. This is our goal. Therefore, young people are in the same formation with the defenders of the Fatherland, and next to military hardware is the equipment for peaceful life. The winners bequeathed to us to live and build a future for new generations. We will not let them down. We have no right!” Aleksandr Lukashenko concluded.

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“Those volleys still echo in our historic memory. We know that we should do everything to carry this memory through centuries. It is full of pain and suffering, patience and courage, heroic deeds, and the triumph of justice. It contains hundreds of thousands of names of heroes. It contains the strength of the nation of descendants of the winners,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stated.

The President stressed that the future of many nations was decided in the Belarusian land back then. “Fascists, who had been recruited from entire Europe, and warriors of the great multiethnic Red Army, clashed in that fateful battle. Head-on. It was a battle for freedom and the future of our nation, for freedom and the future of the nations on the entire continent. It was a confident step towards the Great Victory. As we celebrate Independence Day on July 3rd, we pay tribute to the memory of Soviet soldiers, who fought to the bitter end in the Brest Fortress, outside Minsk and Mogilev, Polotsk and Gomel,

troops. We bow to the cherished memory of civilian victims and fallen heroes. Those are millions of people — a terrible price for our freedom and independence,” the Head of State noted. “We admire great military leaders Zhukov, Vasilevsky, Rokossovsky as well as our fellow countryman, Army General Antonov, who was the main developer of the strategic offensive operation Bagration. The operation’s entire progress from the concept and preparations in unprecedented secrecy and to the active phase is an example of high military art and one of the most heroic pages of the Great Patriotic War.”

“The memory of our heroes lives in every Belarusian city and village, being passed down from generation to generation, from heart to heart, connecting all of us with a living thread of love and loyalty to the Fatherland. This parade is a parade in their honour,” Aleksandr Lukashenko stressed.

The Head of State highlighted the fact that along with Belarusian servicemen, their comrades



Alexandria has gathered friends again!

The big national holiday — the Kupala Night Festival (Alexandria Gathers Friends) — was held in the small homeland of the President of Belarus. As is traditional, the fest was attended by Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko.



The Tarelko family from Mogilev Region is the winner of the Lord of the Village – 2024

Addressing fellow countrymen, participants and guests of the holiday, the President noted, “July has become a kind of Slavic month, a cultural month. From this wonderful holiday in our Alexandria we move to one of the greatest festivals in the world — the Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk. Everywhere we are talking about Slavic people. Although today both the holiday in Alexandria and our Vitebsk festival have long ceased to be purely Slavic events.”

The Head of State drew attention to the fact that our friends from more than ten countries arrived in Alexandria, and representatives of over thirty states will come to the Slavianski Bazaar International Festival of Arts.

“It all started from here. In those ancient times, the Dnieper River was the route along which our ancestors moved from the south. They hoped to have a free life on this territory. They were probably oppressed in other lands. Our ancestors moved here, to the north, from neighbouring Kiev, from the Danube River. Therefore, the Dnieper is a special river and it is good that our generation has revived this wonderful tradition of gathering on the banks of the ancient Dnieper on Kupala days. For fifteen years now, we have been gathering in this picturesque corner of Belarus to feel the connection of times for a moment. In such a short period of time, we have created a festival that has turned from a small cosy holiday into an event of national and



international scale. Nevertheless, it has not lost its cosiness. It really has its special atmosphere. We have preserved the comfort. Our festival has become a place of attraction for creative people and true fans of the original Slavic culture from all over Belarus and from other countries,” the President underlined.

The Head of State noted that each of us has our own place of power, where we come or return to take a deep breath and spread our wings for a new flight, “I see that this cosy corner of Belarus has found a place in your hearts. I sincerely thank everyone who has graced today’s holiday with their skills and talents. I thank everyone who has been creating a truly authentic atmosphere here throughout all these years. This is especially precious nowadays.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko underlined that the world is changing at a breakneck pace now,

“It seems to us that we have learnt and mastered everything. We create an alternative reality in the networks, sometimes living on the Internet. We broke away from real life. But, thank God, there are people like you, with pure thoughts and kind hearts.



SPEAKING AT THE KUPALA NIGHT FESTIVAL (ALEXANDRIA GATHERS FRIENDS),

Aleksandr Lukashenko shared some of his thoughts with Belarusians and guests of the festive event.

In particular, Aleksandr Lukashenko noted that July is always a difficult time for the President, because there are a lot of mass events. Moreover, there was an additional burden connected with his working visit to Kazakhstan located four thousand kilometres from Belarus.

“Returning home, I planned in advance that I should land here [in my small homeland] because there is a lot of work to do in the east. From here I will work in the near future, watching how we prepare for the harvesting campaign. The harvest in the fields is like never before. I do not remember such a good year like this for agrarians. So far, God has given us a wonderful crop. It is going to be a tough job. I need to see how people here, in the eastern regions, will cope with this.” Aleksandr Lukashenko admitted that after a packed schedule, stepping on the native land is like plunging into another world, “It is a different world. People come to their roots, they feel better and easier here. Literally in a day, people become healthy and strong”.

People who believe in miracles come to Alexandria year after year to celebrate the Kupala Night event — a holiday shrouded in ancient legends and myths. Trofimova Krinitsa [the spring well] also bursts with clean waters for you on this fertile land. We, those born in the neighbourhood, believe in its miraculous power. During the Great Patriotic War, mothers and wives sprinkled water from this source on men going to the front.”

The President is convinced that there is no better protection than love for the native land and faith in its power. “We pass this tradition on to our children and generously share it with our friends. We have found what our ancestors had been looking for during a thousand years. We have learnt the true meaning of life. Our peaceful nature, the desire for friendship, respect for traditions of different cultures is the very fern flower which keeps the encoded secret of the world in all its senses. The power of the hospitable Alexandria land and water from Trofimova Krinitsa is enough for everyone.”



The President stressed that today, together with Belarusians, the Kupala Night holiday is being celebrated by guests from more than ten countries of the world, “We have not planned such a large scale, but people have come here on their own. This is the call of their hearts. This is the pursuit of true values, where guests are sincerely welcome, where the pulse of a living creative force beats. However, the most important thing is that we have revived the traditions of our ancestors. We are developing our native national culture. It is not enough to know and remember these traditions, they must become part of modern history.”



According to Aleksandr Lukashenko, our children should see how we take care of what has been created for centuries. “They should absorb the idea that everything that is made with our own hands — a wicker basket, an earthenware jug, or an embroidered towel — is always beautiful, relevant and fashionable. Folk music is a song of the Slavic soul — this is our song. Alexandria has truly become the centre of the revival of ancient ritual and craft traditions. This is the only way to preserve our own identity: by continuing the thousand-year history of the East Slavic peoples. Knowledge of this history and understanding of the philosophy of native culture are our national treasure. We must preserve it if we want to be a nation. This is the backbone of the Belarusian statehood.”

Addressing the Belarusians and guests of our country present at the festival, the Head of State stressed,

“Dear Belarusians and our closest friends from Ukraine and Russia, I want to tell you once again: think about my offer to buy small plots of land in the so-called unpromising villages for a small sum of money. You know that we have preserved our villages. We are building more than one and a half thousand agrotowns; their location has already been determined. Agriculture is being expanded, meaning that agrotowns will also be large. We still have medium-sized and very small villages where many people used to live. These are wonderful places. You need to revive these villages.

May you have a little summer house there. Do it now, it will be too late tomorrow. Do it because you have children and they need to walk barefoot on the ground. There will be no such land plots tomorrow. After all, Belarus has become a quiet, peaceful and cosy place for Russians and Ukrainians.”

The President spoke about one of the meetings with Muscovites in a Belarusian village, “They are not poor people at all. I asked them why they come here as a family every year and why they need this. They replied, ‘We are seeking silence. We feel comfortable here. There is absolute silence here. We and our children need it, especially with Trofimova Krinitsa nearby’.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko recommended that everyone find time and plunge into this natural source of health, as many of our guests from Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia have already done.

“I guarantee that you will be healthy. These are my thoughts here at home. I ask you to listen to my recommendations. After all, I have seen a lot in my life and spent much time on this land where you are today,” the Head of State added.



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FESTIVAL

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Growth through innovation

Smart stops, medical equipment and breathing apparatus for rescuers — Belarusian multidisciplinary industrial enterprise Vityaz expands horizons



The company's production growth rate has reached nearly 140 percent compared to 2023. Exports have soared by 20 percent in five months, and salaries have increased by almost a third. Vitebsk-based Vityaz JSC demonstrates a consistent upward movement in the above economic indicators from year to year. Let us bring to light the innovative developments that have become the driving force of progress at the enterprise.



By Yelena Begunova

From timetable to the sights

The design bureau of non-standard solutions — the Vityaz subdivision — knows how to surprise. Thousands of guests and participants of the *Slavianski Bazaar in Vitebsk* International Festival of Arts will soon be able to personally verify this. The public transport stop closest to the Summer Amphitheatre has already been fitted with state-of-the-art equipment, and a complex information system is being set up.

“This is going to be the first smart stop in Vitebsk Region,” Gennady Azarov, General Director of Vityaz JSC, revealed the news. “The idea has been developed by our designers together with Beltelecom specialists. I hope both Vitebsk residents and guests of the city will be pleased with the result. In the future, residents of other Belarusian cities will also get a chance to appreciate this novelty.”

What services will an unusual IT facility offer to users? First, the screen will display a real-time traffic plan of public transport — schedule, time, routes. Secondly, the *My City* app will indicate the location of all city sights and possible ways to get to them. Thirdly, it will be possible to watch presentation videos about Belarus in general and Vitebsk in particular. In addition, the smart stop will be equipped with charging devices. According to the developers, the general-purpose system of smart stop software envisages the possibility to replenish and expand its functionality, if necessary.

Capital in business

TV sets still occupy approximately 75 percent in the Vityaz production structure. How does the company manage to stay in the market? **Gennady Azarov highlighted the figure: in 2023, the plant produced 946,000 TV sets. This is an absolute record for the entire time of the company's existence. Almost 95 percent of the products were exported.**

“The assortment has already exceeded 150 item names, which we produce under various brands,” the head of the enterprise gave an insight into the product range. “Customer preferences change, therefore we try to match them, staying one step ahead and anticipating their desires. A few years ago, 32-inch TVs were the favourites. Now, however, 43-50-inch models are at the peak of popularity, the production of which we have ex-



Assembly fitter Yuri Gribanov

panded. This also refers to TVs with OLED screens — the thickness of the super-thin panel is as little as 4 millimetres.”

Indeed, factory workers did not even dream of producing 85-90-inch screens five years ago, whereas it is a common thing now. Interestingly, such giants are ordered not only by enterprises and organisations for presentation purposes, but also by ordinary customers to equip their spacious cottages and apartments.

Whatever the screen size, one trend is unshakable — a TV set should have a wide range of functionality, including Internet access, a smart system, platforms with applications and interfaces. That is, three in one — receiver, computer, smartphone. In order to satisfy customers' wishes and stay competitive in the global market, Vityaz JSC has to implement a large production modernisation programme. Its next and very important stage, which will require serious investments, is scheduled for the coming years.

“The project is already under development,” noted the General Director of Vityaz JSC. “It will be a new modern television production for products based on complex software and information systems involving the most advanced technologies. It will feature several workshops and highly efficient lines, where we will create a large and clear mechanism with a well-thought-out chain of streamlined operations, logistics, quality control, and storage facilities. We plan to implement the idea with the involvement of foreign capital. The project will require substantial costs, but it will create the solid foundation for the plant's operation for many years to come, and will enable to expand the geography of supplies. In addition, new jobs will be opened.”

Help for medics and rescuers

Currently, Vityaz JSC is actively working for the country's medical industry. There are several dozen models of equipment and their varieties for healthcare institutions on the assembly line. Leonid Karpov, Chief Designer of Engineering and Industrial Complexes, showed a novelty, the clinical trials of which finished in May. The equipment has passed the registration procedure, and now a cutting-edge duo of disinfectant and a medical waste destructor is ready to be put on stream. The specialist shared the details, “Hospitals and polyclinics used to accumulate waste of used cans, syringes, ampoules, and intravenous infusion systems to later hand it over to commercial companies for recycling, or bought expensive containers for this purpose themselves. It was expensive and inconvenient... Our complex allows reducing costs, simplifying the procedure and ensuring environmental protection.”

The equipment has already been appreciated during the tests by the staff of the Vitebsk City Emergency Hospital.

All waste in bags is loaded into a special 100-litre disinfectant box. At a temperature of 134 degrees Celsius under atmospheric pressure, it undergoes a half-hour treatment, after which is moved to a destructor and crushed. The procedure results in carefully packaged harmless fine fraction, which can be disposed of in the usual way at landfills for household waste.

By the way, the Vitebsk City Emergency Hospital decided to purchase this equipment after the experimental testing — doctors loaded the disinfectant 5-6 times every day and appreciated the convenience of its use.

The same workshop of the plant produces new sterilisers for the medical industry, veterinary medicine and pharmaceutical industries, as well as a mobile irradiator.

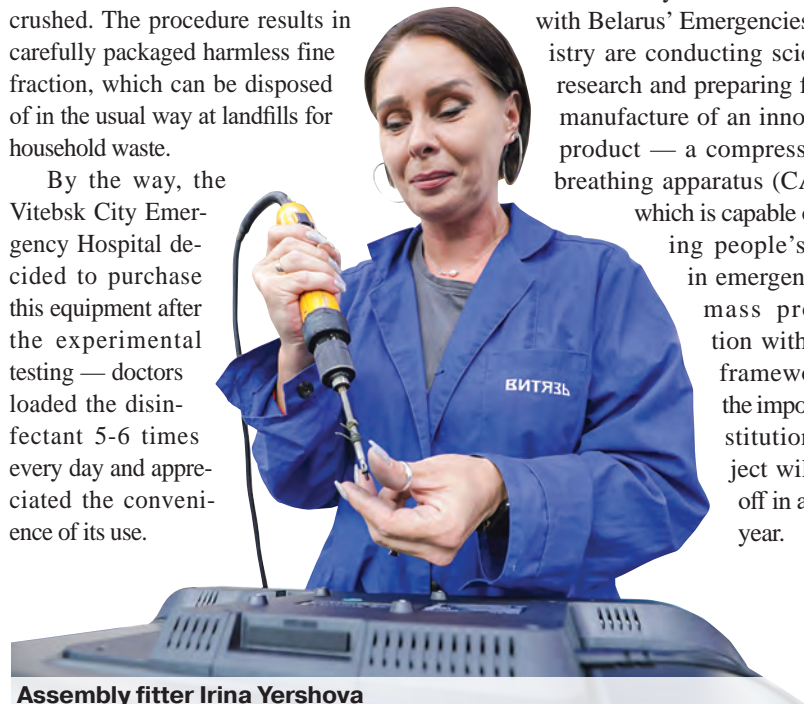
“Do you know those wall-mounted ultraviolet radiators in hospital wards and other places of medical institutions? Now it is possible to abandon stationary equipment — our mobile device can be easily moved to the right point at the right time,” Leonid Karpov explained the operation principle of another novelty. “It can be used not only in medical institutions, but also in kindergartens, schools, and food enterprises... In other words, anywhere where there is a need for thorough disinfection of premises.”

These developments are far from the only ones. Every year, Vityaz JSC replenishes its production with new products that are in demand in various sectors of the national economy of Belarus and the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Moldova. Thus, more than 3,500 pieces of medical devices were produced in 2023 alone.

Heating equipment for electric houses, the production of which was mastered at Vityaz at the end of last year, turned out to be in great demand. Several hundred boilers have already been sold to consumers.

Now the factory workers in liaison with Belarus' Emergencies Ministry are conducting scientific research and preparing for the manufacture of an innovative product — a compressed air breathing apparatus (CABA),

which is capable of saving people's lives in emergency. Its mass production within the framework of the import substitution project will kick off in about a year.



Assembly fitter Irina Yershova

ECONOMY

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The Minsk Times project is dedicated to people awarded the highest Hero of Belarus title

Epoch man

Touches to the portrait of suddenly deceased Hero of Belarus Vasily Revyako — a real hard worker, conscientious citizen and true patriot

Vasily Afanasievich is the brightest example of valiant labour and devoted service to the Motherland. His long-term activity was inextricably linked with the development and success of the domestic agricultural and industrial complex, ensuring the country's food security, and creating decent living conditions for people in rural areas.

From Aleksandr Lukashenko's condolence message on the decease of Hero of Belarus Vasily Revyako



AWARDS

- By Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 135 dated March 1st, 2006, Vasily Revyako was awarded the Hero of Belarus title for exceptional service in the socio-economic development of the Republic of Belarus.
- Honoured Worker of Agriculture of Belarus (1999).
- In 2023, by the decision of the Grodno Regional Executive Committee, his name was entered in the *Book of Glory of Grodno Region*.
- Honorary citizen of Grodno Region.
- Deputy of Grodno Regional Council of Deputies of the 26th convocation, member of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus of the 4th and 5th convocations, member of the Standing Commission on Regional Policy and Local Self-Government under the Council of the Republic.
- The Badge of Honour Order, Medal For Labour Merits.
- Honorary certificates of the National Assembly, the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Grodno Regional Executive Committee.



“ Vasily Revyako on being awarded the Hero of Belarus title,

“It is clear that everyone living on Earth aspires to be a general or a hero. It is natural. However, I have never been focused on that. I keep working like I always did, try to do my best. The main thing is that I do not keep it in my mind that I am a Hero. Maybe just sometimes, when I change my clothes and put on my jacket with a star on it, I recall: I'm also a Hero.”

From an interview with STV channel on July 4th, 2020

Vasily Revyako was born on July 15th, 1948 in the village of Rabets, Khoyniki District, Gomel Region. He began his career as a livestock breeder at the Zaozerye collective farm in Oktyabr District, Gomel Region. Vasily graduated from Grodno Agrarian Institute (today: Grodno State Agrarian University) and later studied at the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the USSR. Since 1975, he worked as the head of the livestock workshop at the Progress collective farm in Grodno Region. Since 1985, he was an instructor of the organisational department at the Grodno Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia (CPB), first secretary of the Mosty District Committee of the CPB. Since 1995, Vasily Revyako headed the Progress-Vertelishki Agricultural Production Co-operative (APC) in Grodno Region. Vasily Revyako was Candidate of Agricultural Sciences, deputy of Grodno Regional Council of Deputies of the 26th convocation, deputy of the Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus of the 4th and 5th convocations, member of the Standing Commission on Agrarian Issues and Environmental Protection, as well as a member of the Standing Commission on International Affairs and National Security.

With people and for people

Vasily Revyako was one of those people who are never completely satisfied with the results of their work. He sometimes noted, “I work little, I need to work more and more efficiently.” This trait of Vasily Revyako, as a competent land manager, ensured the progress of the task entrusted to him, while his desire to make tomorrow better than today was inevitably passed on to his subordinates.

The Hero of Belarus said that he was in love with agriculture, and it apparently reciprocated him for decades. Over the years at the helm of the Progress-Vertelishki APC, Vasily Revyako raised the efficiency level of agriculture to the height unattainable for many executives. In terms of crop yields, the agricultural organisation steadily gained a foothold among the national leaders. High production rates were achieved in animal husbandry there, as well. What was the secret? The Hero of Belarus did not hide it: of course, it was in the people working in the APC.

Was he demanding? Definitely yes. However, this trait invariably had an intelligent form. Thus, Vasily Revyako addressed every ordinary worker, without exceptions, respectfully by their first name and patronymic. He admitted that it was not easy to part with people, even if there were disagreements. In an interview, the famous chairman revealed, “If a person needs to be displaced from the position, I am going to feel a hundred times worse than that person. Therefore, I think it is necessary to consider the decision from different angles, including how it will affect their family and children. It is probably better to help that person and let them keep working.”

Thanks to the efforts of Vasily Revyako, Progress-Vertelishki has become one of the best agricultural enterprises in the country, a school of advanced management experience. It is here that Grodno State Agrarian University has established its laboratory

and trains students to work in the livestock industry. Today, people live in the agrotown of Vertelishki no worse than in the city, and the credit for this also goes to Vasily Revyako. All the streets have been asphalted, and the secondary school, kindergarten, and shops are exemplary. The streets built up with elegant residential buildings are surrounded by lush greenery, with manicured flower beds and tiled pavements. The agrotown's centre is graced with the Palace of Culture, and the administrative building of the agricultural organisation. Medical services are provided by a polyclinic with a day-stay hospital. The agrotown's improvements are monitored by its own municipal service.

The carpentry and art enterprise, where it is possible to order furniture, ceramic and forged products for every taste, works effectively.

Undoubtedly, all of this was done for people in order to make their lives as comfortable as those of city dwellers. At the same time, the APC chairman wanted to know what went on in people's hearts, whether they were always satisfied with external well-being.

The average age of employees at the agricultural enterprise today does not exceed 45 years. The industrial and social spheres are successfully developing. The team is constantly replenished with young staff.

Significant contribution to the development of the country

Vasily Afanasievich [Revyako] had to take one more important decision in his life. Some people talked him out of the challenge and predicted trouble. Nevertheless, he took on that responsibility. In 2016, agricultural co-operatives began to be massively transformed into joint-stock companies or utility companies. Revyako's colleagues had disparate opinions on that issue. Thus, at the 5th Belarusian People's Congress, Vasily Revyako asked for the floor.

He stated that the envisaged re-organisation of the APC was not justified. Effective agricultural co-operatives should continue operating in their traditional form. President Aleksandr Lukashenko listened attentively to the chairman and immediately responded stressing that if a collective ownership enterprise showed solid results, it really was not worth rushing to change the form of its ownership. The Head of State emphasised that if certain amendments to the current regulatory framework were to be made in order to maintain the status, it should be done. And so it was done!

Vasily Revyako did so much for the benefit of the country's economy on the whole. He, however, thought that it was still not enough. In the year when he was awarded the Hero of

The Progress-Vertelishki APC is one of the largest agricultural enterprises in Grodno Region, which specialises in the production and processing of agricultural products: milk, cattle and poultry meat, cultivation of cereals and legumes, sugar beet, oilseed crops, fruits and berries



BELTA

Belarus title, the APC chairman confessed, “When I took over the helm of the agricultural enterprise, I imagined that in a few years I would accomplish everything I had planned and would enjoy the result. It turned out otherwise. It takes two more lives to implement everything you dream of. To sum up the interim results, I am somewhat satisfied with what has been achieved on the farm so far. Serious steps have been taken towards its social development, and economic indicators are encouraging. I am proud of every person who works at the agricultural enterprise today.”

Moreover, the Hero of Belarus always believed that he had managed to achieve great results thanks to the wise policy of the Head of State in the field of agriculture, “I can say with confidence that Belarus has taken a big leap forward. You can hardly recognise our country today — it is just like in a fairy tale. I am very glad that my whole life has evolved in this country.”

Vasily Revyako created a highly profitable and highly efficient production, and a team that nurtured dozens of specialists, who now successfully manage other enterprises. He proved that it is possible to work cost-effectively in agriculture, earn money, and invest it in people. Indeed, he enjoyed the well-deserved respect of his employees. We will always remember what Vasily Revyako did for the people of his advanced agricultural enterprise and for our entire sovereign and independent country.

Based on materials of sb.by, belta.by and Heroes of Belarus by Nikolai Machekin

One of the symbols of the Belarusian capital and the place where people bring flowers on the days of major national holidays is the Victory Monument on the square with the same name in the very centre of Minsk. It may seem that the monument is nameless as neither names nor surnames are indicated on it. However, it is deeply personal for everyone — it was set up in honour of the Soviet Army soldiers and Byelorussian partisans who died during the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War. The grand opening of the monument took place seven decades ago, on July 4th, 1954.

“The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

“Please remember: come to the monuments, to the Eternal Flame, quietly and calmly, without any organisation, you can come without flowers. Remember and bow to those who gave us freedom, if we do not want to fight.”

At the ceremony of laying wreaths and flowers at the Victory Monument as part of the patriotic campaign *Belarus Remembers!*, on May 9th, 2024

The Victory Monument in Minsk marks the 70th anniversary: the history behind the creation of the symbol of national memory

Facets of heroism and glory

sei Glebov and Sergei Selikhanov, who became the authors of the bronze high reliefs on the four sides of the monument pedestal. As a result, Belarusians got a bright pearl of monumental Belarusian art.

Memory does not age

The 38-metre obelisk of grey granite is crowned with the massive image of the Order of Victory made of bronze and smalt. The obelisk facets are dissected by narrow stripes styled after the Byelorussian national ornament and completed with one wide stripe. The monument base features a sword wrapped in a laurel bronze branch. There are four bronze wreaths on the sides... This is an image familiar from childhood. However, not everyone may know that another important element included in this architectural ensemble — the Eternal Flame in front of the monument — was lit seven years after the monument had been opened. This happened on July 3rd, 1961, a few months after the capital of the BSSR got natural gas. The monument and the adjacent objects of the architectural ensemble have been restored several times.

The first renovation that was carried out in 1984-1985 coincided with the construction of the first section of the Minsk metro and the subsequent global reconstruction of Victory Square. The square became oval, and a circular gallery with the Memorial Hall was built underground. The granite obelisk and the Order of Victory on its top were renewed, and capsules with soil from hero cities and the Brest Fortress were placed in special plinths in front of the monument. Later, the site and the monument were repaired in 2003, as well as at the end of the last decade. In particular, by the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory, the concrete base had been strengthened, cracks on some

TOUCHES TO THE PORTRAIT

- The project by Georgy Zaborsky and Vladimir Korol originally envisaged the construction of a 48-metre stele. However, due to the tight deadlines — the monument was expected to be unveiled to the 10th anniversary of Minsk’s liberation — the scale had to be sacrificed.
- Both Byelorussian architects who worked on the creation of the Victory Monument were later awarded the *People’s Architect of the USSR* title, which was generally appreciated by urban planners even more than the Hero of Socialist Labour.
- Tamara Nizhnikova, soloist at the Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theatre of the BSSR, People’s Artist of the USSR, who witnessed the opening of the monument in 1954, later recalled that many people were tearful and even knelt down during the solemn ceremony. People who came to Kruglaya Square in the following days did the same — so strong were their feelings.
- On July 3rd, 1984, Post No. 1 with guard duty at the Victory Monument was initiated for the first time. The symbolic Guard Post of Memory with the participation of students of educational institutions has been taking place for 40 years already.

structures had been eliminated, salt streaks on the granite stele had been removed, engineering networks and lighting had been modernised. The Order of Victory crowning the obelisk was also restored with gold leaf.

It is notable that the latest modernisation of Victory Square and the restoration of the monument were carried out using the funds, inter alia, raised during the nationwide clean-up day of 2019. In other words, millions of Belarus’ residents contributed to the preservation of the place perpetuating the memory of their ancestors and cherished by every Belarusian. This is also deeply symbolic.

By Aleksandr Nesterov

From idea to implementation

The monument was solemnly unveiled exactly seven decades ago, on July 4th, 1954, in the centre of the square, which was called Kruglaya [Round] at that time. It received its current name — Victory Square — only four years later. By the way, Byelorussian architect Georgy Zaborsky conceived the idea to erect the monument back in 1942. It was he and his colleague Vladimir Korol who later became the leading architects in the process of creating the monument.

“I have chosen to work on a sketch-idea for a monument to the Heroes of the Great Patriotic War. I have many different ideas...” Zaborsky wrote to the Board of the Union of Architects of the BSSR [Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic] from the hospital in Troitsk, Chelyabinsk Region. The first sketches and drawings appeared at the same time.

It was only in the autumn of 1950, when the Department for Architecture at the Council of Ministers of the BSSR announced a competition for the creation of a monument to the Soviet Army soldiers and Byelorussian partisans, that the previously made sketches came in handy. Zaborsky managed to defend his original idea in the fierce competition — more than 70 architects and sculptors from Moscow, Leningrad [now St. Petersburg], Minsk, Riga and other cities took part in the contest. The creative duo of Zaborsky and Korol was joined by sculptors Zair Azgur, Andrei Bembel, Alek-

IMPORTANT THINGS IN DETAILS



Bronze sculptural compositions (high reliefs) are placed on the four facets of the pedestal. *May 9th, 1945* (sculptor Andrei Bembel) — attests to the triumph of Victory. The Coat of Arms of the BSSR is located above it. *The Soviet Army during the Great Patriotic War* (sculptor Sergei Selikhanov) — illustrates the moment of the battle. *Partisans of Byelorussia* (sculptor Aleksei Glebov) — reflects one of the rail war episodes. *Glory to the Fallen Heroes* (sculptor Zair Azgur) — shows people’s grief over the hero’s grave.

A bronze sword entwined with a laurel branch (sculptor S. Saltykov) — a symbol of Victory.



A wreath made of art glass with illumination from inside in the Memorial Hall under Victory Square (artist V. Poznyak) — a symbol of the Eternal Flame of our memory. The wall

features a bronze outline of the Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union and plates with the names of hundreds of soldiers and officers who perished when liberating Byelorussia from German Nazi invaders and were awarded the highest degree of distinction.

Four bronze laurel wreaths on cube-shaped stylobates of the stepped monument pedestal (sculptor Sergei Adashkevich) — signify the four fronts whose soldiers participated in the liberation of Byelorussia.



MEMORY

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BRICS share breaks records

The BRICS share of global GDP in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) reached a record 35.7 percent by late 2023, while the share of the G7 economies decreased to 29 percent, according to RIA Novosti calculations based on World Bank data

Today BRICS unites ten countries: Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, as well as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The G7 includes the USA, Japan, Germany, France, Great Britain, Canada and Italy.

By the end of last year, the share of the BRICS countries in the global economy amounted to a record 35.7 percent, having increased by 0.6 percentage points over the year. Since the establishment of the association in 2006, its share in the economy has grown by 10.2 percent.

At the same time, the share of the G7 nations amounted to the lowest 29 percent in the last thirty years in late 2023 — the association lost 0.4 percentage points over the year. Since 2006, the share of the G7 has decreased by 9.7 percent.

Meanwhile, the remaining countries outside these major blocs accounted for 35.3 percent of the world's GDP, maintaining a stable share since 1990, fluctuating within a one-percentage-point range.

Overall, the global GDP in purchas-

ing power parity (PPP) terms reached \$184.7 trillion in 2023, reflecting a 7 percent increase from the previous year.

As experts believe, the share of the BRICS countries in global GDP will continue to grow in the future, especially given the new countries that have joined the alliance.

Moreover, there is a long list of candidate countries seeking to join BRICS: 32 states. In this regard, the weight of the bloc may soon potentially exceed half of the global economy.

Bionic leg helps amputees walk using mind control

A high-tech prosthetic leg enables amputees to walk naturally and at normal speeds without consciously thinking about it, a study suggests

A high-tech prosthetic leg enables amputees to walk naturally and at normal speeds without consciously thinking about it, a study suggests.

Developed by scientists at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the bionic leg links the user's brain activity to nerves in important muscles controlling movement.

Study author Professor Hugh Herr said the results of a small trial were 'quite miraculous' and could influence the way prosthetic limbs are constructed in future.

But there are years of development work still to be carried out before it can be used by more patients.

There are lots of limitations to the way current artificial limbs are able to move, say the researchers in *Nature Medicine*.

Their quest was to test whether new technology could make walking with a leg amputation below the knee more natural.

"So when the amputee thinks, they feel the limb moving naturally — those muscles move as they did when the limb was intact," Prof. Herr told journalists on a briefing. "It's as if they are able to feel their phantom limb and its movement," he added.

And all through greater control from the human nervous system.



UK election: voters end 14 years of Conservative rule

Britain's King Charles III officially appointed Labour leader Keir Starmer as Prime Minister on July 5th during an audience at Buckingham Palace

Starmer led Britain's Labour Party to a landslide election victory and became the country's 58th Prime Minister — the first leader from the centre-left party to win a UK national election since Tony Blair, who won three in a row starting in 1997.

"A mandate like this comes with a great responsibility," Starmer told supporters at a triumphant dawn rally in London, moments after the results that sealed its landslide win were announced.

The 61-year-old pledged to start work straightaway on improving the country.

"Today we start the next chapter — begin the work of change, the mission of national renewal and start to rebuild our country," Starmer told the crowd.

"Change begins now. And it feels good, I have to be honest. Four-and-a-half years of work changing the party. This is what it is for, a changed Labour Party, ready to serve our country. Ready to restore Britain to the service of working people."

Labour snatched a swathe of Tory seats around the country, including from at least eight Cabinet members.

World's oldest artwork discovered

The painting was dated using a new technique and suggests Europe was not where cave art first emerged

Scientists have discovered what they believe to be the world's oldest artwork — depicting three people gathered around a large red pig — in a cave on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. Research published indicates the painting was created some 51,200 years ago.

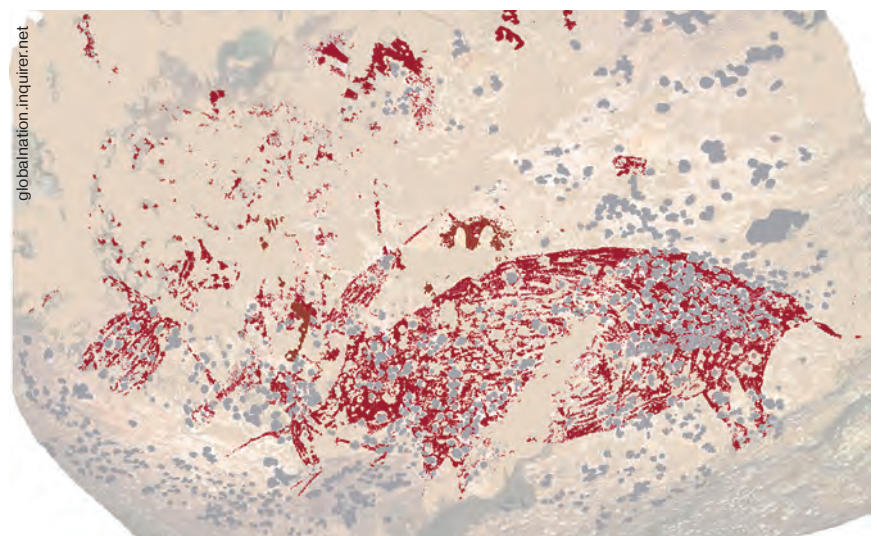
"This is the oldest evidence of storytelling," Maxime Aubert, an archaeologist at Australia's Griffith University and co-author of a new study published in *Nature*, noted.

Aubert was part of the team that identified the previous record holder, a picture

of a warty pig thought to be at least 45,500 years old.

The latest discovery, found inside the Leang Karampuang cave in the Maros-Pangkep Region of South Sulawesi, is in poor condition. It shows three people around a wild pig, measuring 92cm by 38cm. There are other images of pigs in the cave as well.

Aubert speculated that the paintings were probably made by the first group of humans who moved through Southeast Asia before arriving in Australia about 65,000 years ago.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

Fighting without a front line

Can the current terrorist attacks stop the transition to a multipolar world?

A Ukrainian attack with US-made long-range ATACMS missiles with cluster warheads has been inflicted on Sevastopol in Crimea resulting in one and a half hundred wounded and five dead, including children. During the strike, a US drone was detected over the Black Sea. Armed militants have attacked Orthodox churches and synagogues, as well as police officers in Makhachkala and Derbent — twenty people have been killed. This is a terrible summary of just one day. What is behind the terrorist attacks?

By Aleksandr Tishchenko,
national security expert

The aim is to sow fear

Terrorism is a standard paid service in a proxy war. Therefore, it is more logical to look for a customer rather than a performer. The missile raid on the crowded beach in Sevastopol is infinitely atrocious and tragic in terms of its consequences. Targeting the peaceful civilian population is, undoubtedly, a crime squared and its performers are inhumans.

The scariest thing about this fact, though, is the lack of principles and the commercial side. The answer to the question what all of this is for is obvious — for money. Whoever pays, orders this deadly music.

All attempts to discern the cause exclusively in the Kiev regime only lead away from the main root of evil. The missile strike was carried out with an American weapon with a filling prohibited by international conventions, which was officially supplied by the White House at the expense of US taxpayers. Moreover, it should be understood that the Ukrainian army is being prepared and maintained at the expense of, inter alia, the US state budget, whose spending is determined by the national interests of the United States. In addition, the guidance of ATACMS missiles was carried out by official American means and American crews. Technically, only a finger on the start button could be Ukrainian, and that is not a fact.

What kind of terrorist attack can we talk about if everything had been prepared, paid for and executed by Washington while Kiev was a mere mercenary? This is a real war between the United States and Russia. The missile strike on Sevastopol is a new generation terrorist act. What is its aim? To sow fear and destabilisation. Common sense says that what was arranged is just a meaningless attempt at mass murder of innocent civilians.

Terrorist acts instead of counterattacks

Leading media all over the world have been thoroughly creating a picture of poor Zelensky begging the West for long-range weapons, tanks, aircraft and missiles to enable him to fight for Ukraine. Foreign emissaries did not just wander around the world aimlessly, either — they gathered conferences and worked hard to create a proper entourage of this war. According to the plan, no one was supposed to doubt that there was aggression against Ukraine and that it was fair to kill enemy soldiers. This is the background created by the United States around the conflict. It should be admitted that all this rhetoric serves as an effective cover for Washington's direct involvement in military activities. The ostentatious audacity of the inhabitants of Bankova [location of Presidential Administration Building in Kiev, Ukraine], Macron's provocative statements, Scholz's wanderings, Stolten-

berg's NATO concern, Duda's and Nauséda's borderline lamentations, and more are nothing else than acting and attempts to attract public attention to the undesired object. No one is confused by the fact that the endless help with money and weapons to Kiev does not affect the combat capability of Ukraine's Armed Forces or the front-line picture in any way.

No one has paid attention to the fact that the front itself ceased to be a priority. Now decisive actions have been transferred, with the help of new weapons and terrorism, to the internal territory of Russia. As a matter of fact, the war is being teleported from the useless line of contact into the depths of Russia, which they are going to disrupt from the inside. This is the new US tactics instead of any counterattacks at the front.

While the military activity of the Russian Federation near Kharkov looks like a task to stretch the front beyond the capabilities of Ukraine's Armed Forces, the US terrorist tactics in the depths of Russia are defragmentation and diffusion of combat capabilities and military threats. This is a war without a front line or co-ordinates.

Contour of tension

The change of tactics by Washington and Kiev features another aspect. The problem with the White House is that there is no aggressor in the Ukrainian conflict. Renovation works have been launched on the territories that have departed from Ukraine. Resources are not pumped out of these regions, but, on the contrary, investments are flowing there. From the very beginning, the West has tried to pass participants of the special military operation off as a wild tribe that threatens the entire Western civilisation by creating falsifications and replicating accusations of alleged theft of Ukrainian children.

However, all of those have been promptly debunked as having no grounds. Therefore, the tactics of provocation for harsh actions continue. The goal is to make Russians consider Ukrainians



The President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko,

"Belarus is ready to cooperate constructively on countering terrorism, separatism, extremism, illicit trafficking in drugs, weapons, nuclear and radioactive materials, organised crime and illegal migration. I absolutely support the opinion expressed by Chinese President Xi Jinping regarding the counteraction to interference of certain countries in the internal affairs of states and combating colour revolutions. We support the creation of the SCO Universal Centre for Threats and Challenges to Security based on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent."

At the meeting of the Council of Heads of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) Member States, on September 16th, 2022

mortal enemies, cause a massive feeling of blood feud and provoke the tactics at the front and in Ukraine identical to that of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) in Palestine, the scorched earth tactics. That is intended to undermine the authority of Russia and all the countries that are in contact with it.

This also means that all multipolar aspirations might sink into oblivion. In other words, this is not just another US war but military actions aimed at preserving the unquestionable hegemony of the United States.

That is why the multi-contour terrorist breakthrough staged in Dagestan hit the leading confession and law enforcement facilities so purposefully and fatally. The radical Islamic cover was chosen in this regard in order to create an additional contour of tension and weave knots of discord with the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and even with the Global South at the same time — with those who advocate for a multipolar world. This is virtually the format of the third world war. After all, the future of the world order is at stake, and not that of Ukraine as the United States and its European subjects suggest.

Acts of terror are the counteroffensive that everyone has been waiting for. American arsenal in the hands of third parties, sometimes even not Ukrainian ones, is used to continue waging this war.



July festivals in Belarus

The warm season seems to be created for outdoor activities. Singing along to favourite musicians, trying new dishes or participating in exciting rites — there is entertainment for everyone.



By Sofia Arsenyeva

Looking for the magical fern flower

Kupala Night festivities are held in literally all regions of Belarus. The most vibrant and large-scale holiday — *the Kupala Night Festival* — takes place in the agrotown of Alexandria on the picturesque banks of the Dnieper River, Mogilev Region. The Slavs believed that the forces of nature flourished on the night of July 6th-7th. That is why they arranged singing and dancing on the banks of rivers and lakes, paying tribute

to the patrons of the earth and sky. The centuries-old traditions have been preserved to jump over the campfire after sunset, dance in a round, weave wreaths of forest and field plants and then let them float on the water, making wishes. Another beautiful rite is the search for a magical ‘paparats-kvetka’ — a flowering fern. No one knows exactly what it looks like. However, people believe that the fiery flower blesses the one who finds it with eternal happiness, youth and wealth.

WHEN: July 6th-7th

Visiting the land flowing with milk

Munich is famous for its Oktoberfest beer, while Brest is renowned for the family dairy festival. We are in favour of a healthy lifestyle and traditional values!

Savushkin Product JSC is known in all regions of the Union State — its varieties of cheese and curd cheese, yoghurts and ice cream, sour cream and kefir are sold even in stores in the Far North and Sakhalin, Russia. The thematic fest provides a great chance to taste all the delicious goodies in

one sitting, as well as to admire the horned beauties that give fresh milk, and learn how to milk them. Within the framework of the festival, it will be possible to enjoy puppet shows on pastoral topics. The programme traditionally features funny animators, captivating masterclasses, open training sessions and interesting quests. Urban residents are offered to lie on bales of hay and fly eco-serpentine ribbons into the sky — cute stuff!

WHEN: July 26th



Catching fish to music

The best way to celebrate the centenary of Bulat Okudzhava [Soviet and Russian poet, musician, singer and songwriter] is to grab a guitar and set off to the shore of Chigirinskoye water reservoir in Mogilev Region. The local *Big Bard Fishing* is a unique multicultural festival that unites lovers of fragrant fish soup and author’s song genre. There is no place for pompousness here, and almost no Internet connection. Instead, you can pick the guitar strings sitting comfortably around the

campfire until dawn and sing about simple joys of life. Despite the heartwarming atmosphere of the festival, it cannot be called chamber-like in any way. There are hundreds of participants, and thousands of spectators! Concerts will be held on two stages at the same time, and entertaining activities will be organised on two venues. Just in a couple of days in the forest, you will have a chance to learn a new song or master a new river fish recipe — you can count on help from professionals.

WHEN: July 26th-28th



Dancing on the beach

Summer, sun and heat make everyone strive to get closer to cool water. There are countless lakes and rivers in the Blue-eyed country [Belarus’ nickname]. One of the most popular resorts — Braslav Lakes — has long been a mecca for partygoers. The two-day Viva Braslav Open Air party gathered about

thirty thousand participants last year. Even more people are expected to join in the fun this year. It is understandable why: the headliners are Niletto, Lesha Svik, Klava Coca, Oleg Miami... A surprise is waiting for fans of Russian pop music of the noughties — singer MakSim. After groovy dances in the open air, why not take a plunge into water — after all,

Braslav’s central beach is just a stone’s throw from the main stage. In addition, Viva Braslav is famous for its healthy lifestyle programme, so beach volleyball and streetball competitions will be held, and several shooting ranges will be available. Adventure lovers will surely appreciate hot air balloon flights and yachting.

WHEN: July 27th-28th



Trying on a suit of armour

How was the legendary indomitable spirit of the Slavic people forged? It was through fierce battles for their independence and the peaceful future. In the small town of Zelva, Grodno Region, hundreds of reenactors of different eras — from medieval warriors in suits of armour to soldiers of the First World War and the Great Patriotic War — will soon gather on one site. Mass battles, single combats, equestrian tournaments, tactical ma-

noeuvres and formations — the programme is going to be quite eventful. Participants will come not only from Belarus, but also from Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Kyrgyzstan. On the eve of the opening of the *Legendary Epochs* festival, a cinema will be set up under an open sky right next to the old mill. Food courts, guitar and accordion songs, military equipment exhibition — all inclusive, in the Belarusian style.

WHEN: July 13th



Choice has been made

Belarusian biathlete Iryna Leshchanka no longer wants to be torn between family and sports

By Tatiana Pastushenko

Iryna Leshchanka has announced her retirement from professional sport by leaving a message on her social networks, “It is time to bid farewell to high-level sports. The time from 2003 to 2024 flew by so quickly, in a fascinating way, just in a flash. I thank myself for these exciting 20 years of continuous self-improvement! I extend my heartfelt thanks to the people who supported me at the beginning, in the middle and at the final stage of my sports career — to my family, coaches, athletes, service team, medical staff, managers, sponsors and so on. Thank you for your work and care.”

The champion of PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics, winner and multiple medallist of the European Championships, winner of the World Cup awards had been thinking about finishing her sports career for a long time. Last season, upon returning to biathlon competitions after giving birth to her daughter Alicia, she said that the decision whether to continue her career would depend on her health and the results shown. Now that the decision has been made, Iryna has acknowledged that it was not difficult to make the choice. According to Iryna, the decision was deliberate and correct. “I did not regret at all that I returned to biathlon after giving birth to my daughter, that I did not stay at home with the baby but was with my husband and our team. The first year of Alicia’s life passed quickly and cheerfully. Probably, if I had given up biathlon right away, it would be sadder now. Instead, I competed for a while and then realised that I was not ready to split my time equally between sports and family. I did not want to prioritise biathlon over my child, yet in order to show solid results, it should be exactly like that. Also, training and competitions no longer aroused such interest as before. Therefore, now I do not experience any longing for those,” the Belarusian biathlete shared her thoughts.

Iryna and Artsiom Leshchanka’s daughter is already a year and a half old. The biathlete noticed, “I cannot say that our life has changed a lot. Of course, the birth of the daughter made adjustments to our routine. Travelling became more challenging as it was necessary to plan everything

meticulously. In general, I do not feel global changes yet, they will probably happen as the daughter grows older. It is already great to spend time with Alicia, even when we are alone at home. The first year was quite tough: the child is small, cannot talk, and you spend most of your time practically by yourself. Now that she can already walk, talk and ask for what she wants, it has become more interesting.”

The off-season for biathletes is a hot time that lays the foundation for the upcoming season. Iryna used to spend almost all of this time in training camps. Now, however, she spends the hot months in a different way. “I train for myself anyway. It is clear that the workouts are not as intense as they used to be. In addition, I spend a lot of time with my daughter. Summer is always eventful and short, and it is great that now we manage to travel and meet with friends. Previously, I could not afford this due to constant training camp commitments, I had to postpone lots of activities or reschedule for later. Now I enjoy my time,” the Olympic champion confessed.

When asked about her plans for the future, Iryna responded that she was still considering her options. “Some offers might come up. But first, I need to prepare the daughter for kindergarten, and after that I will think about work. Obviously, I am more inclined to continue in the sports field. Having dedicated my entire adult life to it, it seems to me difficult to switch to some completely different direction. I think sports have always been and will remain a part of my life. I am not tired of biathlon. Fatigue has accumulated precisely because of trips, constantly packed travel bags. I would like to live in more comfortable conditions now, although I cannot say that during my active career they were not comfortable. Nevertheless, when you have a child, you pay attention even to those details that you did not think about before...”

Looking back at her more than 20-year career, Iryna often recalls not even competitions, but the years she spent with the team. She emphasised that it was the communication with her teammates during that period that left the warmest memories. “For sure, there are certain competitions, successful races that come back to mind. But sometimes the moments associated with failures leave a deeper

imprint in the memory — that is how the brain works,” Iryna noted with a laugh. “We still keep in touch with the girls from our team, mostly with Hanna Sola, with other biathletes a bit less. It seems to me that a new composition of the women’s national team is being formed now. The team is getting younger — that is how it should be. I hope to see more girls and talented young people joining the national team, who will gradually replace the experienced staff. I plan to visit our team, Oleg Vladimirovich Ryzhenkov [Head coach of the Belarusian national team — Editor’s note] always invites me to Raubichi [national sports complex for international ski competitions]. It is just that I have retired from big-time sports, but I will continue to maintain contacts and communicate with our guys.”



By Tatiana Pastushenko

Ivan Litvinovich is the winner of the final stage of the Trampoline World Cup in Coimbra, Portugal. The Belarusian athlete performed very well during the whole tournament — he showed the best qualifying result and left no chance for his rivals in the final. The second place was taken by Chinese Weijian Fu, and Frenchman Pierre Gouzou closed the top three in the overall standings. Litvinovich has climbed the podium more than once at the previous stages of the World Cup this season. Thus, he won bronze medals in Baku and Cottbus. The competition in Coimbra was the last test of strength for the athletes before the Paris 2024 Olympics, for which two of Belarusian trampolinists have been selected: Ivan Litvinovich and Vyaleta Bardzilouskaya.

The final stage of the World Cup was unsuccessful for Vyaleta Bardzilouskaya. She did not qualify, and the best result among Belarusian girls was demonstrated

Jump to the podium

Belarusian trampolinists have checked their readiness for the Paris 2024 Olympics at the World Cup in Portugal



Ivan Litvinovich

by Katsiaryna Yarshova, who took sixth place in Coimbra. Another future participant of the Olympic Games in Paris, Russian Anzhela Bladtceva ascended the podium in the women’s competitions — she secured second place at the tournament. Bladtceva has repeatedly shown solid results at the World

Cup stages this season. She became a silver medallist in Baku, and a winner in Arosa, Switzerland.

The Olympics in Paris kick off in less than three weeks, and the results shown by our athletes at the tournaments preceding the Olympic Games confirm their

high readiness for the major competition of the four-year period. Alas, not every Belarusian athlete who has won an Olympic licence is allowed to go to Paris to take part in the high-profile sporting event.

Nearly four dozen Belarusian athletes have qualified for the Olympics in Paris, yet securing a licence does not guarantee their participation in the Games. Despite the fact that all athletes from Belarus and Russia have received a neutral status in order to be able to compete at international competitions, a specially created IOC commission has eliminated in the course of inspections a significant part of those who in a fair contest won their right to perform in Paris. According to the list recently published by the International

Olympic Committee, Belarusian swimmers Ilya Shymanovich, Anastasiya Shkurdaï and Alina Zmushka, as well as taekwondo athlete Georgii Gurtsiev have been admitted to the Olympic competitions. In addition, 14 more athletes have a chance to compete at the Paris Olympics — they plan to contend for awards in trampoline jumping, Greco-Roman wrestling, cycling, rowing, kayaking and canoeing, bullet shooting, weightlifting and tennis.

The Russian team is expected to have even fewer representatives at the Paris Olympics. As sports.ru reports, only 13 athletes have confirmed their participation in the Games so far. More quotas are available, but not all athletes are ready to perform in Paris in a neutral status and without national symbols. Thus, the Russian Wrestling and Judo Federations have refused to send athletes to the Paris Olympics. In this regard, Russians will compete at the Olympics in cycling, canoeing, swimming, trampoline jumping, and tennis.



Photo of the week

The harvesting pace is breaking records. According to experts, the winter barley gross harvest will hit the 1m tonne mark for the first time — twice as much as last year. In the photo: winter barley harvesting at Mayak Vysokoye agricultural complex in Orsha District.

DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



On July 11th, 1974, China's famous *Terracotta Army* was found — the burial site of at least 8,100 life-size terracotta sculptures of Chinese warriors and their horses at the mausoleum of Emperor Qin Shi Huang in Xi'an. The statues of warriors are made in full height and are real works of art. Each terracotta warrior has their own unique features and even facial expressions. The *Terracotta Army* and Qin Shi Huang's tomb complex are designated as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

July 12th, 1561 is the day when Pokrovsky Cathedral, also known as Saint Basil's Cathedral, sitting in Moscow's Red Square, was consecrated. The cathedral consists of eight separate churches that symbolise the days of decisive battles for Kazan. All of them are united by a common base. St. Basil's Cathedral is an object of Russia's cultural heritage, a recognised architectural monument and is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.



On July 12th, 1917, poison gas was used for the first time as a chemical weapon during the First World War. Near the Belgian city of Ypres, Germany used poisonous liquid mustard gas that caused severe skin burns

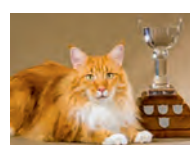


and blisters. It was later named Yperite after the battlefield. In the course of the First World War, chemicals were deployed in huge quantities — 12,000 tonnes of Yperite, which affected about 400,000 people.

On July 12th, 1943, the largest tank battle of the Second World War took place on the Kursk salient. This battle, known as the Battle of Prokhorovka, became part of a grandiose strategic operation — the Battle of Kursk. In one day, Germans lost about 10,000 men and 400 tanks and were forced to go on the defensive. This battle largely determined the victory of the Soviet troops during the Battle of Kursk.



July 13th is International Puzzle Day. This date is timed to coincide with Ernő Rubik's birthday — a Hungarian architect and designer born on July 13th, 1944. He became world famous for his invention, which he created in 1974 and which later became known as Rubik's Cube. This is perhaps the most famous and popular puzzle game in the world.



On July 13th, 1871, the world's first cat show was held in the Crystal Palace in London. It was organised by Harrison Weir, a prominent artist specialising in animal images and a life-long cat enthusiast. Weir developed the exhibition concept and regulations, for the first time defined cat breed standards, and grouped felines into different categories based on colour and fur length. A total of 170 cats of 25 breeds were displayed at the show.

July 13th, 1930 marks the first ever FIFA World Cup, which took place in Uruguay. The men football team of this country won the Olympic Games in 1924 and 1928, after which Uruguay was given the right to host the first World Cup in this spectacular sport. Uruguay's national football team defeated Argentina in the final match by 4–2 to secure the World Cup victory.



On July 14th, 1941, the famous *Katyusha* rocket launcher was used for the first time in combat. Simultaneously 112 rockets were fired at the railway junction of the city of Orsha captured by Nazi troops and destroyed enemy echelons, ammunition, and

the crossing over the Orshitsa River. The BM-13 combat launcher, affectionately nicknamed *Katyusha* by Soviet soldiers, became the first mobile multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) created in the USSR.

On July 16th, 1944, the famous partisan parade took place in liberated Minsk. History had never known such parades.



Not soldiers and officers marched in solemn columns, but Belarusian partisans — tired, thin, emaciated, but infinitely happy people — who fought against the German occupiers. The parade was preceded by a rally dedicated to the liberation of the Byelorussian capital, which, in addition to 30,000 partisans, gathered 50,000 residents of Minsk who survived the occupation.



On July 17th, 1945, the Potsdam Conference kicked off in Potsdam, a suburb of Berlin. It was the last meeting of the Big

Three — leaders of the three largest powers of the anti-Hitler coalition in the Second World War (USSR, USA and Great Britain): Joseph Stalin, Harry Truman and Winston Churchill. The major goal of the conference was to determine the next steps in shaping the post-war structure of Europe.