



What happens  
when the  
economy  
begins to live  
by the laws  
of politics

6



Apple capital  
of Belarus  
is the second  
name of the  
Sharkovshchina  
District

10

INTERNATIONAL

# The Minsk Times

Socio-political Weekly

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A team from Vitebsk — Ilya Ivanov, Denis Susalko and Nikita Kudinov — were the winners of the 100 Ideas for the CIS project in the 'Production Technologies and Industrial Infrastructure' category. They presented a work called 'Gesture Bot' — a control system through the movement of the hand.

## Victory of fresh ideas

Flights of original thought and imagination, shaped into a clear technical justification — young innovators gather every two years at the International 100 Ideas for the CIS Youth Project. At this time, one of the CIS cities becomes the scientific capital. This year, the Armenian city of Kapan welcomed the inventors. The team from our country included ten participants, three of whom brought home awards.

The categories 'Security', 'Environmental Management' and 'Production Technologies and Industrial Infrastructure' were successful for the Belarusians.





# Decisions have been made: time to fulfil them



## About electric vehicles

Aleksandr Lukashenko sets the task of expanding the use of electric transport in Belarus. The Head of State stressed that this is one of the most promising areas. “The global practice shows that the decision to develop and introduce infrastructure for it [electric transport] was right. Virtually all countries are doing it today. It’s also important for us as we don’t have abundant oil resources and have recently launched the Belarusian nuclear power plant,” the President believes.

Alongside purely economic

aspects, the ecological dimension of this problem is also important, and therefore it’s impossible in any case to not create the proper conditions for the functioning of this new sphere, said the Belarusian leader.

About a year ago, it was decided to provide a number of benefits to increase the interest of the population in purchasing light electric vehicles. According to the Government, this practice has paid off.

“Now there is a need to introduce additional incentives,” noted Aleksandr Lukashenko.

## At a meeting with senior officials of the Council of Ministers, the President of Belarus discussed a wide range of issues: from combating the pandemic and fake news, protecting personal information to stimulating the use of electric vehicles

### About the rise in prices and incomes of the population

At the meeting, the Head of State put special emphasis on the task of curbing the rise in prices.

“We are approaching a winter period and in addition to the COVID-19 response, we need to curb the price rise so that people will not have to struggle to survive. This pertains first and foremost to food prices,” specified the President.

He noted that the issue of price increases is very sensitive for the population, “There is a topic, and it is very important and correct, which is often raised by people: the ratio of rising prices and incomes of the population. People don’t care how high prices in supermarkets are if they have enough money in their pockets to buy goods at these prices. This ratio and this balance must be maintained at all costs,” stressed the Head of State.

In his opinion, it is necessary to explain to people more carefully that prices for goods

and services are interconnected with the financial condition of enterprises, on which, in turn, the prosperity of workers depends, “The rise in prices for some goods means the well-being of those workers that produce these goods. If the price for a tractor rises, then the tractor plant and its workers receive more money. But farmers don’t care about the well-being of a tractor plant and its workers. They are always complaining about growing prices for tractors. Or let’s take another topic of the day: rising prices for food. Urban dwellers do not rejoice in rising prices for potatoes or other products and thus additional earnings for farmers or collective farms. Citizens are not interested in this, and people don’t think like that. We need to explain this to people.”

### About fakes

Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke about fake information that appears on the Internet and in some media outlets, “We need to address many issues. These issues will be brought

to us from different sides. Of course, I do not want to enumerate those fakes, but the State Control Committee checked a few things during the night and again in the morning. You would be really astonished by some of things that are reported. They will write that hundreds of people are dying in hospitals, that we do not have enough oxygen, medications, treatment and other things. I can say that 99.8 percent of this information is fake. But everybody should understand that all information is scrutinised.”

In conclusion, the President reminded everyone of his demand for the strict implementation of all management decisions taken, “I want to warn you once again. If we reach an agreement on something and make a decision, you must fulfil it. This is the main thing today. This is the issue of our survival. Otherwise, we will be destroyed. We need to survive and preserve our state.”

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

## The Constitution of our future

Belarus must remain a presidential republic. The new Constitution is not being written for Lukashenko. There will be no dual power in the country. What else was discussed at the meeting of the President with the working group on finalising the draft of the new Constitution.



By Dmitry Kryat, Polina Konoga

At the moment, it’s not only amendments to the Basic Law that are being developed but the Constitution of our common future is being written. President Aleksandr Lukashenko considers the following points to be key,

**“The main thing in the work of this group is to prevent the loss of balance in the system of government. It is important to avoid the overlapping of functions and authorities of key government agencies and to ensure the coherence of their work.”**

*In an interview with reporters, the Head of the Belarus President Administration Igor Sergeyenko said that interaction with the group is already happening on an almost daily basis, and the work is serious and scrupulous. The media asked if there was a deadline for the work. According to Igor Sergeyenko, in general, the revision process will take about a month. Thus, by the end of November to the beginning of December, the draft of the new Constitution should be submitted for national discussion.*

### Expert approach

The table in the Red Hall of the Independence Palace brought together the Head of the Belarus President Administration Igor Sergeyenko, Chairwoman of the Council of the Republic Natalya Kochanova and representatives of both chambers of the Parliament, Deputy State Secretary of the Security Council Aleksandr Rakhmanov, Head of the Council of Ministers Office Konstantin Burak, Deputy Chairperson of the Constitutional Court Natalya Karpovich and judge Olga Sergeyeva, Chairman of the Federation of Trade Unions Mikhail Orda, Presidential Aide Aleksandr Kosinets and Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, Professor Aleksandr Radkov. It is these people at expert level who will carry out the revision of the amendments to Basic Law, continuing the activities begun by the Constitutional Commission. At the beginning of the event, the Head of State recalled that the decision had been made previously, “Not long ago we agreed to hold a meeting of the Constitutional Commission after the working group, whose members are present here, finish — together with me, of course — writing the Constitution. Its final version will be submitted to the Constitutional Commission session and immediately to the referendum.”

In the process of developing amendments to the Basic Law, the idea of raising the status of the Belarusian People’s

Congress is being discussed. The President dwelt on this issue,

**“Special attention should be paid to the new body: the Belarusian People’s Congress. We need to determine its status and competences. We need to do it carefully so as not to disturb the stability of the state machine or allow dual power.”**

According to the Head of State, the working group should work actively and swiftly from the very start. At the suggestion of Aleksandr Lukashenko, the work of the group will be led and overseen by the Belarus President Administration, and the Head of the Administration will promptly manage this process.

### Checks and balances

The Head of State drew attention to widespread fakes from the fugitive opposition. They say the new Constitution of Belarus is being developed under the current President. However, the Belarusian leader debunked this myth. The Head of State added that the current Basic Law establishes a solid system of government headed by the President,

**“Therefore, any other Constitution will be weaker, as they say, more democratic than the current one. Therefore, to reproach me for making the Constitution under the President is complete stupidity. We**

**say that the time has come to make the Constitution in such a way that, if we talk about the division of the functioning of the authorities and administration, so that the powers are to some extent dispersed, but the country remains a presidential republic.”**

In further work, the President strongly recommends paying less attention to the actions and statements of the fugitives, “Whatever we do here, for them — the worse is the better. “We will hear them, whether we want it or not, but if we respond to every this and that coming from people living in Poland or Lithuania and working off the money received from Americans, Germans and others, we will have no time to work and take care of our own people, and we will not be able to address any issue, be it COVID or the sanctions.”

Aleksandr Lukashenko pointed to the high degree of responsibility of people involved in the development of the draft Constitution,

**“You must always remember that any step we take can destroy the country... Let’s propose an option to the Constitutional Commission and then to the people; people of different ages, different beliefs, different professions, so that they understand that this is their Constitution.”**



# Our system is a model for many

Cautious optimism, what's good about Belarusian medicine and what kind of vaccine the President is ready to use. What else the Head of State spoke about during his visit to two hospitals near Minsk.

By Dmitry Umpirovich, Yevgeny Kononovich

Last week, two days of Aleksandr Lukashenko's work schedule were devoted to medical topics. First, the Head of State held a meeting on countering the spread of the coronavirus infection. Later he visited two clinics in Borovlyany: the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Oncology and Medical Radiology named after N. N. Alexandrov and the Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital.

The President visited the red zone, inquired how patients with COVID are treated and assured himself that patients with other problems are not forgotten. Moreover, Aleksandr Lukashenko personally and from the bottom of his heart thanked the doctors for their courageous struggle against the insidious virus,

*"I see that you are facing great difficulties, like everywhere else, probably, but you are coping with them. Therefore, thank you so much... The fact that we will break through is certain, but I would like it faster."*

## Everything according to the plan

The presidential instruction to the Healthcare Ministry not to stop the provision of planned treatments, operations and consultations to patients at a recent meeting sounded clear and unambiguous. During his conversation with doctors, Aleksandr Lukashenko returned to the topic, "Imagine that this is a war and we live in wartime. You can't cut people off from doctors now. If a person is not admitted to the clinic or hospital, they begin to worry.

*Therefore, your meeting with a sick person, a patient or an old woman who has just arrived is already a step towards recovery... How can we postpone oncology? What does planned surgical intervention or consultation mean? This is oncology! It's scarier than any COVID..."*

According to the Director of the Centre, Sergei Polyakov, in the current difficult COVID period, it is the Borovlyany that are ready to take over the provision of all cancer care in the country.

He also added that foreign cancer patients also come to Belarus for treatment. Aleksandr Lukashenko reacted to this remark as follows,

*"The 'Great' West with its human rights agenda is obsessed with money. We cannot even comprehend it sometimes. They charge you for every this and that, they rip you off. We do these surgeries just as well as they do."*

It's impossible to make money on people's health!



**We can be a model and indicator for many countries. This moment is always of interest to our foreign partners, since there is no such system of centralised oncological care abroad.**

Director of the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Oncology and Medical Radiology Sergei Polyakov

The Head of State repeated this message once again when the conversation at the N.N. Alexandrov Republican Scientific and Practical Centre for Oncology and Medical Radiology tackled vaccines, including those against COVID-19, the politicisation of this issue in the world and the desire to make big money from the problem. The President is convinced that healthcare should be an absolutely international domain. He also added,

*"Why are there so many deaths in rich America? Because the healthcare system was destroyed there, healthcare is a market where everyone competes for patients — the richer, the better. Here is the result."*

## The focus of special attention

From the Republican Scientific and Practical Centre of Oncology and Medical Radiology, Aleksandr Lukashenko went to the Minsk Regional Clinical Hospital — one of the leading clinics in the country. The pride of the local doctors is reconstructive surgery, which deals with the extremities. But now, of course, the main focus is on the treatment of patients with coronavirus infection. Aleksandr Lukashenko inquired in detail whether there are enough resuscitation beds, oxygen and ventilators to treat COVID patients.

The head doctor of the clinic, Aleksandr Linkevich, said that 220 beds were allocated in the hospital for patients with coronavirus, 37 of them are intensive care beds. Less than half of the 36 available ventilators are in use.

The presidential route also included the red zone, where patients with COVID-19 are being treated. Today, the clinic has just over 200 such patients, every tenth in a serious condition. Aleksandr Lukashenko spoke warmly to them and wished them a speedy recovery.

## PARALLELS

### The Belarusian way in the fight against coronavirus

During a visit to clinics in Borovlyany, the Head of State drew particular attention to the problems in the fight against the spread of COVID-19 in countries neighbouring Belarus, where the centralised healthcare system has not been preserved. He gave examples,

*"Take Latvia — it is a disaster. It is being ruined. Take our dear Ukraine — you see what is going on there, their healthcare system was destroyed."*

He noted that the system of providing medical care has been preserved in Belarus, and, as time has shown, this was the right decision. Its presence enables the country to overcome the difficulties associated with the pandemic, successfully save and treat people, "We benefit from good management, centralisation, a vertical structure in a good sense of this word, mutual assistance and Soviet-style competition, not this cut-throat approach."

### Optimism in the fight against coronavirus

Talking with doctors, the Head of State noted that the main result of the meeting on the epidemiological situation was a feeling of cautious optimism in the dynamics of the incidence of COVID-19, "There is growth, but not as strong as two weeks ago. We feel this in the country as a whole."

A separate emphasis was placed on vaccination, "It's absolutely clear to us from practice that vaccinated people get sick less often, and if they do, then there isn't usually a crisis. This is a clinically proven fact."

At the same time, Aleksandr Lukashenko drew attention to the fact that Russian President Vladimir Putin was vaccinated with 'Sputnik V' while Joe Biden was vaccinated with Pfizer, "And what about me? We agreed with Dmitry Pinevich [Healthcare Minister] that as soon as the Belarusian vaccine is ready, we will get jabbed. So, please, work on our vaccine. I am ready to get vaccinated, but only with our product, only with the Belarusian vaccine. This is my honest opinion."

## FACTS AND FIGURES



• In 2000, there were 150,000 cancer patients in Belarus. By 2021, their number had doubled, while the number of cancer survivors who have been receiving follow-up care for more than five years tripled over this period.

• The death rate during the first year after cancer was diagnosed halved (down to 42 percent) and remains at this level, which suggests a decrease in the number of advanced cancer cases.



• Disease and mortality are successfully combated through early detection of oncological diseases.



• New technologies and approaches are being introduced, so the survival rate has increased significantly. For example, mortality from bladder cancer has more than halved and Belarus is now in the top three regarding this indicator, along with Finland and the Republic of Korea.

• Since the beginning of the year, the Centre has performed 11,000 operations. For example, 66 surgeries were planned for last Wednesday alone.



• Providing assistance to foreign cancer patients is a fairly popular area.





# Don't spit into the well, it may prove useful

## How anti-Belarusian attacks hit the Ukrainian economy

By Yevgeny Kononovich

**Ukraine is officially preparing to import electricity from Belarus. The publication of the final results of the auction for access to the section of the power transmission line between Ukraine and Belarus is scheduled for October 29th, according to the Ukrainian newspaper *Ekonomicheskaya Pravda* (Economic Truth). That is, from November 1st, electricity purchases from Belarus can be resumed.**

### Shot in the eye

Everything is great with this news. Let's leave aside the fact that it is beneficial for us, and Ukrainian consumers won't be left behind either. More important in this case is that the harsh autumn reality reminded the Kiev politicians of the equally harsh lesson of folk wisdom: do not spit in the well, it might be useful to drink water.

Not so long ago, to please its masters in the EU and the United States, Ukraine cheerfully re-

ported supporting any sanctions and restrictions against Belarus, up to the ban on the import of electricity from our country. Our 'fugitives' also didn't fail to add fuel to the fire. Certain political scientists, journalists, IT specialists and other 'zmagary' [protesters] who found refuge in Ukraine, urged this country with whoops and screams to join the sanctions against Belarus (so the Ukrainian brothers have them to thank for such a shot in the eye). With the onset of the first cold weather and an unprecedented increase in gas tariffs in Europe, hypocritical Ukrainian politicians rushed to beg for 'brotherly electricity', forgetting about their pride.

It is, of course, understandable. When an energy crisis is knocking at the door, playing politics is more expensive.

***Ukraine met the heating season with an unprecedented shortage of gas and coal. Add to this the deterioration of the energy system, which no one thought about modernising in the heat of the constant political fight in Kiev.***

Academician of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Volodymyr Semy-

nozhenko, recently announced the seriousness of the situation, "Our thermal stations, built 50 years ago, are almost worn out. Nuclear power is also in poor condition. And what about regional energy systems? After all, it was a huge crime, not only economic, but also political, when they were handed over to private hands."

### When there is no agreement among comrades

According to the leader of the Ukrainian *Batkivshchyna* party, Yulia Tymoshenko, the energy crisis in Ukraine is deepening not only due to the incompetence of the authorities, but also due to corruption machinations with the resale of Ukrainian gas,

"We know that the prime cost of Ukrainian gas is 1 Hryvnia, it is sold to people for 7 and to the public sector for 13. Intermediaries have flooded the system and corruption has reached its climax in the resale of natural gas today. For the industry, the price reaches 50 Hryvnia per cubic metre, so in literally a month we'll receive prices for food and basic necessities that won't be

available to people. Inflation will reach its highest levels."

Against this background, the position of Lithuania looks nothing but a mockery of its comrades in misfortune, which insistently urged Ukraine not to take electricity from the Belarusian nuclear power plant, but itself sharply increased its consumption in October.

"Although according to the documents, these deliveries are registered as imports through Latvia, actually, electricity comes to Lithuania from Belarus," reports the Internet newspaper *Strana.ua* with reference to the telegram channel of the deputy of the Ukrainian party 'Servants of the People', Andriy Gerus.

As you can see, our neighbours have no concept of allied principles, and indeed of honour and morality. In words, one thing, in fact, surreptitiously, quite another.

In general, the Ukrainian authorities will have to swallow their pride to warm their citizens, including at the expense of Belarusian energy.

***During the years of independence, the Ukrainian political elite has managed to send almost***

***all sectors of the economy backwards. Even agriculture is feeling the consequences of the Maidans.***

For example, the poultry industry has remained unprofitable for two years now. Against the background of the high cost of grain, enterprises either sharply reduce the number of poultry, or close, stated Sergey Karpenko, Executive Director of the Union of Poultry Breeders of Ukraine Association. As a result, Ukraine has had to import eggs from Belarus for the first time in 30 years of independence.

With such a policy, the Ukrainian authorities cannot expect anything good. Unsurprisingly, Zelensky's rating fell below 25 percent in a poll by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology. Meanwhile, the ruling party Servant of the People in the rating of the popularity of political forces in the country dropped to second place, yielding the leadership to the party of ex-president Petro Poroshenko — European Solidarity.

Such a political swing, perhaps, is a fun activity for the moneybags-oligarchs, but the trouble is that they hit the common people very painfully.

# Frost is no obstacle for sanctions

The war between Lithuania and Poland with BelNPP ended with the purchase of wood waste from Minsk

The struggle for independence from Russian gas ended, for most of the countries of Eastern Europe, not only with losses but also with an almost hopeless situation in the energy sector. This became especially noticeable in autumn 2021, when gas prices on the spot markets in Europe began to break records.

In the UK, the bankruptcy of energy companies has become almost widespread. Since the beginning of September, more than ten such corporations have already announced their withdrawal from the market. The country with the strongest economy in Europe also has problems: Germany's largest energy concern E.ON announced that it no longer concludes contracts with end consumers for gas supplies due to rising gas prices.

Naturally, in such a situation, no one is going to solve the problems of the EU 'periphery'. At the same time, countries that have refused long-term contracts with Gazprom are in a particularly difficult situation. The current crisis threatens not only power outages, but also the disruption of the heating season.

Lithuania and Poland have found a non-standard way out of this situation, starting to buy wood pellets from Belarus. It turns out that atomic energy cannot be purchased from there, but wood waste can.

The press service of the Belarusian Universal Commodity Exchange (BUCE) reported that in 2021 the largest export auctions for pellets were held. During this session, six deals — worth about 1.2m Euros — were concluded.



The main buyers were Lithuania, Poland and Denmark.

The scheme has been operating since spring 2020. According to the statements of the BUCE press service, last year, in the course of export exchange trading, sawn timber and wood chips were sold for a total amount of 16.4m Euros. Then, more than half of all lots were bought by Lithuania and Estonia. Until now, however, deals have been sporadic and sales have been low.

In autumn 2021, because of record gas prices, the demand for wood pellets has increased significantly. In just nine months of this year, sales exceeded the number of exported materials in 2020. Moreover, this year Lithuania and Poland purchased most of the Belarusian wood waste.

Nevertheless, Lithuania and Poland actively promoted the idea of introducing new anti-Belarusian sanctions. These restrictive measures could also affect the country's woodworking industry. At the moment,

**The energy crisis has forced the countries of the EU 'periphery' to increase purchases of wood waste in Belarus, despite the imposed sanctions against this country and the demonstrative refusal to supply energy from the BelNPP, writes Baltnews**

the trade in wood fuel is not subject to sanctions, but the Belarusian authorities independently imposed export customs duties on timber and wood products. According to the decree of the President of Belarus, Aleksandr Lukashenko, this is necessary to prevent a shortage of timber and wood products. But Polish and Lithuanian companies are not even stopped by the duties.

The Polish authorities are also in a very difficult position. Gas prices hit record highs just as the European Court of Justice imposed a daily fine of 500,000 Euros, virtually banning coal mining at the Turów mine. Also, Poland is not going to renew the contract with Gazprom for the supply of Russian gas, which is valid until December 31st, 2022.

That is why today, the Eastern European country uses any opportunities, especially when it comes to alternative energy sources. Stanislav Stremidlovsky, a political scientist and expert on Poland, told Baltnews that bad political relations have almost never prevented business from establishing business contacts with a country.

"Currently, the prices for electricity and gas are growing rapidly, even gasoline has become more expensive. Poland is facing a very difficult winter," notes Stanislav Stremidlovsky. That's why Polish companies buy Belarusian pellets, despite the sanctions against Belarus. "They just have nowhere to go," concluded the expert.

Based on materials of [belta.by](http://belta.by)



# A matter of good technique

## Production growth up by 70 percent and new sales markets: Amkodor presents samples of equipment and reveals its export strategy

By Ilya Kryzhevich

### Boundless opportunities

During the presentation, Presidential Aide Valery Belsky noted that the new equipment will undoubtedly take its rightful place in the global forestry market.

“Today Amkodor competes with leading manufacturers, despite all the difficulties associated with the introduction of sanctions. The team rallied, the management set tasks and after a very short time, imported products were replaced by their own manufactured ones. The growth rate of 1.8-fold against the background of the sanctions measures is an outstanding result. Today, most of the enterprises of our industrial complex have similar outcomes. This is evidence of the character of the Belarusian people, our opportunities, which are actually boundless,” said Valery Belsky.

Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Subbotin told reporters that the sanctions affected the operation of the enterprise, but the company managed to significantly restructure its business processes to fit the new realities, “We had to radically rebuild the business, as well as the scheme for launching components and sales. We see that the company has successfully coped with this, they began to make parts as good as those that were purchased. Some things had to be mastered from scratch, some were taken from our neighbours. We note that the enterprise has a close fusion of science and production, with



**Last week, the Amkodor Holding presented new models of forestry equipment and the element base of its own production. These include the Amkodor FF1461 forwarder with 6x6 wheel arrangement, equipped with a prototype manipulator, as well as a universal timber semi-trailer with a load capacity of 10 tonnes.**

one smoothly flowing into the other, thus generating a good result. The machines shown here are direct evidence of this.”

According to Mr. Subbotin, the country has always wanted to produce more of its products and promote it on international markets, “This barrier once again contributed to the self-development of our industry. The foreign trade balance exceeded \$2bn. This is also proof that we began to behave a little differently, to sell in a different way — somewhat more aggressive, more wisely. We changed and became slightly better.”

### Production volumes are increasing

Speaking about the company’s supplies to foreign markets, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Amkodor Holding, Aleksandr Shakutin, regretted that, due to the sanctions imposed against us, the company cannot supply its products to the EU, “Although our relations developed very quickly and rapidly — we planned to supply up to 400 units



During the event, guests could appreciate the Amkodor equipment

of equipment per year, mainly forestry machines. Unfortunately, since last year we were forced to diversify sales markets in a short time, look for new partners and new countries. Many have already opened their doors for us: these are the countries of the African continent and Asian states. Regions of Russia began to treat us even more warmly when

our products practically equated those of their own production. Accordingly, we have increased the volume of supplies in all these areas.”

Aleksandr Shakutin also stressed that the holding plans to increase production in 2021, “We are going with a growth rate of 170 percent. In the first half of the year, there were some problems with the supply of components for forest machines which held back the production of equipment. Now we have mastered many components ourselves, put them into production and found new partners. I think we will increase production.

*We will finish the year with a growth rate of more than 180 percent. We sell everything that we manufacture. There is already a queue for separate vehicles, such as forestry equipment and prepayment has been made several months in advance.”*

The enterprise is currently carrying out large-scale work to create import-substituting machines, mechanisms, units, parts and assemblies. The company managed to

create machines, which include more than 70 percent of the element base of its own production. During the event, guests could appreciate the new generation universal loaders with a capacity of 2 to 5 tonnes. Moreover, the Amkodor Holding demonstrated a wide range of components and assemblies of machines created to replace foreign analogues.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Belarus and Russia approve military co-operation plan for 2022



The plan aimed at strengthening Union State security envisages 139 events. The details were provided by Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, summing up the results of the joint board meeting of the Defence Ministries of Russia and Belarus, TASS reports.

The Head of the Russian Defence Ministry noted that the decisions made at the meeting ‘are aimed at developing interaction between defence departments while also contributing to strengthening the military security of the Union State’. The Minister noted, “Priority attention is paid to the regional grouping of troops of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation, as well as the development of joint military systems.”

Sergei Shoigu called operational and combat training an important area of collaboration between the two states.

### In 2020, Minsk was visited by 27,300 tourists from 91 countries

On average, foreigners stayed in Minsk for seven days. This information is published on the website of the Main Statistical Office of the Belarusian capital.

The list of countries — leaders in the number of citizens who arrived in Minsk



as organised tourists is topped by Russia (21,302 people), followed by Turkey (787), Iraq (650), Latvia (438), Lithuania (426), Switzerland (363), Ukraine (342), UAE (209), Germany (175) and Estonia (164).

At the same time, Minsk residents also travelled around Belarus in 2020. In total, 67,000 people used the services of Minsk tourist organisations for these purposes, including 37,200 Minskers.

186,500 residents of the capital, who visited 98 countries, left Belarus as part of organised tourist trips. For recreation abroad, Minskers chose Egypt, Turkey, Russia, Montenegro, Tunisia and others.

### Animated film, entitled 263 Nights, of Belarusfilm Studio recognised ‘Best Documentary Short Film’ at 7th Moscow Jewish Film Festival

“263 Nights (produced by Belarusfilm Studio) is an international project by Belarus, Russia and Israel, based on the real history of a group of 26 Jews. This is the story of people who escaped through a basement and a woman who, in an incredible way, escaped death twice.



It seemed that the Minsk ghetto was completely destroyed, but people continued to live on the site. On Sukhaya Street, underground, they spent 263 days and nights in rat-infested darkness — until the liberation of Minsk.

The director of the cartoon is Irina Tarasova, the scriptwriter is Konstantin Andryushechkin, the production designer is Anna Yemlyanova. The cartoon is based on the literary work of Boris Gersten.

### IAEA Operational Safety Review Team (Pre-OSART) mission visits Belarusian nuclear power plant (BelNPP)

This was reported by the Energy Ministry’s press service.

The visit of experts to the plant takes place within the framework of the technical co-operation project, entitled *Enhancing the Operational Safety of the Nuclear Power Plant during Commissioning and Operation*. The mission included experts from Great Britain, France, Belgium, Russia, Armenia and Ukraine. They will assess the progress in implementing the recommendations and proposals developed in 2019 in the process of considering the



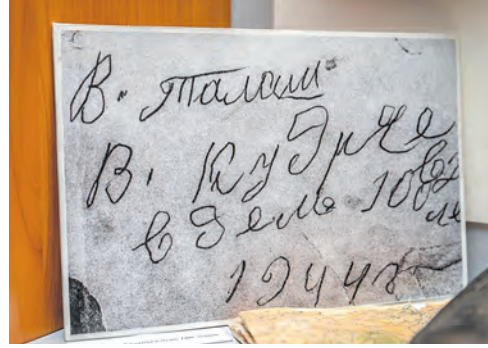
operational safety of the first power unit of the BelNPP.

The IAEA Pre-OSART mission is carried out for nuclear power plants under construction and commissioned before nuclear fuel is loaded.

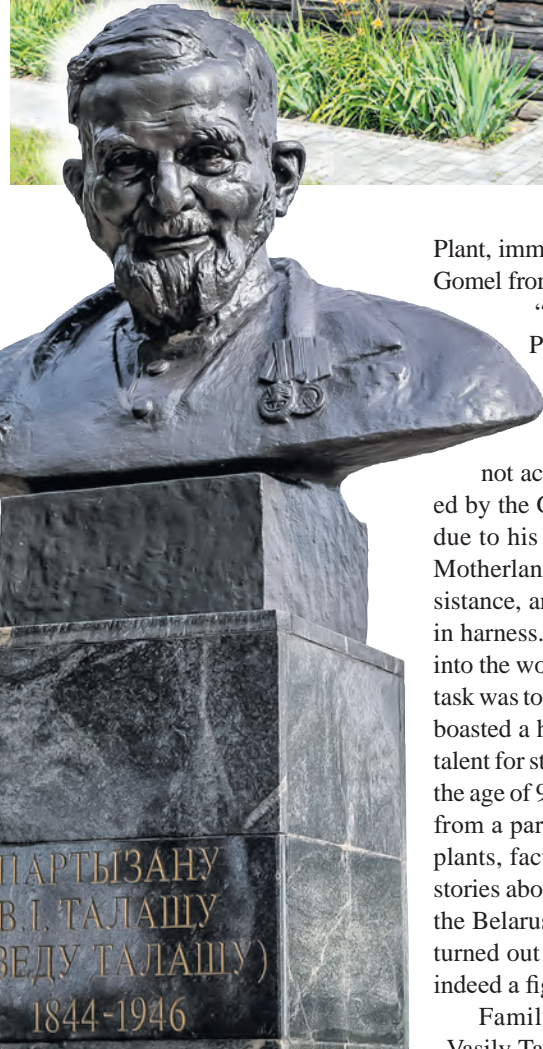


# Choosing to fight

How Ded Talash became the most famous Belarusian partisan



In the centre of Petrikov, a legendary bearded partisan looks menacingly at the visitors of the town square. This is a monument created by the famous Soviet sculptor, Zair Azgur. In the history of our country, in military terms, there were partisans who were much more significant than the Polesie peasant: Vasily Korzh, Batka Minai, Yemelyan Barykin, but it was Ded (Grandfather) Talash who — with the light hand of Yakub Kolas — acquired all-Union fame and love. The personality of this ‘poleshuk’ is, of course, extraordinary. There is even an anecdote about Talash, which they say he invented himself.



By Stanislav Galkovsky

## The land was scarce

Two huts in the village of Novoselki, in the Petrikov District, represent the museum of Ded Talash. The new spacious hut is original while a more unusual-looking option is a new building. More precisely, a copy of a house from the second half of the 19th century (the real building was burned down by the Polish invaders). It was in such a ‘mansion’ that Vasily Talash moved into when he joined the house of his wife, says the senior researcher of the museum, Nadezhda Muratshina, “Our hero was born in the village of Belka, now it is part of Petrikov. His father was married twice and there was very little land. Therefore, Vasily was favourably married to a girl with a dowry. What did he do? He fished, worked on the land, raised children, having two sons and three daughters. He was leading the life of an ordinary Polesie peasant.”

The turning point was 1919, when during WWI, and then the Civil War, these lands were occupied by Polish units.

This year marks the 177th anniversary since the birth of Ded Talash, who lived for almost 102 years! Just imagine, he is older than Chekhov, Gorky and Lenin! He was born 17 years before the abolition of serfdom! At the time of the events immortalised in *Drygva* [The Quagmire by Yakub Kolas], Vasily Talash was 75 years old! It seemed his life had been lived, but it was not so!

## He could not stand the Poles

At the end of the 19th and early 20th century, the land issue was acute in the Russian Empire. Only after the 1917 Revolution did the peasants have the opportunity to get real land allotments. These steps by the Bolsheviks were well received by the rural poor, therefore, the local peasants perceived negatively the appearance of the Polish authorities in Polesie enforce-

ing the previous land policy. Most of them sided with the power of the people and the Red Army during the Soviet-Polish war.

In 1919, a detachment of the Red Guards was quartered in Novoselki. The commander settled in Vasily’s house — a respected villager. They developed friendly relations. Talash — as an experienced tracker and fisherman — served as a scout. The information was transmitted to Petrikov, where a large contingent of the Red Army was based.

When the Poles arrived, Vasily did not go down well with them right away. They wanted to requisition hay, he defended it with a pitchfork and an axe. To spite Ded Talash, the haystack was simply burned. As a result, the 75-year-old peasant went into the woods, where he organised a partisan detachment of 300 people (there were many dissatisfied people) from his fellow countrymen and began to take revenge on the invaders. In general, they beat the enemy as best they could.

**The episode when Ded Talash scattered the Polish crew, became a textbook event. Józef Pilsudski himself (as popular rumour assures us) ordered his sailors to expand the area of operation of the river flotilla in Pripyat. And then they faced Belarusian partisans. Our hero single-handedly scattered the Polish river patrol and beat them with a rifle butt, taking ammunition and weapons.**

According to Yakub Kolas, there were three enemies, but Talash insisted that there were five. The fact of this operation is indirectly confirmed by the captured Polish bandolier, which is kept in the family of the legendary partisan’s great-grandson.



After the advance of the Red Army to the west, Vasily went to serve in the reconnaissance of the 417th Infantry Regiment; he was even given uniforms (boots instead of bast shoes, and his pants were almost generals — with stripes). However, the aged soldier was quickly discharged for health reasons, as he came through typhus.

After the war, he became

Chairman of the Novoselki Rural Council and a delegate to the 8th Congress of Soviets of the Polesie Region.

Subsequently, it has become known from archival documents that Talash repeatedly appealed to the new government with a request to award himself the Order of the Red Banner. He was a consistent person: he served the Fatherland, so should be given a reward. If not himself, who will ask for him? And he achieved not only an order, but also a personal pension, a new house (the old one was burned by the Poles) and a respectful attitude. He did not even join the collective farm, being a self-serving person, with his allotment, cow and opinions. The peasant really wanted to have his own piece of land, and he got it.

## There is a people’s war

In the collection of Talash’s great-great-grandson, Valery Drigo, there are many interesting things from his famous ancestor, for example, a rare razor (possibly presented to him by Yakub Kolas), although Vasily Talash himself never shaved his beard. The list of values includes the seal of the Revolutionary Military Council, issued in 1918 to the division (on the eve of the Soviet-Polish war), the famous astrakhan hat from the portraits of a partisan, a Polish leather bandolier — a trophy taken from sailors, a box of matches from 1943. The latter exhibit was produced at the Novobelitsk Plywood and Match

Plant, immediately after the liberation of Gomel from the Nazi invaders.

“At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, he was in his 97th year. It seemed obvious he could no longer be a partisan. But Vasily Talash did not accept this. He was even arrested by the Germans, but he was released due to his advanced age. However, the Motherland needed the symbols of Resistance, and the old partisan went back in harness. He faked his death and went into the woods,” says Valery Drigo. “His task was to agitate among the recruits. He boasted a huge life experience and a big talent for storytelling. In January 1943, at the age of 99, Talash was sent to Moscow from a partisan airfield. Here he visited plants, factories and military units with stories about the military heroic deeds of the Belarusian partisans. In addition, he turned out to be the oldest partisan, and indeed a fighter in the USSR.”

Family history is connected with Vasily Talash’s trip to Moscow, which has already become a popular anecdote. After speaking at the enterprise, the veteran of the partisan movement was dropped off near the hotel. He decided to take a walk around the capital. When asked if he would get lost, he dismissed the idea, saying that he didn’t get lost in the Polesie woods, and wouldn’t here.

**Of course, it was winter and snowy. All the buildings looked the same, and the grey-haired ranger got lost. How was he to find a hotel whose name he had forgotten? Natural ingenuity and life experience helped. He asked passers-by where the partisan Talash was staying, about whom they’d wrote in the newspapers, adding that he wanted to meet with him. The Muscovites showed the right hotel.**

The great-great-grandfather was smart and strong, he enjoyed telling tales and fishing, Valery Drigo shares his family legends, “He probably lived for almost 102 years because he ate correctly: fish, cereals, vegetables, fruits. He enjoyed pears very much. A couple of these trees have even survived near the house in Novoselki. However, it was the pears that killed him. He overate unripe fruits which his body could not manage. As they said then, he died of volvulus, the doctors didn’t have time to save him. Nevertheless, he lived his life — May God grant such a life to everyone — he loved his native land very much and defended it from enemies and bequeathed it to us.”





# Temple where God lives

For three decades, the Memorial Church in Honour of All Saints and in Memory of Innocent Victims of Our Fatherland has become not only a place of repentance for believers, but also a truly national shrine

By Marina Kuzmich

This church is the same age as our young state. The temple was conceived as a symbol of a nation that honours the memory of their heroes and does not repeat the mistakes of the past. It was erected with the blessing of His Holiness Alexy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, under the patronage of the Belarusian Head of State, Aleksandr Lukashenko, the now-deceased Metropolitan Filaret, the now Honorary Patriarchal Exarch. Today, the memorial temple is a great support for those seeking the



Vitaly Pivovarchik

deepest meanings of being, a living connection between times and generations.

The white-stone church with golden domes amazes with its grandeur from a distance. Built on a hill in the form of a tent, it creates an impression of both solidity and lightness. It is impressive with its decoration and if you get to know it better, it will reveal itself to be a large-scale complex of historical memory and a spiritual symbol of the Belarusian state.

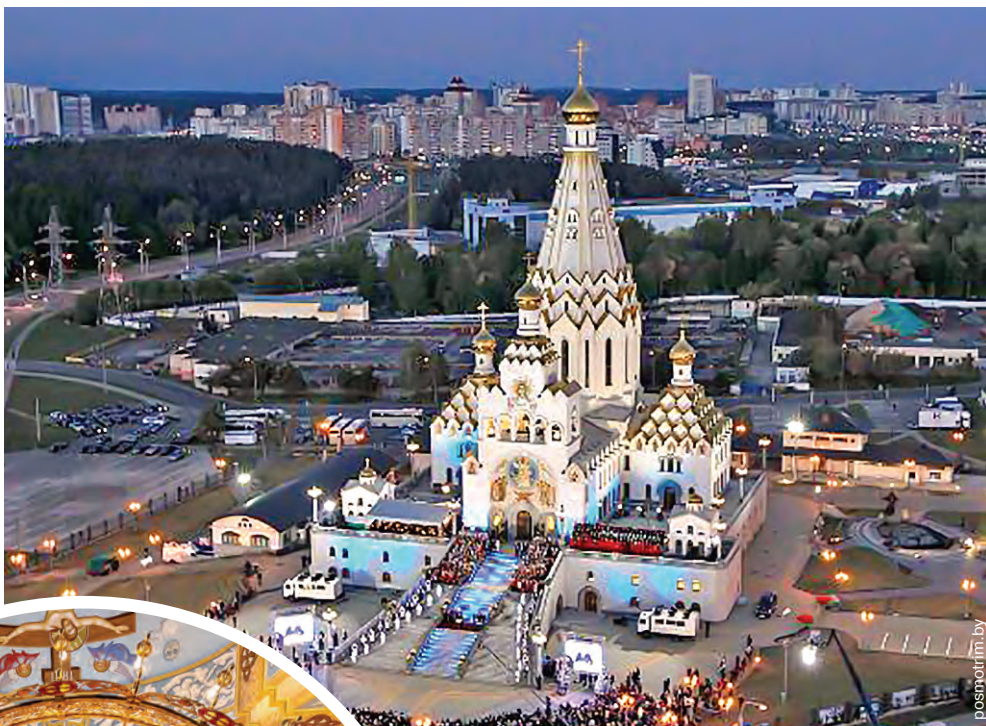
The Rector of the All Saints Church, Fyodor Povny, accepting the congratulations, confesses that it's hard to believe in the number, "Three decades have flown by in an instant!"

The history of the All Saints parish began with the consecration of the foundation stone of the Memorial Church in honour of All Saints in June 1991. During this time, many events from the chronicle of the parish have become part of the newest biography of modern Belarus. One of these is the solemn burial of sarcophagi with the remains of three unknown warriors — soldiers of the Patriotic War of 1812, the First World War and the Great Patriotic War — in the crypt of the memorial church. Then, on the eve of Independence Day — on July 2nd, 2010 — in memory of the millions of defenders of their native land, Head of State Aleksandr Lukashenko and Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk lit the Unquenchable Lamp with Holy Fire, delivered from Jerusalem from the Holy Sepulchre.

Today it is the largest unquenchable lamp in the country. Anyone can see this symbol of incessant prayer and eternal memory. We go down to the crypt where the lofty idea of the entire memorial temple is revealed.

An everlasting light on a high stand in the centre of the hall is the heart of the crypt. It's here that people of different faiths come to offer prayers. Orthodox and Catholic believers, Jews and Muslims — everyone can light a candle from the lamp and pray for one's own ancestors to the best of one's own faith and spiritual experience.

From the foot of the lamp, it's as if streams of primordial matter rush upward. The large ball symbolises disembodied spiritual forces. The green crystal bowl changes colour due to special illumination. And even its framing carries meaning. The vine is a sign of the image of Christ. The



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branches are believing Christians, bunches of grapes symbolise communion and life in Christ. The top of the bowl is made in the form of tongues of flame. Beneath it, the Holy Fire glimmers.

In the centre of the crypt is the icon of the Resurrection of Christ. Below are small arks with particles of the relics of saints: John the Baptist, Saint Luke, Sergius of Radonezh and Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya.



Fyodor Povny

*The memory of the victims of military events and peacetime tragedies is kept here. Within the walls of the crypt, there are memorial capsules with earth from the places of battles, the graves of compatriots who gave their lives on the battlefields. However, there is no feeling of mourning. On the contrary, unearthly beauty and solemnity are maintained everywhere.*

Niches are located on both sides of the crypt. There are 504 of them. Today more than 220 are filled. Each of them is a symbol of the memory of innocent victims and real heroes. In the small windows of the onyx niches they appear as if they were alive... Veterans of the Great Patriotic War and their descendants come here to honour their memory.

They pray for the repose of the soul of the Soviet ace tank driver, Zinovy Kolobanov. On August 20th, 1941, during the Kingisepp-Luga defensive operation, the crew of his KV-1 tank in one battle near the strategic transport hub Voiskovitsy-Krasnogvardeisk knocked out 22 enemy tanks in the convoy from an ambush. The earth from the place of this battle is in one of the niches of the crypt.

The memory of the Hero of the Soviet Union, Feodosy Smolyachkov, is also honoured. This native of the Bykhov District of the Mogilev Region went to the front as a young boy. He defended Leningrad. He is considered to be one of the best snipers of the Great Patriotic War. Of the 126 sniper bullets given to him to destroy enemies, 125 hit right on target. The earth from his grave was brought from St. Petersburg to the crypt.

There is also a capsule with earth brought from the Verkhnedvinsk District of the Vitebsk Region. According to the plans of the Nazis, 40 square kilometres of the region's territory was to be wiped off the face of the earth along with the people. Eight decades have passed, and the population in this area is only half restored. How many such corners are there, incinerated by the Nazis throughout the country... Ozarichi concentration camp, Krasny Bereg, Semkovo, Khatyn, Ola... In every window of the memorial wall there are millions of deaths and mutilated lives. Here a person understands that war is not a dry paragraph from a history textbook. This is a huge amount of lives given up. Here they are, these lives...

The urn with the remains of prisoners of the Trostenets concentration camp was presented at the Nuremberg trials in November 1945 as one of the proofs of the atrocities of fascism. From 1944 to 2016, it was kept in the Museum of the History of the Great Patriotic War. Later it was transferred to the memorial temple. This is how symbolically six thousand people — burned by Nazi occupiers — found peace.

During the tour, the abbot leads us through the halls of the memory museum — located next to the crypt, describing the exhibits and showing dioramas depicting war scenes from different times. Considering them, one cannot but think about what spirituality and patriotism are and why these concepts are so closely intertwined in the museum of the memorial church.

In All Saints Church, everything is in live contact not only with the history of the country, but also with the Belarusians themselves. One of the niches — it was the first to be filled — contains part of the inner skin of the Kursk nuclear submarine, which sank in 2000. Three of the 118 crew members were Belarusians. Every year, submariners who now live in Belarus meet in the crypt during the litiya, when a prayer is read.



The tragedies of peacetime are remembered by the bas-reliefs dedicated to the memory of those killed in the war in Afghanistan, the liquidators of the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, the tragedy on Nemiga in May 1999 and the explosion at the Oktyabrskaya metro station in April 2011.

*In the crypt and the museum of memory we see an example of heroes and their feats, while saints look at us from icons in the main temple space. These are not only the ancient ascetics of Egyptian deserts and monasteries, but also compatriots who fought for the faith and served God. 74 Belarusian saints are depicted on the icons of the local row of the iconostasis, on the walls, columns and vault of the temple.*

The main temple space unfolds in the form of a 54m tent. Its height indicates that prayers for the souls of soldiers who fell on the battlefield, whose ashes are symbolically buried in the crypt under this main altar, are heard in heaven. From there they bless us and pray for we who are living today.





# Tiny wrists in cuffs

An Associated Press investigation into police use of force against children has found kids as young as six have been treated harshly by officers

In an analysis of 3,000 instances of police use of force against children, the AP found Black children made up more than 50 percent of those who were handled forcibly, though they're only 15 percent of the US child population. They and other minority kids are often perceived by police as being older than they are. The most common types of force were takedowns, strikes and muscling, followed by firearms pointed at or used on children. Less often, children faced other tactics, like the use of pepper spray or police K-9s.

In Minneapolis, officers pinned children with their bodyweight at least 190

times. In Indianapolis, more than 160 kids were handcuffed; in Wichita, Kansas, police officers drew or used their Tasers on kids at least 45 times. Most children in the dataset are teenagers, but the data included dozens of cases of children ages 10 or younger who were also subject to police force.

Police reports obtained for a sample of incidents show that some kids who were stunned or restrained were armed; others were undergoing mental health crises and were at risk of harming themselves. Still other reports showed police force escalating after kids fled from police questioning.

"Adolescents are just so fundamentally different in so many respects, and the techniques that officers are accustomed to using ... it just doesn't lend itself to the interaction going well with youth," said Dylan Jackson, a criminologist at Johns Hopkins University, who is working with the Baltimore Police Department on juvenile encounters. "I think that when officers understand the basic core components of development and youth development — their social, emotional, physical, psychological development — it can really help them understand why they might need to take a different approach," he added.

# Belgium seeks to relax EU sanctions on Belarus

**Belgium is trying to water down European Union sanctions on Belarus' potash industry, in a bid to ease difficulties companies within the bloc face in implementing the measures**

Diplomats in Brussels have written to other EU member states, requesting a loosening of restrictions on Belarusian potash to allow for changes to the potassium content of fertiliser imports, according to a letter seen by Bloomberg News.

In the letter, the diplomats argue that sanctions imposed on Belarus potash producer Belaruskali JSC earlier this year have caused an 'implementation problem' for EU companies and the 'potash sector should not be singled out'.

According to the letter, a large Belgian company that supplies water to cities is facing customs issues because the grade of potash it was importing was at times higher than is allowed by the EU under the sanctions. Other firms are also facing similar problems, the document shows, and could lose out if Belarus seeks buyers elsewhere.

A separate document shows that more than one EU member state is backing the request to amend potassium levels in Belarusian potash.

Belgium is proposing the EU allows for a deviation of as much as 2 percent from currently permitted levels of potassium. The letter notes that if European companies are forced to source potash supply from elsewhere, it would lead to price spikes and lower-quality potash.



# Queen turns down the award

**The 95-year-old Queen has 'politely but firmly' turned down an award for *Oldie of the Year*, declaring she doesn't meet the criteria**

*Oldie of the Year* is handed out annually by *Oldie* magazine to recognise the contributions of older people. However, when the Queen was asked if she'd accept that award this year, her assistant private secretary wrote back, "Her Majesty believes you are as old as you feel, as such the Queen does not believe she meets the relevant criteria to be able to accept and hopes you will find a more worthy recipient."

Ultimately, the award went to 90-year-old actor and dancer Leslie Caron, and the Duchess of Cornwall was at the ceremony where it was presented. Awards chair Gyles Brandreth described the letter from the Queen as 'lovely', adding, "Perhaps in the future we will sound out Her Majesty once more."

Queen Elizabeth earlier this year celebrated her 95th birthday amid what she described as a 'period of great sadness' following the death of her husband, Prince Philip. Philip was once named *Consort of the Year* by *Oldie* magazine in 2011, and he joked at the time, "There is nothing like it for morale, to be reminded that the years are passing — ever more quickly — and that bits are beginning to drop off the ancient frame. But it is nice to be remembered at all."

Previous award recipients have included a range of people from Oscar winners to Nobel laureates, from community care nurses to veteran athletes, from Sir John Major to Dame Olivia de Havilland and David Hockney.

# Olympic flame arrives in China

Greece handed over the Olympic flame to organisers of the 2022 Beijing Winter Games, a day after the lighting ceremony was disrupted by activists calling for the event to be postponed

Hellenic Olympic Committee Chief Spyros Capralos gave the Olympic torch to the Vice-President of Beijing 2022 and Vice-President of the Chinese Olympic Committee Yu Zaiqing at the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, where the ancient Games were revived in 1896.

"The Olympic flame will travel to the Great Wall and across other parts of China, bringing with it the light of peace and friendship," Yu said. He noted that China vowed to deliver "a streamlined, safe and splendid Games".

Around 2,900 athletes, representing approximately 85 National Olympic Committees, will compete in the Winter Games between February 4th and 20th, 2022.

Actresses dressed as ancient Greek priestesses had earlier lit a cauldron with the Olympic flame, after China's Turin 2006 and Vancouver 2010 freestyle ski silver medallist Li Nina ran a lap with the torch in the second-century AD stadium.

The ceremony was held without spectators, with mainly officials and media in attendance.

"The pandemic may have prevented us from holding the Olympic flame ceremony in the presence of people, but I am sure that the successful and safe organisation of the Games will be another victory of humanity against the coronavirus," Mr. Capralos said.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies



Concept and photo-script, detailed snapshot drawing and 3D visualisation: let's look at how modern Belarusian cartoons are created

**We grew up together with the characters from our favourite cartoons and had no idea of how these fictional friends come to life on the screen and what a great job is done to create them. It's a true art to be able to immerse viewers into a film, to capture their hearts. This is exactly what a large team of experienced and creative specialists of Belarusfilm are engaged in; among them are screenwriters, animation artists and many others.**



Yelena Turova

# Magical animation in action



Shots from *The Stars of the Seventh Heaven* animated film

By Inna Gorbatenko

## Live images and 3D worlds

Specialists are now working on a full-length animated film: *The Song of Sirin*. It's quite a complex format and, in the history of Belarusian animation, there is so far only one example of such a picture: *The Stars of the Seventh Heaven*. The latter was premiered this spring to many positive reviews.

Director of feature and animation films, Yelena Turova, has worked at Belarusfilm for 30 years and eagerly tells us about the new project, "The work is long-lasting; it will take four years. We'll collaborate with a studio that works with the 3D technology. This is a kind of experiment for us, because we have not yet shot full-length 3D animated films."

The preparatory stage will take about a year. Over this time, the team need to work out the characters, prepare snapshot drawings, animation and style sketches... In a word, much work lies ahead.

Creating an animated film, like any work of art, begins with an idea. Then a synopsis (animators use this word for a short linear presentation of the film script) is developed, the target audience and timing are outlined...

"Sometimes a well-known fairy-tale or legend is taken as a basis," Ms. Turova explains. "*The Stars of the Seventh Heaven*, for example, is based on a book by Gennady Davydko, written for children so that they can make theatrical performances in kindergartens. We adapted the material as an animated film and a theatrical production is a different thing. Moreover, our film was musical and we had to compose a libretto based on the plot: part of the dialogues and scenes transformed into musical pieces. Therefore, when creating a script, it's also important to take into account the genre in which the film will be created."

## Step-by-step

We come into a room where a team of artists work. They join the process at the stage when the script is ready and face a truly important task: to create style sketches. Art director Daniil Zhyugzhda comments, "These give a clear idea of how the cartoon scenes will look and what style will be used. Based on them, everything will be

drawn and characters are developed."

I notice many small pictures on the wall, arranged in rows. They remind me of comics in some way. This is a storyboard: the first visualisation of the project. Storyboard artists know exactly what each scene is about, how dynamically the action develops, what emotions the characters experience. From the storyboard of *The Song of Sirin* it's possible to understand what the size of the film is, in which part of the shot the characters are located, where the edited pieces are cut, in which direction the participants of the events are moving...



Aleksander Kulevsky



One cartoon second consists of 25 pictures

The next step is to scan all the images and collect them in the timeline in the desired sequence. At this stage, the audio part is added to the visual part: copies from the script are read and music is superimposed. The storyboard scenes collected in one video together with the draft sound form an animatic draft of the film. Then the team arranges group views to decide later on what works, what needs to be redone or removed.

## How characters are born

Character development is an extensive topic and each of them gets a kind of personal file, with information on its appearance, full-length and profile views, variations of extreme facial expressions (laughing, being surprised or scared).

"Locations are developed simultane-

ously," adds Ms. Turova. "Every scene takes place somewhere — in a forest, a street, an apartment or some fantastic place... Everything needs to be thought through. That is, the team needs to build a scene so that the story develops on the screen as clearly as possible, every detail should help the perception of the film, and

not conflict with it."

It's impossible to create a cartoon without animators, whose work actually combines two professions: an artist and an actor. They need not only play a film in their heads but also put it on screen so that the dynamics are

felt and those who are engaged in technical assembly catch the rhythm. It's top skills!

For a truly creative person, it's not so important what a masterpiece is created from. It's enough to simply turn to imagination and ingenuity. "You can make a cartoon out of anything, even from nails. The main thing is a good idea at the heart, catching at emotions," the lady adds. "Modern audiences are now much spoiled and can hardly ever be surprised with technical effects. Everyone has seen everything. It is difficult to surpass Disney or DreamWorks, so you need to be interested in something else. We are betting on an idea."

Finally, we move on to the stage that is most noticeable in the final product: movements and gestures. Each wave of the character's hand needs dozens of shots which require the painstaking

work of a whole team of artists. This is actually an answer to the question of why cartoons take so long to be made. A 10-13 minute film needs a year to complete. Look. One second of a cartoon has 25 pictures, so an average 70 minute film consists of about 100,000 pictures!

## Each voice matters

A soundtrack can either improve or spoil a video. Voices of the characters also matter. Sometimes animators immediately hear a specific actor in a character and ask them to read the text. In this case, the voice leads the character and helps develop it. This happened to actress Klara Rumyanova who voiced the Hare from *Well, Wait! [Nu Pogodi!]*, *Cheburashka*, and the Baby Raccoon at the Soyuzmultfilm Studio. All Soviet children knew her voice.

"Thanks to the voice, a minor character can become a favourite," says Ms. Turova, adding, "For *The Kinderville Ghost* feature film based on Oscar Wilde's story, we drew the image of a ghost cat — Amadeus. Dmitry Pustilnik, who voiced it, spent two hours to find the best intonation, though the character had only 20 sentences. As a result, the artiste made his speeches so masterfully that the animators followed the voice of Amadeus during their further work on the film. Another cat, from *The Stars of the Seventh Heaven*, spoke the voice of the singer, Theo. The musician's remark about jelly turned out to be so successful that we even changed the mood of the character at that moment, letting a tear run down his cheek."

Finally, the conversation turns to the future of cartoons and Ms. Turova admits: more realistic does not mean better. "The more realistic the character is, the less it is appreciated by the audience. Even if technologies continue to develop at the same quick pace, this doesn't mean that craft cinema will sink into oblivion. Sometimes its strength relies on simplicity. Hand-made works — even with computer support — will always be highly valued as they are truly charming. Of course, computer cinema will also develop and, for example, the 5D technology has every chance of success. So far, it's a kind of attraction in cinemas but — after all — the cinema was also nothing more than an attraction at one time," says Ms. Turova.





# Apple capital of Belarus

This is the second name of the Sharkovshchina District: it's time to stock up on 'anti-cold' vitamin treats

By Kristina Khilko

## Prolonging youth

In the village of Alashki, there are apples for the most fastidious gourmet: from very sweet to sour, from green to rich raspberry. Moreover, they don't care about severe winters: the fruit can be stored until almost next summer. The most popular variety, 'Pamyat Sikory' (Sikora's Memory) is named after a local self-taught apple-breeder. Ivan Sikora bred about five hundred varieties of apple trees; during his lifetime he was called the 'Belarusian Michurin'. The plantsman laid a garden in the village of Alashki before the reunification of Western and Eastern Belarus, saved during the war. The experiment was successful. Today, people from all over the Union State come to the small homeland of the famous agronomist for bulk buys of the fruit. This summer, guests from Smolensk visited the traditional apple fest. Against the background of autumn ARVI and coronavirus, the benefits of apples are undeniable. It's all about their unique chemical composition. This amount of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients is not found in any other fruit. Local apples are rich in antioxidants that protect our body from aging and literally prolong youth. Moreover, they have strong anti-inflammatory effects and boost immunity.

will give a master class and skilfully show you how to cook on the stove, in the oven and ... on a wooden block. An uncomplicated device that looks like a primus is jokingly called 'local know-how' by the villagers. A couple of light cuts and the block — set on fire from the inside — is ready to work. The very process of cooking on it is a special kind of culinary art.

## Listening to a clay song

On the coat of arms of Sharkovshchina you will see an impregnable cogwheel tower made of red brick, similar to a chess rook. In these lands, clay is not just a natural treasure. According to one version, the clay gave its name to the town: after the rain, the clay soil spread, and in order to maintain balance and not sit in a puddle, passers-by had to shuffle ('sharkat' in Belarusian) their feet.

You can look at the variety of one of the most ancient Belarusian crafts in the House of the Potter — located in the village of Germanovichi. The

local clay has a special colour: sunny and bright red. In skilful hands, a shapeless mass turns into clay pots, jugs, baking containers, floor and flower vases, mugs and candlesticks. In front of the public, masters sculpt their creations, spin them on a potter's wheel, send soft clay to the oven and show their finished masterpieces. After firing in the oven, the jugs are bathed in milk. Ceramic treated in this exotic way becomes water-repellent, obtaining a beautiful dark shade.

## Seeing the Gardens of Eden

In Germanovichi you will find the Art and Ethnographic Museum named after Yazep Drozdovich. One of the most mysterious artists of the 20th century transferred the visions that came to him in dreams onto canvas: amazing Saturnians, the fiery sands of Mars and futuristic landscapes. The bold and mysterious experiments during the life of the master was not appreciated: people saw him as an eccentric and a fantasist. The unrecognised genius painted colourful flowers, bizarre birds, fire-maned lions in the Gardens of Eden on black canvases for a nominal fee. Naive works were not only a decoration, but also a kind of talisman; they were presented 'for good luck' and hung in the house at the most honourable place. Alas, with the development of industry, after factory carpets came into fashion, the painting tradition did not last long. Today, the largest collection of 'malyavankas' can be seen in the Germanovichi Museum.

## Collecting 'red gold' in a basket

The area is also famous for the largest raised bog in Europe: Yelnya. The unique reserve is more than nine thousand years old. It is beautiful here at any time of the year, but especially in autumn. With the onset of the velvet season, the annoying mosquitoes disappear, and cranberries — the local 'red gold' — appear in the thickets of moss. It is believed that the 'anti-cold' berry tastes better after frost, but locals don't wait for cold weather; they take a basket, put on Wellington boots and go out on a quiet hunt. Here you can also walk along the Ozeravki eco-path.

Birdwatching — the most popular area of ecological tourism — is actively developing in Yelnya. Just at this time, flocks of grey cranes soar over picturesque lakes with islets of bizarre shapes. The most successful tourists often see the nesting sites of the rare ptarmigan and the white-tailed eagle.



## Tasting grutsa

In the agro-town Radyuki, Belarusian national cuisine is presented in all its glory. Old and varied, it doesn't end with the popular draniki (potato pancakes). Skilful housewives managed to save unique recipes for unusual dishes from their mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers. At the local House of Culture, a club of Belarusian national cuisine — Grutsa — was established. It is named after a unique dish: fragrant pearl barley porridge with peas, seasoned with onions and crackling. This dish, alongside oatmeal jelly, ham hocks and mushroom stew, was always held in high esteem by the Radyuki dwellers, especially at Christmas and Lent.

Today, sophisticated tourists need to be surprised not only with a delicious authentic dish, but also with an unusual presentation. Local hostesses





# Winter is already appearing

By Tatiana Pastushenko

We have already described how our Olympians prepared for the performance in Beijing. And what about our Paralympians, whose Games will start on March 4th? How are they approaching the main event of the four-year period?

“At the first stage — based on the results shown during the two previous seasons — our athletes have already won four men’s and four women’s places in cross-country skiing and biathlon,” says Nikolai Shudeiko, Secretary General of the Paralympic Committee of Belarus. “We are planning to increase this number. Now places will be issued in the form of personal invitations. That is, the Paralympic Committees will submit applications for specific athletes with justification as to why they should be included in the number of participants in the Games, and the athletes will be awarded a wild card. The remaining quotas will be distributed after the World Cup, which will be held in Lillehammer, Norway, on January 2nd-23rd.”

The leaders of our team are currently preparing for the Paralympic Games in Beijing, they successfully performed at the



Yuri Golub

There are only a few weeks left until the start of the winter season. Belarusian Paralympians are also preparing for it, the main event of which — the Games in Beijing — will take place on March 4th-13th. Our athletes have already won eight places for this tournament. Who is preparing for the Paralympics now and how are they doing it?

main event of the four-year period in Pyeongchang: Svetlana Sakhonenko, Yuri Golub, Dmitry Loban and Lidia Loban. We will not see one of the most titled Belarusian athletes, a participant in six winter Paralympic Games, Yadviga Skorobogataya in Beijing, since she recently decided to end her sports career. But Vasily Shapteboi, who has attended five winter Paralympics is still in the ranks; however, this time, he plans to concentrate not on two sports, but only on the biathlon races, where — due to accurate shooting — he will be able to take the struggle to the leaders. In addition, Yekaterina Shastina, Valentina Shits, Nikita Ladesov and Darya Fedkovich are included in the application for the Paralympic Games.

“The final composition of the participants in the Paralympic Games will be formed by February 19th-20th,” continues Mr. Shudeiko. “We expect to get two more or maximum three qualifications. There is a problem with the sport medical classification, since the competition calendar is not so extensive due to the pandemic. And if there are no tournaments, then there is no opportunity to pass it. At the same time, all team leaders with vision problems must be re-classified. It is also necessary for young athletes, of whom we have a lot. In Mogilev, for ex-

ample, Vladislav Kondratov and Lyudmila Tarelkina are currently training, in Minsk — the promising Vladislav Konioev, in Novopolotsk — Roman Sviridenko,” he adds.

Our Paralympians have already done a lot of work, training both in Belarus and abroad. Almost the entire team went to Italian Lignano for mountain training on roller skis. Some athletes had to change their plans due to visa issues.

“A Schengen visa provides for only 90 days of stay in EU countries, so when planning training, we take into account that athletes will still need to go to the run-in, then on to the European Cup and classification, the World Cup and the world championship. They will have to spend a lot of time abroad. The leaders of the team had already gone to mountain camps before, so now Svetlana Sakhonenko and some other athletes, for example, have decided to go to Tyumen to train on the snow, so as not to go beyond the limit of days provided by the visa,” explains Mr. Shudeiko.

Nikolai Shudeiko explains that, after these training camps, the athletes will return to Belarus for several weeks, and will then leave ‘in season’ — for competitions and the final stage of preparation for the Paralympic Games, which the team plans to hold in Antholz, Italy. The training of athletes was simulated taking into account the fact that the competitions in Beijing will be held in difficult conditions.

“Races for skiers and biathletes will take place on the same tracks as the Olympians, so they will be held at high altitude. The conditions will be difficult, but we tried to make sure that, during the preparation, the athletes could measure up to the altitude at which they will complete and live. It’s too early to talk about what results our Paralympians will be able to achieve at the Paralympic Games. Their level of readiness can be assessed when the competition begins. And our Paralympians will open the season in the Finnish Vuokatti at the European Cup stage,” he summed up.



Svetlana Sakhonenko with her partner Roman Yashchenko

## ARENA

● **The President’s hockey team defeated the Brest Region squad in an amateur tournament match**



On the ice of the capital’s Olympic-Arena, the Presidential squad won with a score of 7:3 (1:1, 3:1, 3:1) in the opening match of the 15th Republican Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prizes of the Presidential Sports Club.

The best players of the meeting were Vadim Boiko (Brest Region) and Denis Kurdeko (President’s team).

The next match for the Head of State’s squad will be held on November 27th against the team from the Minsk Region on the ice at the Olympic-Park.

The President’s hockey team has won amateur competitions twelve times, while hockey players from Gomel and Minsk regions boast one title each.

● **Representatives of Belarus took part in the ANOC General Assembly**

The 25th General Assembly of the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOC) was held in Greek Crete. Representatives of 148 NOCs attended the gathering, with another 57 joining the event online.

Belarus was represented by the NOC Secretary General, Polina Golovina, and the leading specialist of the NOC Interna-

tional Relations Department, two-time Olympic medallist in rhythmic gymnastics, Ksenia Sankovich.

Acting President of ANOC, Robin Mitchell, and President of the IOC, Thomas Bach, as well as President of the Greek Olympic Committee, Spyros Capralos, made welcoming remarks to the participants.

The strategic plan of ANOC for 2021-2024 was approved, which outlines four key positions of the organisation: co-operation, development, representation and events. All ANOC activities to support NOCs will be carried out within these main areas. The General Assembly also approved amendments to the ANOC Charter.



● **Yegor Sharangovich helped New Jersey Devils beat Buffalo Sabres in the NHL Championship**

In the recent regular championship match of the National Hockey League, the New Jersey Devils broke the resistance of the Buffalo Sabres — 2:1 (in extra time). Buffalo took the lead thanks to Dylan Cozens, who realised the advantage of his team in the fourth minute. After that, the score didn’t change for a long time. However, in the 46th minute, Nico Hischier once again restored the balance in the majority. In the fourth minute of extra time, Pavel Zacha brought the New Jersey Devils a victory with the passes of Damon Severson and our Yegor Sharangovich.

The Belarusian spent 16 minutes 13 seconds on the ice and finished the game with ‘+1’ plus-minus statistics.



Andrey Sazonov

## Photo of the week



Foggy morning in Mogilev

### DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



**On October 28th, 1886**, the official opening of the Statue of Liberty took place in New York. This monument, created in Paris by the French sculptor Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi

in collaboration with Gustave Eiffel (who calculated the steel frame), was donated by France to America in 1886 for the centenary of its independence. The statue is a national monument and the main symbol of the United States. Since 1984, it has been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

**October 28th** is International Animation Day, established in 2002 on the initiative of the International Animated Film Association. On



October 28th, 1892, in Paris, the artist and inventor Émile Reynaud summoned the audience to a new, hitherto unseen spectacle — the theater optique (optical theatre). For the first time, he publicly demonstrated his praxinoscope apparatus, which showed moving pictures. We now call this event the birth of the prototype of modern cartoons.

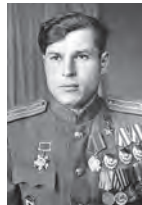
**On October 29th, 1961**, the Museum of the History of Kletsk District opened to the public. It was based on the exhibits of the local lore club and the history club. The most



significant collections include numismatics, photographic documents, household items and historic documents. The museum

organises excursions and meetings with famous people, while also holding exhibitions of works by folk craftsmen and thematic exhibitions from the museum's archives.

**On October 30th, 1921**, Fiodor Arkhipenko was born — Hero of the Soviet Union. During the Great Patriotic War, fighter pilot Arkhipenko fought on the South-West, West, Bryansk, Stalingrad, Voronezh, 2nd and 1st Ukrainian fronts. He flew 467 sorties, conducted 102 air battles, shot down 30 enemy aircraft personally and 14 as part of a group. Until 1959, he served in the Soviet Army as a Colonel. He died in 2012.



**On October 30th, 1981**, the automatic interplanetary station Venera-13 was launched in the Soviet Union for a soft landing on Venus.



Coloured panoramas of the landing site were obtained, soil samples were taken and its chemical analysis was carried out.



**October 30, 1921**, the Belarusian State University was opened in Minsk. This date was preceded by a long

preparatory period for the creation of the university infrastructure and the organisation of the entire educational process. BSU is the leading university in Belarus, which is ranked among the top 2 percent of the world's best universities.

**October 31st** is the Day of the Automobilst and Road Worker in the Republic of Belarus. This holiday is in nationwide recognition of the merits of transport workers in the development of the country's economy. For the highly developed automotive industry of Belarus, this holiday is very relevant: the brands of such giants as MAZ, MTZ, BelAZ, Gomselmash, Belshina and others are known in many countries.



**October 31st** is World Cities Day, which was established by a resolution of the UN General Assembly in December 2013 in order to draw the attention of the general international community to the problems of global urbanisation. The general theme of World Cities Day is the motto: 'Better City, Better Life'.



**October 31st** is International Black Sea Action Day. It was announced within the framework of a strategic action plan signed in 1996

in Istanbul by representatives of six countries of the Black Sea region. The main goal of the day was to draw the attention of the international community to the irreparable damage to the sea caused by overfishing, water pollution and global warming.

**November 1st** is World Vegan Day. Vegans — adherents of veganism — eat and use only plant-based products, that is, completely excluding anything of animal origin. They don't wear leather, fur, wool or silk, and what is more, they don't use products that have been tested on animals. Their reasons for refusal may be different, but the main one is the unwillingness to be involved in the killing and cruelty of animals.



**November 2nd** is Memorial Day in Belarus. People call this day the Autumn Dziady (translated as 'grandfathers' from Belarusian). This is the day of remembrance of ancestors. During a solemn memorial dinner, it is customary to talk only about grandfathers — their lives, individual cases and character traits, remember their words and instructions, wise advice and good deeds.