



A cluster of medical production companies emerging at Great Stone Industrial Park



The exhibition devoted to the 150th anniversary of Ferdynand Ruszczyk held in Minsk



INTERNATIONAL

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Deputy Head of the Belarusian Emergencies Ministry's airmobile squadron, Sergei Galozhin, is back home from Turkey where he — along with his colleagues — worked on extinguishing forest fires

## Help from aircraft

Our helicopters are now back from Turkey where they were involved in extinguishing forest fires. Summer in Turkey is a hot time not only for tourists but also for local emergency services as forest fires are raging countrywide. Our first Mi-8 helicopter took off in late April, while the second departed in mid-May. During their time assisting extinguishing fires in Turkish forests, the Emergencies Ministry's aircraft spent 459 hours in the air. Our pilots made 292 flights, pouring 4,190 tonnes of water on the fires and transporting 212 Turkish rescuers and foresters to the fire sites. Six Belarusian crews worked in shifts in Turkey. Aircraft readiness was also ensured by our engineering staff. The experience of extinguishing fires — acquired in Turkey — could be useful: for example, when the Olmanskie marshes in Polesie are on fire.



# Collective security: proactive actions

Military-technical co-operation, information security and counteraction to technologies of 'colour revolutions' were on the agenda at the heads of states' meeting at the CSTO summit

For the first time, the session of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) was held via videoconference — which, however, did not affect the friendly nature of communication and the results of the summit. This is especially important, given that almost all CSTO member states have faced external pressure in one way or another. The key message of Aleksandr Lukashenko to his colleagues was based on this reality, "Today, taking into account the dynamics of challenges and threats, we need not only to maintain the current interaction but also to enhance it. Under modern conditions, the allied friendship is becoming increasingly significant."

## The theory of 'manageable chaos'

The military-political bloc includes Belarus, Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan at present and the leaders of these countries spent some time discussing the situation in the region and the world as a whole. After all,

it is already obvious to everyone against whom and what it will be directed."

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only complicated the problems of international interaction but also provoked an aggravation of social conflicts. Mass riots swept even the United States and European countries, which until recently



this determines the setting of priorities in the CSTO's activities for the coming period. Moreover, this year has added to the difficulties for all participants of the organisation. In his speech, the President of Belarus quite specifically formulated new challenges and threats that require maximum convergence of the allies' positions.

Aleksandr Lukashenko, in particular, expressed concern about the build-up of the US and NATO military presence near the western borders of the CSTO. This refers to deployment of an additional American contingent in Poland and plans to create new military infrastructure. The Head of State explained, "We clearly see an increase in systematic military measures on the territory of this country and in the Baltic States. At the same time, it is not only the national interests of Belarus that are under the threat of military activity. In this context, we should also consider NATO's statements about the development of a new strategic concept. I think

have been viewed as almost exemplary 'democracies'. This is no longer a spontaneous manifestation of discontent, noted Aleksandr Lukashenko, stating, "*The international order is sliding towards so-called 'manageable chaos'. There is a well-thought-out and orchestrated activity of global players who sometimes fail to consider anything, even the interests of their own peoples.*"

## Pressure with a certain cynicism

Along with this, the sanctions rhetoric does not weaken, while double standards are being unceremoniously imposed on the entire world. A vivid example of this is the reaction of the authorities to illegal protest actions. A tough crackdown on protesters in western countries is presented as an objective necessity, while, in other countries, maintaining law and order is demonstrated as dictatorship and despotism.

The President of Belarus said, "In the conditions of these unequal co-ordinate

systems, manipulation of people, the use of hybrid influences and technologies of the so-called 'colour revolutions' have become commonplace. Moreover, there are no 'colour revolutions' here; these are ordinary riots. It is especially outrageous that western countries, including our Baltic neighbours, had a hand in them.

**Now there is no doubt that civil peace and the integrity of Belarus were and still are at stake. Moreover, we are asked to change the government, laws and social orientation with a special form of cynicism. These proposals are no longer even hidden behind diplomatic phrases.**

Their brazen and undisguised interference in the internal affairs of Belarus simply does not sit well."

"We are directly invited to change the government, laws and social guidelines," said Aleksandr Lukashenko. "Otherwise, they threaten to crush us with sanctions, destroy the economy and infrastructure, and change the moral foundations of our society. *Now there is no doubt that civil peace and the integrity of Belarus were and still are at stake. Moreover, we are asked to change the government, laws and social orientation with a special form of cynicism. These proposals are no longer even hidden behind diplomatic phrases.*"

It was external interference that caused the situation in Belarus to worsen, the Belarusian leader believes. He pointed to the 'literally frenzied behaviour of Poland and the Baltic States against Belarus', saying, "*Moreover, we clearly see that their actions ensure the realisation of their own interests and are aimed at*

*increasing their significance within the European Union. I want the ordinary people of these neighbouring countries to hear about the unworthy and unscrupulous behaviour of politicians.*"

How should we react to the fact that a military group is being created in NATO to seize western Belarusian lands? Aleksandr Lukashenko recalled the long-standing plans of western countries to create a buffer zone between the EU and Russia, "These are goals that were not realised after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the mid-1990s. The President of Russia and I understand this very well. Events in Belarus (they are already openly saying) are a springboard for pressure on the Russian Federation. I just want to say in a friendly way: if people think that this is somewhere far away, in Belarus, not here... Maybe that's what we once thought. Even when the events in Ukraine were happening, we thought it was far from us. But before you know it, you'll have it here."

## Act together

In this regard, the President of Belarus called on the states to join efforts to resist pressure and interference from outside. In the face of this growing pressure, the CSTO must show its ability to work in the political, military and information dimensions, and act ahead of the curve. Aleksandr Lukashenko is convinced that economic co-operation is the basis for our unity, "If we see each other in the economy, as we have long set a goal within the framework of the Eurasian Economic Union, then we will remain. If not (the Russian President said this with certainty), we'll be split apart and shared out."

In this regard, the Belarusian leader stressed the need for a personal meeting of the CSTO heads of state in an expanded format and, taking into account the lessons of recent events, the discussion of prospects for joint actions.

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

## Documents adopted by the heads of state at the end of the session

- **The statement on the formation of a just and sustainable world order.**

The CSTO stressed that the international community should completely get rid of confrontational thinking, the desire for monopoly and dominance in international affairs. Scenarios and plans based on any kind of national exclusivity, including those based on hatred and outright hostility, are absolutely unacceptable. **In this regard, the heads of state called for**

- **a meeting of authorised representatives of the CSTO, CIS, SCO, OSCE, NATO and the EU to discuss the security strategies adopted in**



- **these organisations as a first step towards creating an indivisible security space.**

- **The declaration of the CSTO Collective Security Council.**

It reads: "The CSTO will increase its participation in global efforts to ensure peace and security, consistently advocating the settlement of international and regional conflicts, primarily armed ones, exclusively by peaceful political and diplomatic means within the framework of internationally rec-

ognised dialogue frameworks, proceeding from universally recognised principles and norms of international law without electoral approach'.

- **The plan for the development of military co-operation for 2021-2022.**

- **The anti-drug strategy for 2021-2025.**

- **Decisions related to the logistical and medical support of the collective forces, additional measures to improve the system of personnel training for state authorities of the CSTO member states.**

# The main thing is to save people's lives

The series of trips to the country's regional hospitals — announced last week by the Head of State — began with a visit to the Vitebsk Regional Maternity Hospital — a medical facility where they help women become mothers, including patients infected with coronavirus. However, the President's attention was focused not only on the situation in the region, but in the country as a whole. Aleksandr Lukashenko described it as follows, "The situation in the world is very tense, to say the least. The situation in Belarus is also difficult. There is a phrase that we all know: the situation is not easy, but under control."



## Based on one's own experience

It was the Vitebsk Region that became the first in the country to take on the coronavirus strike this spring. It is not for nothing that it is here that they have accumulated their own — and therefore unique — experience in treating people. There is a recommendation by the World Health Organisation not to separate newly born children from mothers infected with COVID-19. However, in the Vitebsk Regional Maternity Hospital, attended by the Head of State, they learned in practice during the first wave of the pandemic that this approach is not productive, as babies got sick from infected mothers. Therefore, they decided to act in their own way.

"We take the children right away!" the chief doctor of the hospital, Yelena Leonovich, reported to Aleksandr Lukashenko.

"And how many days does a newborn child spend without a mother?" the President asked her.

"Until moms recover; only then do we give the newborn back. Our mothers agree with this, understanding the high degree of contagiousness of this disease."

Numbers do confirm this. There are 45 patients with COVID infection in the hospital (in total, according to Healthcare Minister Dmitry Pinevich, 600 such patients have now been identified in the country), with 25 of them having already become mothers. PCR analysis was taken from their babies on the third day, and the result was negative for all. After listening and appreciating this, the President praised them saying, "Well done for not listening to these WHO specialists."

Hearing about the state of affairs in the hospital is one thing. The Head of State wanted to see everything with his own eyes and communicate with women, wishing them recovery and thanking them for the children.

## There are enough resources to fight COVID

In fact, this is why the President came to Vitebsk to make sure of the real

state of affairs concerning the treatment of people in general and patients with coronavirus in particular. Opening the meeting of the regional headquarters on countering coronavirus infection, the President described another purpose for his visit, "We have accumulated our own experience in fighting this evil. We have learned how to cure people. Therefore, the second question is: what is lacking in the Vitebsk Region to treat people, first of all, with COVID-19?"

Despite the fact that it was from the Vitebsk Region that the first wave of the disease began in the country at the beginning of this year, the situation in the region now is definitely not critical,



as in the country as a whole. Aleksandr Lukashenko gave the following figures, "Today there are about 500 artificial lung ventilation devices used in the country while we could use 2,500. We have plenty of ventilators. We will do everything so that our doctors don't feel a lack of these."

During the first wave of the pandemic, the organisational headquarters — established in the regions on behalf of the President — proved to be efficient, so it was decided to resume their work.

Later, talking to journalists and commenting on the work of Vitebsk headquarters, Healthcare Minister Dmitry Pinevich stressed, "COVID infection is not only an infection, but also affects the economy and the social sphere. We

discussed how our schools, boarding schools and cultural institutions work, how these restrictive measures are observed, the mask regime, how it affects the overall work of the region. Today's detailed conversation shows that the headquarters of the Vitebsk Region is fulfilling its function."

## Encouraging statistics

Nevertheless, some people really want to 'line their pockets' from the difficult situation in the country and in the world as a whole. Therefore, countless fakes — which breed like mosquitoes in a swamp — appear in various network resources. In particular, this applies

to statistics around the incidence of COVID-19, including the number of people tested. The Head of State emphasised that this is not the main indicator in statistics. Three times as many tests are done in the country nowadays as during the first wave. Accordingly, the number of infected is higher.

The President called the prevalence of the number of patients discharged from hospitals with COVID-19 over the number of hospitalised patients as a recent positive trend. He particularly emphasised, "The death rate is the main factor. In the Vitebsk Region, which is not the best right now, two people died today, and no people died yesterday. I want everybody to hear that: people's lives are the priority. Everything else is secondary."

## The most important question

In this regard, the Head of State currently has no issues either with the Healthcare Minister, or the governors, or the members of the headquarters, "Thank God, people do not die in thousands in a day, not even in hundreds. And they will not perish, because all of us — from the chair of the village council, the district executive committee, the regional executive committee to the minister, the prime minister and the President — are and will be dealing with this problem. Let's save people: this is my appeal to doctors. You need to treat people. The issue of healing and saving people is the most important one."

The chief doctor of the Vitebsk Regional Clinical Infectious Diseases Hospital, Tatiana Kovaleva, honestly admitted to reporters that she could not even formulate an answer to a direct question from the President about what the region was missing, because a lot of attention is now being paid to COVID-19, "We are receiving medical preparations, including very expensive ones (one bottle costs about a thousand US Dollars). We have absolutely everything we need for medication. We are provided with the drugs that are used today by the world's leading clinics. We keep track of all new items, and everything new that appears is immediately implemented with us."

Journalists had another question for the meeting's participants: what are the forecasts for the future? This is what Vladimir Sinkevich, the chief doctor of the Vitebsk Regional Centre for Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health, answered, "We assume that elementary precursors have appeared in the Vitebsk Region, which can characterise the situation as encouraging. At the moment, the incidence of acute respiratory infections has slightly decreased, the composition of the patients themselves has decreased, the proportion of adults is decreasing... And this, on the whole, gives us hope."

Based on materials of sb.by and belta.by

# To preserve what has been already achieved and to ensure growth

By Polina Konoga, Yevgeny Kononovich

To make any plans, it's important to evaluate what's already in place. In this sense, the performance of the economy in 2020 can be analysed from different perspectives. On the one hand, the country has failed to reach the level of last year in industry and investment. Exports are sinking by 15 percent. However, on the other hand, given how difficult this year has been, it's definitely not worth blaming ourselves. Aleksandr Lukashenko looks at the situation realistically,

*"The current Government faces one of the most difficult periods in recent decades. Sometimes the situation changed not over months or weeks, but in days."*

It's true that international organisations predicted a fast decline in the Belarusian economy and even a rapid collapse after the financial market instability occurred in August, said the Prime Minister, Roman Golovchenko, at the meeting.

However, the real expectations for

The Palace of Independence has hosted a meeting on the work of the economy in 2020 and draft forecast documents for 2021. The President of Belarus outlined the main goal for the future as follows, "Next year, there should be positive dynamics in all areas... It's unacceptable either socially, economically or politically to reduce the level already achieved."

this year are completely different and everything possible has been done, the President stressed, "The key task has been achieved, namely financial stability in the banking sector and the foreign exchange market. We did not run into arrears and paid off all the debts. This has been achieved in the context of the tight budgetary framework and the main shock of the year: coronavirus."

The sectors of agriculture, construction, communications, information and the financial sector posted positive results. The industry will

come close to the level of last year: 99.2 percent. The industries most affected by COVID-19 will remain in the neutral or negative zone.

Roman Golovchenko added that the Government views GDP at the 99.1-99.2 percent level following the year's results. He said,

*"Even with this figure, Belarus will maintain a leading position in economic growth not only among its neighbours but also in Europe as a whole."*

# Export acupuncture



Medical manufacturing becoming a topical avenue for Great Stone

By Ilya Kryzhevich

## Foreign capital

The market for medical equipment and services is now one of the most actively expanding and attractive for investors — exceeding \$400bn even before the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, pharmaceuticals and biotechnologies are among the priority activities of the Great Stone Industrial Park.

A cluster of such enterprises is already being created in the Park. These are projects with capital from Belarus, Estonia, China, the USA, Russia and the UAE. At the moment, several projects are related to this area — including Belarusian Asomedica, which was founded in 2006 and has a staff of over 300 people manufacturing a wide range of medical products.

“It was among the first to respond to the deterioration of the epidemiological situation in our country,” says the Head of the Industrial Park’s Administration, Aleksandr Yaroshenko. “In March, the company began producing facemasks with a filter element of a high degree of protection.”

Asomedica sells its products in Belarus, also exporting to Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. It makes portable ultrasound diagnostics devices, stationary ultrasound diagnostics devices of medium and high level, respiratory circuits and facemasks, filters. Asomedica is also an official distributor of the world’s leading manufacturers of medical equipment and supplies for x-ray endovascular cardiac surgery, otorhinolaryngology, resuscitation, functional diagnostics, obstetrics, gynaecology and surgery.

Veismed — a joint venture with Belarusian-American capital which produces medical equipment for surgery and has already started construction of a production facility — is another resident of the Park. Its manufacturing aims at the domestic market and the EAEU.

Aleksandr Yaroshenko adds that, in 2021, construction of a plant to produce veterinary medication will begin by a resident using Russian capital: Belagrogen.

In turn, Belalek specialises in the production of drugs, while EuroPharmIntegration will be engaged in the production of innovative medical products: hydrogel wound healing plates. The latter are unique, as the content of the pharmaceutical substances which make these plates has a therapeutic effect. Their production is expected to be launched next year.

## In the process of working on laws

During the fight against coronavirus, the Industrial Park has expanded the list of medical producers: five companies have joined the project. Among them is Belarusian Delfidia which focuses on the production of medical devices and telemedicine. It plans to produce remote health monitoring systems — cardio-gadgets, pulmo-gadgets with mobile



Aleksey Stolyarov

applications, as well as glucose meters with test strips. The production process will be carried out in early 2021.

Another investment project of Czech Beznoska MT envisages the creation of a new production of endoprostheses and devices for orthopaedics and traumatology. In October, Belarusian Smartbiotech also joined the Park; it will produce test systems for the diagnosis of diseases.

“We can now assert for sure that medical production is becoming a topical avenue for the Great Stone,” admits Mr. Yaroshenko. “Moreover, we are currently working on legislation regulating the activities of the Industrial Park. The planned changes will make it possible to attract interested companies

## A cluster of medical production companies emerging at Great Stone Industrial Park

The Great Stone Industrial Park attracts advanced high-tech projects from all over the globe to work on its site. More than two-thirds of its residents’ production facilities belong to the fifth and sixth waves of innovation. Such companies are involved in the fields of mechanical engineering, electronics, telecommunications, IT and medicine. The latter area is developing particularly dynamically in the Park this year: five new companies that create popular medical products have joined the project. Our reporter has investigated the formation of the medical and biotechnological cluster at this Silk Road ‘jewel’.



High-protection grade facemasks and respirators produced at Great Stone

plains. “As a result, this material enjoys advantages over many others used for making facemasks in Belarus. No one has ever used it here before. However, this material is used in medical masks and respirators in the European Union, the United States and China.”

Mr. Yugay adds that his company started production in summer. However, at that time, the demand for masks was falling and it was decided to make products as reserve — to be ready in

and also organise the provision of medical services on its site — including services in the field of traditional Chinese medicine.”

## Special respiratory protection

Against the background of the fight against the pandemic, a project that can make every breath safer has come to the Industrial Park this year. KitGroup produces facemasks and respirators of high protection classes — FFP2 and FFP3 — made of melt-blown: a non-woven material based on polypropylene threads.

“This material has a high fibre density that does not allow most viral bacteria to pass through,” KitGroup’s founder Vitaly Yugay ex-

autumn. The company spent just over two months on all the processes related to the purchase of equipment, recruitment and training of personnel, and setting up production. At present, 15 people work at the plant which can daily produce 100,000 medical masks and 50,000 medical respirators.

“Initially, we faced difficulties with sales in Belarus — being busy with preparing the necessary documents. At present, we have access to the domestic market. We’ve launched sales and already shipped 100,000 pieces to Belmedtekhnik’s chain of stores,” notes Mr. Yugay. “Construction organisations have also shown interest in our products. Due to the introduction of the mask regime in the country, the daily consumption of simple three-layer masks should be about three million units. We can already take ten percent of this market.”

As Mr. Yugay says, KitGroup’s products are obtaining European certification and intermediate test results are already available. There are also requests from Switzerland, Lithuania, Estonia and Germany. “At the same time, there are plans for the future. When the coronavirus is defeated, we’ll be able to more widely master the sphere of individual protection means. We have prospects for working not only with medicine but also with the defence industry,” concludes KitGroup’s founder.



Aleksey Stolyarov



This is considered one of the main areas in the strategy of oil exploration for the next five years. During this period, 3D field seismic works are planned to be carried out on an area of about 3,000 sq.km. Seismic exploration will cover the Yelsko-Narovlyanskaya, Radomyanskaya, Nikolaevskaya and Vystupovichskaya oil-promising areas within the southern structural zone. Geographically, these are Lelchitsy, Yels, Narovlya, Mozyr and Khoyniki districts.

At the same time, three most promising areas have been identified: Valavsky, Yelsky and Radomyansky. According to experts' forecasts, recoverable reserves at promising facilities exceed 14 million tonnes of hydrocarbons. The formation fluid inflows — obtained during the tests — indicate good reservoir properties of the rocks which is a favourable factor for the oil production process.

The seismic crew started prospecting work in the Valavsky area. Like drillers, geologists work on a rotational basis without leaving the site. Their camp is equipped with the greatest possible comfort for field conditions.

One of the techniques used by Belorusneft's Department for Field Seismic Operations is 3D work. At the first stage, the search site is marked, which in the language of

# Those who seek will find

Large-scale geological exploration works were launched in the Gomel Region: for the first time in the history of Belarusian oil production, the search for hydrocarbon deposits will be conducted in the southern part of the Pripyat Trough

geologists is called the source point. For this, a GPS navigator is used, enabling experts to pinpoint the location as accurately as possible. Then beacons are driven into the ground at a certain distance from each other which indicate the points at which the three-piece seismic sensors are later installed — connected via a cable. When carrying out aerial surveys (using 3D technology), they are placed along the perimeter of a given area.

After the lines are laid, vibration sources come to the forefront. To be more precise, they appear, roaring deafeningly with their powerful engines. It refers to special vehicles assembled at the Seismotekhnika enterprise. A steel giant weighing over 30 tonnes and being almost 9m long is based on a chassis manufactured by the Minsk Wheel Tractor Plant.

The main working tool is a vibration machine — a base plate that provides a statistical pressure of more than 30 tonnes on the ground.

When the machines start working, the ground trembles underfoot in the most literal sense.

In a simplified form, the essence of what happens looks like this: machines create vibrations by sending a signal that is reflected from the collectors located in the earth's interior — cavities filled with liquid substances.



If they are present, the signal is reflected, which is fixed by the sensors. They also transmit the scanned 'echo' along the cable that goes to the field station at the end of the line. This is where the primary processing of information is carried out, which is then transferred for detailed analysis to the laboratory. Based on the results, maps are drawn up. With these, geologists determine the places where deposits are most likely to be.

It will take a long time before the first oil is obtained from the new source, but the first steps have already been taken, which is the major point.

## Proposal meets demand

In January-October 2020, the BSW — Management Company of BMC Holding sold over 33,000 tonnes of products to Romania — a 189 rise on the same period of last year.

The company shipped eight kinds of metal products to Romania. Four of them — rolled structurals, rolled steel products, seamless pipes and bronze-plated bead wire — demonstrated growth rates varying from 19 to 190 percent. "The increase in sales is attributed to changes in the Romanian domestic market. In particular, the demand for imported metal products in Romania soared due to falling steel production in the European Union caused by counter-epidemic measures. The Belarusian Steel Works promptly responded



### Belarusian Steel Works' exports to Romania almost doubled in January-October

to meet the demand," the company's press-secretary, Aleksandr Olesik, has announced.

In the ten months of the year, the Belarusian plant's shipments to Romania were close to \$21m — enabling Romania to get close to the top 10 importers of BSW's products. Russia, Germany and Israel top this rating in 2020.

In January-October 2020, the plant exported over 800,000 tonnes of metal products to 23 countries of the European Union. The figure is on par with last year's. The steel mill managed to improve sales in Finland, France, Romania and Austria.

Based on materials of belta.by

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Belarusian Ambassador to Japan Ruslan Yesin discusses investment and commercial projects with Japanese businessmen



The Ambassador of Belarus to Japan, Ruslan Yesin, met with the Head of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the city of Kashima (Saga Prefecture), Chairman of the Mori Iron Works Koichi Mori — a leading regional industrial company. Investment and commercial proposals by Belarusian enterprises interested in the implementation of joint projects for the production of auto components and spare parts for equipment were presented at the meeting.

Earlier, Mr. Yesin met with the Governor of Saga Prefecture, Yoshinori Yamaguchi, who expressed interest in further deepening bilateral interregional co-operation — in particular, noting the popularity of Belarusian linen products among the prefecture's residents who appreciate its quality and environmental friendliness.

### Exhibition dedicated to the 250th anniversary of the birth of Beethoven being held at the Academy of Music

The exposition presents sheet music editions of famous works of Beethoven for piano and scores of symphonic works, as well as vocal works, collections of documentary materials, scientific research and articles. The



exposition is supplemented by photographic documents, alongside CDs and gramophone records with piano and symphonic works by the composer performed by renowned masters.

In total, Beethoven left more than 240 compositions to his descendants, including nine completed symphonies, five piano concertos and 18 string quartets. Most of the works are included in the educational and concert repertoires, and the composer himself is one of the most frequently performed in the world.

### Belarus and Vietnam intend to increase the volume of truck assembly at MAZ Asia JV

The Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam hosted the ceremony of signing the Belarusian-Vietnamese intergovernmental protocol on amendments and additions to the bilateral document aiming to support the production of motor vehicles in Vietnam from 2016. This will enable them to simplify the work of the joint Belarusian-Vietnamese enterprise for the assembly of trucks — MAZ Asia LLC — and to increase the volume of production. From the Belarusian side,



the protocol was signed by the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to Vietnam, Vladimir Goshin, while on the Vietnamese side it was signed by the Minister of Industry and Trade, Tran Tuan Anh. The parties stressed that the adoption of the agreement confirms the desire of the two countries to develop interaction.

### Russian-Belarusian exercise Zapad-2021 to be held in September

Strategic exercises are aimed at strengthening the military security of the Union State. "The most important event for practising practical actions by the troops will be the Russian-Belarusian strategic exercise *Zapad-2021*, planned for September, aimed at further strengthening the military security of the Union State," said the Russian Defence Minister and Army General, Sergei Shoigu.

He noted that preparations for the International Army Games will continue next year, including two new contests: 'Tactical Shooter' military tactical shooting and 'Meridian' for military topographers. In addition, a competition for the deployment of a



field hospital will be held within the framework of the All-Army Competition.

# Shift for red zones

Grodno State Medical University opens the country's first red zone simulation centre

By Tatiana Vrublevskaya

More than 300 students at the Grodno State Medical University have been attracted to hospitals and clinics to fight the coronavirus. They have not been afraid of either the diagnosis or working in the red zone. Some still need to gain experience and develop special skills. For the latter, the first simulation centre has been launched in the country to ensure practical training for working in red zones.

It has taken two weeks to complete the work. An ordinary classroom was divided into two halves. Face-masks, protective suits, containers for disinfectants, pulse oximeters and other equipment were purchased and, in fact, everything has been done to imitate a real situation.

An assistant at the Department of Propaedeutics of Internal Diseases at the Grodno State Medical University, Aleksandr Alekseyuk, explains, "This is the first such room in our country. Here, it's possible to learn the methods for putting on and removing personal protective equipment (PPE). Students and practicing doctor-lecturers can discuss the key points of the fight against coronavirus infection. We need to convey what is important during the medical examination."

It's possible to say that a reserve of specialists is being formed at the University; under certain situations, they will be able to render assistance. This is a unique chance for future doctors to put their knowledge into practice.

In fact, a large training complex has been organised which includes two-hour classes on working out how to dress and remove PPE, studying regulatory documentation on COVID-19, working directly with patients in the red zone — examining them and clas-



Aleksey Bibikov

sifying them to a particular category according to the severity of the disease. It is also important to master the skills of contactless thermal and heart rate monitoring, placing the patient in the prone position and filling out the checklist.

"There is not much time, so we need to prepare for the practical lesson in advance," adds Mr. Alekseyuk. "The results are evaluated. We started training sixth-year students as they will begin work in just six months. However, we will gradually involve first-year students."

The Rector of the Grodno State Medical University, Yelena Krotkova, adds, "Our training is guided by experienced teachers who have personally worked in the red zone as consultants and practitioners since

spring. The University actively helps practical health-care and its students now work as volunteers, secondary medical staff, specialists in field teams and call-centres. In addition, 78 lecturers work in the red zone. An advisory group of 27 people has been set up; if necessary, it makes recommendations to all redesigned medical institutions in the city and districts of the Grodno Region."

Angelina Dudik, a sixth-year student, believes that the experience gained in the simulation centre could hardly be overstated, "We are graduating in a few months and, definitely, skills of this kind are very useful. It's important to learn how to put protective gear on and off properly as this may save lives in the future."

INSIDE



Ivan Yurivanovich

"There are tops, balls, houses, mushrooms, lanterns, beads, traffic lights, nesting dolls. There are also fairy tale characters in the collection, which are made using different techniques and from different materials. Unique holiday masks will tell the museum's guests their stories," the museum staff note.

The second part of the project is dedicated to holiday cards. The organisers pay attention to the fact that, in the 20th century, every event was accompanied by cards and the exhibition showcases New Year cards from 50 years ago. Visitors will also be able to read greetings common at that time.

"During these holidays, don't miss the opportunity to plunge into the atmosphere of the colourful holiday, which will introduce you to how the New Year tree was decorated in the 20th century, while giving you a unique sense of joy and delight," the museum staff add.

## Old-time beauty

Antique Christmas toys presented at the National Historical Museum

By Natalia Yemelyanova

The exhibition of old Christmas toys from the private collection of Galina Zhuk — *Visiting a Fairy Tale* — is open at the branch of the National Historical Museum of Belarus: the House-Museum of the 1st Congress of the RSDLP. It features tree decorations and New Year cards issued from 1940 to 1980.

"The exhibition will make visitors plunge into an atmosphere of joy, anticipation of a miracle and light nostalgia for childhood, which filled 20th century Belarusian houses," the organisers say. It also showcases the collection of Galina Zhuk, from Bobruisk — featuring more than 700 Christmas tree toys.



Ivan Yurivanovich

## Helping hand

Specialised Educational-and-Rehabilitation Centre helps restore the motor function of hands with the help of VR gloves and games

By Irina Sergeeva

This has been announced by the Centre's Head — Alla Litvinchik — as she spoke at the *We are Different but Equal* seminar held recently in Minsk.

"The device for effective and safe recovery of motor functions is made in the form of a glove. In class, a person puts it on their hand and performs tasks on the computer — such as throwing a ball into the basket. The glove reads the movements of the hand and displays them on the screen when syncing with the computer," said Ms. Litvinchik.

Accordingly, effective rehabilitation is achieved not by performing complex physical exercises but through entertainment. "The programme currently has only five games, but the developers of the glove say that they have started working with Belarusian War-gaming to develop new ones," she added.

The device helps restore the motor function of the upper extremities to people who have experienced ischemic and haemorrhagic stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, suffering from cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis.

The Specialised Educational-and-Rehabilitation Centre is a structural division of the Belarusian Prosthetic and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation Centre which deals with professional rehabilitation of people with diseases of the musculoskeletal system and the consequences of various injuries.



holographica.space

The Minsk Times  
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2020

# Driving force of innovation

## Belarusian electric car: export prospects and technology improvement

**Our scientists believe that queues at electric fuelling stations and mass use of electric vehicles will be common in just five years. Nevertheless, they unanimously agree that the launch of Belarus' own nuclear power plant will give a serious impetus to the country's electrical engineering. However, the Joint Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences has been preparing for such news for a long time — working on a line of electric vehicles and their components. Our reporter has learnt more about the Belarusian niche in the field of electric vehicles, export prospects and technology improvement.**

By Vera Arteaga

### Racing car among others

A tour through the Institute's Electro-mechanical and Hybrid Power Units of Mobile Machines R&D Centre — led by its Chief, Aleksandr Belevich — starts with an electric race car which has been made completely from scratch. The car is recognised by its curves and traditionally low build. Its cockpit is open and all the components can be studied not just from books, but first-hand. Mr. Belevich points to the engine and battery, explaining that it's an initiative project.

Explaining why the Centre's specialists have worked on certain solutions on the basis of this race car, the official says,

"Its load range is higher than that of a regular car, since it has a sports purpose. This means that all elements work in more extreme conditions. All the pros and cons of our developments are more clearly seen as a result."

Interestingly, this car is not simply a simulator: it's a real custom car with cognitive and demonstration functions. It's not aimed to be for sale but the situation may change in the future.

Development of elements for electric transport has a great export future. "Subsequently, we are considering the possibility of organising a custom studio on the basis of our Institute. A client would be able to either re-equip an electric car or create a copy by order. Customisation is a fairly common global practice, including when it comes to electric vehicles. This might be interesting to us as well," Mr. Belevich adds.

Among the Centre's collection there's also a passenger car and an ice-filling combine that prepares ice rinks. Until now, as the expert explains, vehicles of the kind used to consume diesel fuel and electric cars were imported. With this in view, the Minsk Tractor Works was tasked to make an electric analogue. Specialists of the Institute have developed an electrical part for it and batch production of such combines will be launched next year.

### Technology and security

Over the past year, scientists have done a lot — not only in relation to technologies. The Centre for Testing Electric Traction Drives has been established and accredited, and there is equipment for testing batteries. It's necessary not only to produce but convince people that an electric car and its components are completely safe.

Development of elements for electric transport continues and this sphere has good prospects — for several reasons. Belarus is a compact country which means it has a

**A racing car is not a mere simulator but a true custom vehicle**



**The Joint Institute of Mechanical Engineering of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus works on a line of electric vehicles and their components**



**Specialists say the first generation of prototypes of components — engines and power electronics — is ready**



**Over the past year, scientists have done much — which involves not only technologies**

small market for sales. However, experts say, many of our neighbours, in particular in the Eurasian Union, have low production of electrical components for such machinery.

Mr. Belevich believes the future belongs to components and their adaptation; our country could produce and supply these to consumers. "The EAEU is our most promising market. The Indian market is also very promising; it has cheap labour but weak technology, and there is a search for ideas for production. I am convinced that there is a place for Belarusian products and technologies there," he says.

The Institute's General Director, Sergei Poddubko, adds that the staff work in several avenues, "We are now overseeing

several projects on electric transport and are constantly developing new components for the electric drive — with focus on new high-speed electric motors of two types: for passenger cars and for electric trucks. Moreover, we have developed not only an engine for trucks, but also an entire electric drive. A gearbox is attached to the electric drive, which makes it possible to increase efficiency by an incredible 10-15 percent — which means we can reduce the battery capacity and, as a result, cut costs. This is a global trend. The Industry Ministry has supported us. We'll start production of such nodes, as they are promising. We'll install them on Belarusian trucks and sell them abroad."



The electric car is still an endless process of improvement. That's why the industry is so attractive today. As scientists stress, it's important that Belarus managed to join it simultaneously with other states.

### Heavy, not light

At the same time, this does not mean that a Belarus-made passenger car will be ready tomorrow. Moreover, does this make sense if everything in the country focuses on heavy engineering? There are a number of machine-building giants that produce large-sized equipment, and there are traditions. Therefore, Mr. Belevich notes that scientists primarily address their efforts to them.

"We've already got used to electric buses and they now service Minsk streets — creating an impression that it's been like that for ages. MAZ has presented its first model of an electric truck, with a large share of foreign components. We are preparing the Belarusian version and definite customers are already known. The vehicle is to be ready in 2022, though now we are being tasked to launch a project for production of an electric small utility vehicle. A similar project (though diesel-based) has already been implemented with the Joint Institute of Mechanical Engineering participation. However, there is a need, including taking into account European demand, for an electric version. We are starting to develop such a car but are still deciding on the manufacturer. As for the passenger segment, we do not have batch production of passenger cars, so it is impractical to launch passenger electric vehicles. In addition, it is difficult to compete with global brands. We managed to reach an agreement with Joylong on production of an electric minivan on its basis. It's a semi-commercial segment. Yet, we don't have a multi-million-Dollar consumer market. The minivan is scheduled for certification next year, production will then follow," he says.

Importantly, scientists assert, along with the support of 'electric direction' by the state, enterprises have gained more understanding of the new topic. "Previously, we faced rejection. We were asked about the prospects and possible customers. Meanwhile, at present, they are already meeting us halfway," says Mr. Poddubko. "At the same time, some doubts remain since the electric transport market is very dependent on state preferences. It develops well where these are present. The situation changed in Belarus when state support was introduced. Everyone sees the advantages of electric transport."

Among the latter are, for example, fewer breakdowns in comparison with petrol cars. Moreover, the life cycle is longer as the battery, which is a key component, can be replaced. Importantly, this car does not consume expensive liquid fuel and makes no emissions — which is much valued, given the changing global environmental realities.



# One of the hottest years

It may be the year everyone wants to forget but 2020 has also been one of the hottest on record

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) said it has been ‘another extraordinary year’ for the climate, with heatwaves, wildfires, hurricanes and floods compounding the threat of coronavirus.

The average global temperature in 2020 is set to be around 1.2C above the pre-industrial baseline of 1850-1900, provisional analysis for January to October shows. That puts it on track to be one of the three hottest years on record, according to the assessment in the provisional report on the state of the global climate from the WMO.

This year is currently in second place in all five global datasets in the analysis, behind 2016 and ahead of 2019, though the difference between the years is small and could change

once figures for the full year are in.

The hottest year on record, 2016, saw a strong El Nino event, a climatic pattern in the Pacific Ocean which pushes up global temperatures on top of the impact of climate warming caused by humans.

The WMO Secretary-General, Professor Petteri Taalas, said that while the world is currently experiencing a La Nina moment, which cools global temperatures, that has ‘not been sufficient to put a brake on this year’s heat’. He added, “Despite the current La Nina conditions, this year has already shown near record heat comparable to the previous record of 2016.”

The past decade has been the hottest in temperature records

stretching back to 1850, with the warmest six years on record all occurring since 2015.

There is a one in five chance that global average temperatures will temporarily exceed the threshold of 1.5C above pre-industrial levels by 2024. Under the global Paris Climate Treaty, countries are committed to trying to curb global temperature rises to 1.5C, a level beyond which the worst impacts of climate change will be felt.

The state of the climate report, which draws on information from national meteorological organisations, UN bodies and regional and global climate centres, detailed the effects already being seen. Heat in the oceans is at record levels, with 80 percent of the world’s seas experiencing a marine.

# International arms control

**Nuclear risks have reached unacceptably high levels in the world, and the international arms control regime is now virtually hanging by a thread, as stated by the UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu**

The UN Under-Secretary-General spoke at the Washington-based Arms Control Association annual meeting — held in a virtual format.

A coincidence of circumstances has increased nuclear risks to unacceptable levels. Among the factors that have led to the emergence of such a situation in recent years, Ms. Nakamitsu named ‘corrosive’ relations between states possessing nuclear weapons, technological breakthroughs in the development of new military equipment, regional security crises with nuclear implications.

“At the same time, as you know, the nuclear disarmament mechanism is paralysed, and the arms control regime is hanging in the balance. The interconnected nature of these trends and the potentially catastrophic consequences have brought us to a stage in which the only choice for the international community is to enter a fundamentally different trajectory. Otherwise, it will face the growing threat of a catastrophe,” she said.

“The ongoing pandemic has made clear that in or-



der to create sustainable solutions to the crises we face, we must shift towards a more people-centred approach to peace and security. We must also include the voices of the people who are most impacted by war and conflict in a systematic way in arms control and disarmament policy and programmes,” Ms. Nakamitsu added.



# China lands on the Moon

**China has successfully landed a lunar probe on the surface of the Moon, the country’s National Space Administration says**

The robotic spacecraft, named Chang’e-5 after the mythical Chinese goddess of the Moon, has spent two days on the Moon collecting soil and rock samples, guided by mission control on the ground. It’s the first attempt to collect rocks from the Moon by any country since the 1970s.

The probe’s robotic arm scooped up rocks from the surface, and a drill bored into the ground to collect soil. The samples, expected to weigh about 2 kilograms, were sealed into a container in the spacecraft.

If successful, the mission will make

China only the third country to have retrieved lunar samples, following the United States and the former Soviet Union decades ago.

When the samples are returned to Earth, scientists will be able to analyse the structure, physical properties and material composition of the Moon’s soil.

The mission may help answer questions such as how long the Moon remained volcanically active in its interior, and when its magnetic field — key to protecting any form of life from the Sun’s radiation — dissipated.

# No Christmas markets

The European plazas where people would usually gather at crowded stalls to partake in hot mulled wine, gingerbread, sausages and other delicacies are just empty squares

Christmas markets, a cherished tradition in Germany and neighbouring countries, have joined the long list of annual traditions that were cancelled or diminished this year because of the coronavirus pandemic. November saw many European countries impose partial or tougher lockdowns as new virus cases soared. The restrictions are either being retained or only partially loosened as Advent began.

Over the border in France, the roughly 300 stalls of Strasbourg’s pop-

ular Christmas market won’t go up this year. And it’s the same story in the Belgian capital, Brussels. Luxembourg city and Geneva have also joined the lengthy list of cities to have cancelled their highlight of the festive season.

The same goes for Prague, as the City Council announced the cancellation of the historic market due to the poor epidemiological situation in the central European country. The installation of several small stalls in the Old Town Square will be possible only in the case of an improvement.



Materials prepared with aid of information agencies

# A window into Ferdynand Ruszczyc's world

2020 is marked in the UNESCO calendar as the Year of Ferdynand Ruszczyc: the legacy of the outstanding symbolist painter is considered the ownership of several countries — Belarus, Lithuania and Poland, while Ruszczyc himself is a noteworthy representative of the Russian classical school of painting. The exhibition devoted to the 150th anniversary of the master was being prepared at the National Art Museum for a long time, but the pandemic and related restrictions forced them to postpone the event to the end of November, and also seriously reconsider the concept of the exposition.

By Irina Ovsepyan

Until recently, only one work by Ferdynand Ruszczyc was kept at the National Art Museum: the globally known *At the Roman Catholic Church* (1899) was purchased from Leningrad collector, A.I. Shuster, in 1957. In November 2019, three more paintings — belonging to the early period of Ferdynand's work, joined the museum collection. They were bought from the artist's grandson with the financial support of the Honorary Consul of Belarus in Lausanne, Andrei Nazheskin, and presented to



*At the Roman Catholic Church* (1899), oil on canvas



Ferdynand Ruszczyc

where the Ruszczyc estate was located. Bogdanovo is the birthplace of the artist, this place certainly deserves to be visited.

Vikenty Adamovich, who heads the Department of Culture, Ideology and Youth Affairs at the Volozhin District Executive Committee, believes Bogdanovo is a great place to create art pieces. "The artist said that his soul always remains in Bogdanovo. Ferdynand Ruszczyc visited Minsk and St. Petersburg, Warsaw and Krakow, Paris and Berlin, but the village of Bogdanovo remained the place where he returned to from trips near and far, where his old home and his family were waiting for him," he says.

It was in Bogdanovo at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries that the painter created his most famous works, his native surroundings and nature served as an endless source of inspiration for him. What the estate was like during the artist's lifetime can be seen in unique archival photographs from WWI: the pictures were given to the museum by a private collector, Vladimir Bogdanov.

The exhibition at the National Art Museum is the main event of a series devoted to the Year of Ferdynand Ruszczyc in Belarus. It opened on February 27th and the museum's Director — Vladimir Prokoptsov — commented, "The Ministry of Communications and Informatisation joined Belpochta unitary enterprise in preparing for the 150th anniversary of the artist: on November 5th, an official franking of an envelope with a stamp dedicated to Ferdynand Ruszczyc took place. The National Bank issued silver and copper-nickel coins for the significant date. The Ministry of Information also supported the idea and financed the release of the *Heaven and Land of Ferdynand Ruszczyc* album by the

Petrus Brovka Belarusian Encyclopaedia Publishing House which was produced at the highest printing level.

The book, whose release experts have been waiting for over the whole year, was written and prepared by Vladimir Prokoptsov: part of it is devoted to the

biography of Ferdynand Ruszczyc, and the rich illustrative material, including a large number of previously unpublished archival photographs, is truly interesting. The biographical text and art history analysis of reproductions of the artist's paintings — collected from all foreign museums — supplements the edition. This titanic work gives comprehensive information about the creative heritage of the master.

The impeccable taste with which the National Art Museum approached the landmark anniversary is obvious: modern approaches are organically combined with a strict academic presentation, while the exhibition halls open windows to the era and world of Ferdynand Ruszczyc.



Culture Minister Anatoly Markevich (left) pays a visit to the exhibition

**The exhibition at the National Art Museum introduces the work and life of the founder of the Belarusian school of landscape painting**

the museum. These all are now available to the public as part of the show: everyone can appreciate the indescribable beauty of Ferdynand Ruszczyc's brushstrokes and his uniquely tender, reverent attitude to nature and his native land.

"The exhibition will leave a major, serious mark on this year's events," Belarus' Culture Minister Anatoly Markevich believes. "Belarusians will enjoy an opportunity to understand the legacy of this great person. I would like to thank the National Commission for UNESCO and its Chairman, Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei and the Minsk regional and Volozhin district executive committees for their work in preserving the memory of our countryman and, of course, the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus."

The fact that Europe has been locked down since spring has prevented bringing Ferdynand Ruszczyc's works to Belarus from foreign galleries, although there were agreements in place. As a result, some pictures are being shown in the museum halls via multimedia. The organisers have taken a different path: the exhibition at the National Art Museum reflects not only the work of this landscape painter, decorator and teacher, but also introduces us to his closest professional environment.



*Winter Minsk, 1890s*, oil on canvas

Viewers get a great opportunity to look at the artist's pieces in the context of the era. For a true connoisseur, it's just as interesting as a detailed immersion in the master's works.

Ruszczyc graduated from one of the most significant art schools in the Russian Empire: the Higher Art School at the Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. He was taught by such recognised outstanding masters as Ivan Shishkin and Arkhip Kuindzhi and among his



At the exhibition

fellow students were Nicholas Roerich, Konstantin Bogaevsky, Wilhelm Purvitis, Arkady Rylov... Their works help us understand the creative environment in which the young landscape artist's talent was formed and developed. Another section of the exposition is given to his students: outstanding Belarusian artists Piotr Sergievich and Mikhail Sevrak. Paintings by less famous, but no less wonderful artists — Marian Bogush-Shishka and Nesvizh-born Kuzma Churilo — are also on show.

The exhibition also features pieces by contemporary Belarusian authors. For two years in a row, the Belarusian Union of Artists has been holding open air shows in Bogdanovo, in the Volozhin District

# With Leica and notebook



Yevgeny Khaldei

By Marina Kuzmich

Yevgeny might have died back in 1918 during one of the Jewish pogroms in his native Yuzovka village (now Donetsk). His mother and grandfather were killed, and Yevgeny himself received a bullet wound in the chest. The boy was only one-year-old at the time but miraculously survived. People often said about him that he was born under a lucky star. Yevgeny Annanievich often recalled these words of locals during the war, when he was on the verge of death more than once.

However, did the photo-journalist who was sent on a mission by the news agency understand this? Looking at the photographs taken by him during the



A Bombardier Pilot in the Sky over Sevastopol, May, 1944

fighting — both from the helicopter cockpit and near the buildings charred after the bombing — it becomes clear what the Soviet people had to endure during these hard times. A photo chronicle of the terrible 1941-1945 years includes more than a hundred photographs. Mr. Khaldei's photographs were donated to the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History by the ROSPHOTO Museum and Exhibition Centre. Its Director, Zakhar Kolovsky, said that many of the pictures were provided by the daughter of the famous photographer, Anna, "She often recalled her father in her interviews. She said that Yevgeny Annanievich's first camera was made of two cardboard boxes and old lenses from glasses. The homemade camera was made by his grandfather. Thirteen-year-old Zhenya began to shoot and developed the film under the bed. He worked part-time in a local photographic studio, and later got a job in a large-circulation factory newspaper. The best photos were sent to Moscow. His abilities were noticed and later he was invited as a photo-journalist to TASS."

We gaze at the portraits of the soldiers in Mr. Khaldei's photos and see courage and bravery on their faces. Here is a report from Bulgaria, where we can see smiling local partisans and the clairvoyant Vanga



Raising the Victory Banner over the Reichstag, May 2nd, 1945

Exhibition of famous Soviet photo-journalist Yevgeny Khaldei — *The Victory Banner* — has opened at the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History

Capturing the horror of fascism and showing the value of a peaceful life was the main thing for photo-journalist Khaldei. Everyone who sees his shots live can be convinced of this. The pain of the Great Patriotic War was felt by the reporter himself, who had walked with a camera from Murmansk to Berlin and became the author of the famous photograph *Raising the Victory Banner over the Reichstag*. The work of the master of our time is studied from textbooks. His resilience and courage is an example for future generations.

**The exhibition of photographs by Yevgeny Khaldei — 'The Victory Banner' — at the Belarusian State Museum of the Great Patriotic War History is available until December 27th**



Georgy Zhukov at the Victory Parade, 1945

hugging them like her children. Meanwhile, tired old people on the ruins of Berlin are depicted on the *Why War?* photo.

Zakhar Kolovsky notes that Mr. Khaldei is called not only a photo-journalist but an artist. In 1995, at the age of 77, Yevgeny Annanievich received an award from the Ministry of Culture of France: the Knight of the Order of Arts and Literature title. Mr. Khaldei had no paintbrush in his hands, as his main tool is the Leica camera.

The images and characters created by him — decades after the Victory — are truly touching: i.e. *The First Day of War*. Mr. Khaldei's daughter told the ROSPHOTO Museum and Exhibition Centre experts how her father managed to take it, "On the evening of June 22nd, 1941, he

came from another business trip. He didn't have any new tasks so he went out into the street and saw how people were gathering around the loudspeakers and began to shoot. He wrote down the names of everyone who got into his shots in a notebook."

In black and white photos, symbols of light and darkness, good and evil can be easily read. The confident gaze of the sniper, Liza Mironova, who became a Hero of the Soviet Union, pierces everyone, as do the courage and fearlessness in the eyes of a Soviet soldier who talks with residents in liberated Vienna. Yet another photo depicts how the Soviet pilots are heading for Berlin.

During the war, Yevgeny Annanievich was in the same ranks with the sol-



The First Day of the War, June 22nd, 1941, Moscow. People listening to V.M. Molotov announcing the beginning of hostilities.

diers and ate with them from the same pot. Together they prepared for battle and took cover during the raids.

"There was a case when the photo-journalist changed places with a soldier, and in a few minutes, he was hit by a land mine," continues Zakhar Kolovsky. "It is noteworthy that in every episode of the war Mr. Khaldei was looking for hope. After victorious battles, he photographed the Soviet flag and moved on. By the end of the Great Patriotic War he had established himself as a first-class photographer. The military events captured in the photo were recorded by many military journalists, but it was the pictures of Yevgeny Khaldei that got on the pages of newspapers."

**From the photographs of the craftsman, the country learnt about all the horrors of the war. Some of the photographs were presented as evidence for the Nuremberg Tribunal.**

The famous *Raising the Victory Banner over the Reichstag* photo was taken by Mr. Khaldei in a staged manner a day after the event, when the fighting had already subsided and the Reichstag was taken. On May 2nd, 1945, a photo-journalist reached the building and asked the soldiers to help him climb onto the roof. These soldiers were Aleksei Kovalev from Kiev, Abdulhakim Ismailov from Dagestan and Leonid Gorychev from Minsk. The soldiers fixed the flag on the roof, and the photographer chose the angle. In order to get that very shot, Yevgeny Khaldei shot two rolls of photographic film. This is how the photo, which became one of the symbols of the Great Victory, was made.



Yegor Sharamkov

# No floor event or pommel-horse for Belarusian gymnasts

The pandemic thinned the composition of the European Artistic Gymnastics Championship, but only one Belarusian athlete took advantage of the situation

From this week, European gymnasts are taking part in the continental forum. The European Championship this year was expected to take place in the spring and become one of the important stages on the way to the Olympics. However, the Games were postponed, but for a long time they could not decide what to do with the championship. In the end, they decided to hold it, changing not only the date, but also the venue. Instead of Baku, gymnasts flew to Turkish Mersin. The organisers couldn't solve all the problems, and we are in for perhaps the most unusual and unpredictable tournament in recent years, including for the Belarusian team.

By Dmitry Komashko

## Girls — on the sidelines

As for the team, however, it was too difficult and uncertain. Although initially the Belarusians had positive views on the European Championship and the season in general. After last year, during which Andrei Likhovitsky climbed onto the podium at the 2nd European Games, and Anastasia Alistratova announced herself as one of the main young hopes of the women's team, they were expected to continue, including at the Tokyo Olympics. However, our leaders didn't even fly to the European Championship, although a couple of weeks ago, the Belarusian national squad was ready to pack their bags for Turkey. The well-known Belarusian coach, Valery Kolodinsky, who undertook to raise the Belarusian women's gymnastics from the bottom of the table on the eve of the 2nd European Games, had pinned serious hopes on this season but he has to admit that the entire team left the Staiki complex not for Mersin, but for their homes. "The regular gymnastics season starts in January while the European Championship takes place in spring and the World Championship is held in autumn. In the end, things were constantly shifting. When the Olympics were cancelled, they decided to move the European Championship to autumn. First one place was chosen, but those in charge refused it. As a result, they agreed on Turkey in December, but we didn't go there either, as most of the girls have already gone home."

The decision to refuse to participate in the European Championship was made just a couple of weeks ago. Up to this point, the women's team were out in full

force training in the Staiki complex and cherished the hope of performing anywhere this year. Valery Kolodinsky explains that the decision was made jointly with the country's sports leadership and was not easy. In the end, it was decided that it would be better this way.

"All our athletes are minors. And now there is a great risk that the situation may not go according to plan. For example, while we are at the competitions, all the borders could once again be closed and flights cancelled. Remember how many stories there were when people were

European Games, Mr. Kolodinsky hoped to continue. In the gym with the coach are now only two junior athletes: Nastya Smantser and Yulia Lukhta. They are seen as the next reserves and the team's main hopes, so there were plans to trial them at the European Championship. Smantser, by the way, has already made it to the finals of the adult competitions.

## One for all

Nevertheless, Belarus was represented at the European Championship in Mersin in the men's competition. True,



Belarus. Anatoly Shikovets, who replaced Aleksandr Baranov as the head coach of the men's team a year ago, explains that this time the Belarusian athletes had a unique chance to be on the podium, "Our team is not the only one that has decided either not to go to the European Championship or to significantly reduce the number of participants. In Mersin, we didn't see many of the leaders. For example, the Russian national team didn't come to Turkey, and there is no English team either... In these conditions, for the first time in many years, we can even claim a prize place as a team. As they say, everything is on an equal footing, but the result will remain. Anyway, only one Belarusian athlete is participating in the European Championship — Yegor Sharamkov. We believe that he has the best chance of competing for medals."

Yegor himself is full of hope and optimism, "This season we have already had to change plans and adjust our preparation several times. I'm philosophical now: as it turned out, anything can be cancelled. But still, the European Championship is a great chance for me. I have very serious intentions. I don't want to hang medals on myself in advance — as the competition is still quite serious — but the prospects look very good. I feel that this tournament is mine. It's time to show the result!"



Anastasia Smantser

'stuck' in other countries? Or when someone in another country was forced to go into isolation? And we have a whole team, and are responsible for these girls..." adds Mr. Kolodinsky.

De facto, the Belarusian gymnasts did not have a season, although initially, after a fairly successful performance at the 2nd

there were some 'amendments' here too. Andrei Likhovitsky, who claimed a medal at the 2nd European Games, decided to devote the troubled coronavirus times to his health. He underwent shoulder surgery but intends to recover by the Olympics. The rest are in training in the gym and are following the events in Turkey from

## ARENA

### ● Belarusian biathlete Dinara Alimbekova placed fourth in pursuit race at Biathlon World Cup stage in Kontiolahti



Dinara Alimbekova gained two penalties, finishing the 10km distance with four firing lines 55 seconds behind the winner. This is the best result by the Belarusian athlete in her individual races in her entire career.

The Norwegian Tiril Eckhoff won the final race of the World Cup second stage: the Scandinavian athlete shot accurately and posted 31 minutes and 5.9 seconds at the finish line.

### ● Thomas Bach will be the only candidate running in next year's IOC Presidential elections

The current President of the Inter-

national Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach, will be the only candidate for the Head of the organisation.

Elections are scheduled for March 2021 during the 137th IOC session in Athens. The registration deadline for applicants for the post of IOC Head expired on November 30th.

By decision of the IOC Executive Committee, the President-elect will take office after the Olympic Games in Tokyo. The main events of the four-year period in the capital of Japan are scheduled from July 23rd to August 8th, 2021.



Thomas Bach of Germany has been heading the IOC since September 2013. After his re-election to a new Presidential term, the Würzburg native's term expires in 2025.

### ● Women's Tennis Association introduces new corporate identity

The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) has launched a new campaign — *WTA For The Game* — aimed at building deeper connections with fans.



The rebranding includes a redesign of the WTA logo for the first time in a decade. The new purple logo depicts a tennis player serving. The title font in the association's corporate style has also been changed.

As far as the tournaments are concerned, there are now nine categories for women, as well as the men's competitions under the auspices of the Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP). The rating points system for WTA tournaments will also change.

### ● To the Olympics without mandatory vaccination

The Japanese authorities intend to allow foreigners to attend the Tokyo Olympics without compulsory coronavirus vaccinations or quarantines, provided that those who enter provide negative COVID-19 tests and download a tracking app.

Japan will not restrict tourists from using public transport.

Almost one million tickets were sold to foreigners for the 2020 Games, which were postponed for a year due to the pandemic, and 4.5 million tickets were sold inside Japan.





Snow mirror world. Winter evening in Molodechno park, Minsk Region.

## DATES. EVENTS. PEOPLE.



**On December 10th, 1870,** Ferdynand Ruszczyk (formerly the estate of Bogdanov, Volozhin District, Minsk Region), a painter, a graphic artist, a theatre artist and a teacher, was born. He studied with K. Yermolayev in Minsk. In 1897, he graduated from the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts. Among his paintings are *Around the World, Earth*. He illustrated periodicals in Vilno, Warsaw and Krakow. UNESCO has declared 2020 as the Year of Ferdynand Ruszczyk.

**December 11th** is International Mountains Day, proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2002, aiming to attract attention to the problems of development in the mountainous regions of the planet. Mountains occupy almost one quarter of the earth's surface and are home to 15 percent of the population, as well as being a reserve for many species of plants and animals, and a resource of all the main rivers of the Earth.



**December 12th** is International Day of Neutrality, approved by the UN General Assembly on February 2nd, 2017. Neutrality in the system of international law is a

policy of non-participation in war and refusal to participate in military blocs in a peaceful period. The neutral status of the state reduces the level of international tension in the region, guaranteeing neighbours that there will be no enemy and no armed forces belonging any military bloc on their borders.



**December 12th** is International Universal Health Coverage Day, announced by the UN in 2017. This day aims to raise awareness of the need for reliable and sustainable health systems and universal health coverage.

**On December 13th, 1105,** Mina Polotsky was ordained bishop of Polotsk. This is one of the first Polotsk hierarchs about whom there is dated chronicle evidence. It's likely that it was with his help that Yevfrosiniya Polotskaya was brought up. Mina Polotsky is honoured by the Orthodox Church as one of the best archpastors who contributed to the spread of Christianity in Belarus. In 1984, he was included in the Synaxis of Belarusian Saints.



**On December 15th, 1575,** Stephen Báthory was elected King of Poland and Grand Duke of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. He ruled in Rzecz Pospolita until December 12th, 1586. During his reign, the Livonian War with the Tsardom of Muscovy took place, as a result of which part of the lands of the Livonian Confederation was ceded to Rzecz Pospolita. Báthory actively supported the Jesuits, as their educational system was considered the best in Europe. He built Jesuit colleges in Nesvizh, Polotsk, Lublin, Riga. Stephen Báthory also planned to move the capital of Rzecz Pospolita to Grodno. Although his plan was not destined to come true, he built a royal castle there, reconstructed Vytautas' Fara (Vytautas Church) and spent the last years of his life in it.



**On December 15th, 2000,** by the decision of the Ukrainian Government, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was closed, where on April 26th, 1986, the world's largest man-made disaster in the history of mankind took place. The official delegation of the Republic of Belarus took part in the events timed to coincide with the closure of the nuclear plant.



**On December 16th, 1770,** Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) was born — German composer, pianist and conductor, representative of the Viennese classical school. Beethoven is a key figure in classical music in the period between Classicism and Romanticism, one of the most performed composers in the world. He wrote in all the genres that existed in his time, including opera, music for dramatic performances, and choral works.

**On December 16th, 2010,** after the completion of restoration and reconstruction works, the grand opening of the Mir Castle Complex took place. The restoration was finally completed in 2013. The Mir Castle Complex is a unique monument of the national culture of Belarus. The architectural ensemble of Mir includes a castle-museum of the 16th-20th centuries with thirty-nine fully-fledged exhibitions, earthen ramparts, picturesque parks and a pond, alongside the burial vault of the Svyatopolk-Mirskie dukes. In 2000, Mir Castle was included in the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List.

